



This year, three people came to visit us in Port Bouët! In this picture, my best friend, Amandine Kouadio and I are standing on the beach with Tom, Mark Phillips, and Kate Montgomery. Stan Thompson, the third visitor, is taking the picture. The beach is a five-minute walk from our house.

Below, left, my step-mom is holding my younger brother, Thomas William. And in the right picture, my grandmother (my Dad's mother) is holding the baby. They are standing in front of my Dad's and step-mom's house.





Tom, Amandine, and I went for a walk in the neighborhood. In the left photo, Amandine and I are standing in front of a grocery store. You can see cucumbers, tomatoes, and an entire table of fish. In the right photo, we see attiéké, made from fermented grated cassava which is cooked in big pots and packed into plastic bags. Because attiéké is fermented, it does not spoil quickly even if left at room temperature.



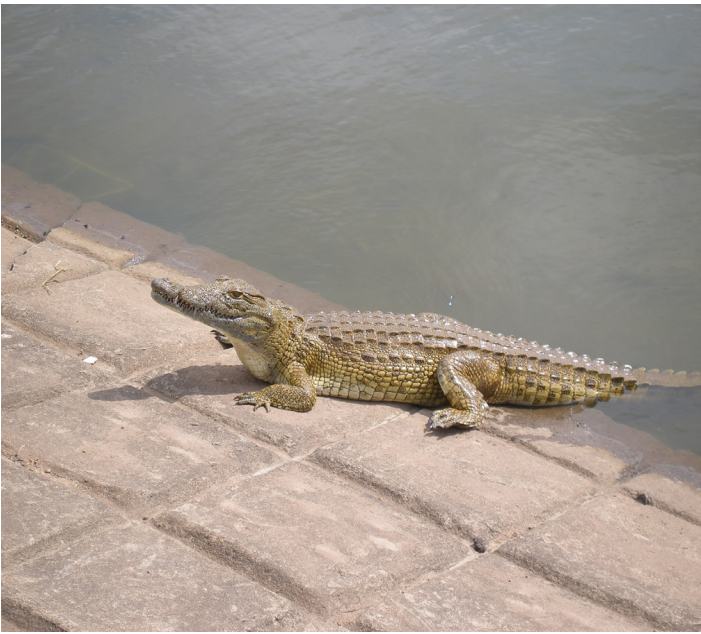
The five-some piled into a Peugeot station wagon. Stan very graciously offered to sit in the back. Above, a neighbor working out for an upcoming boxing match, stopped by. Left, on the outskirts of town, traffic typically backs up. The car's engine was running hot, so the driver poured ice water over the block to cool it down.



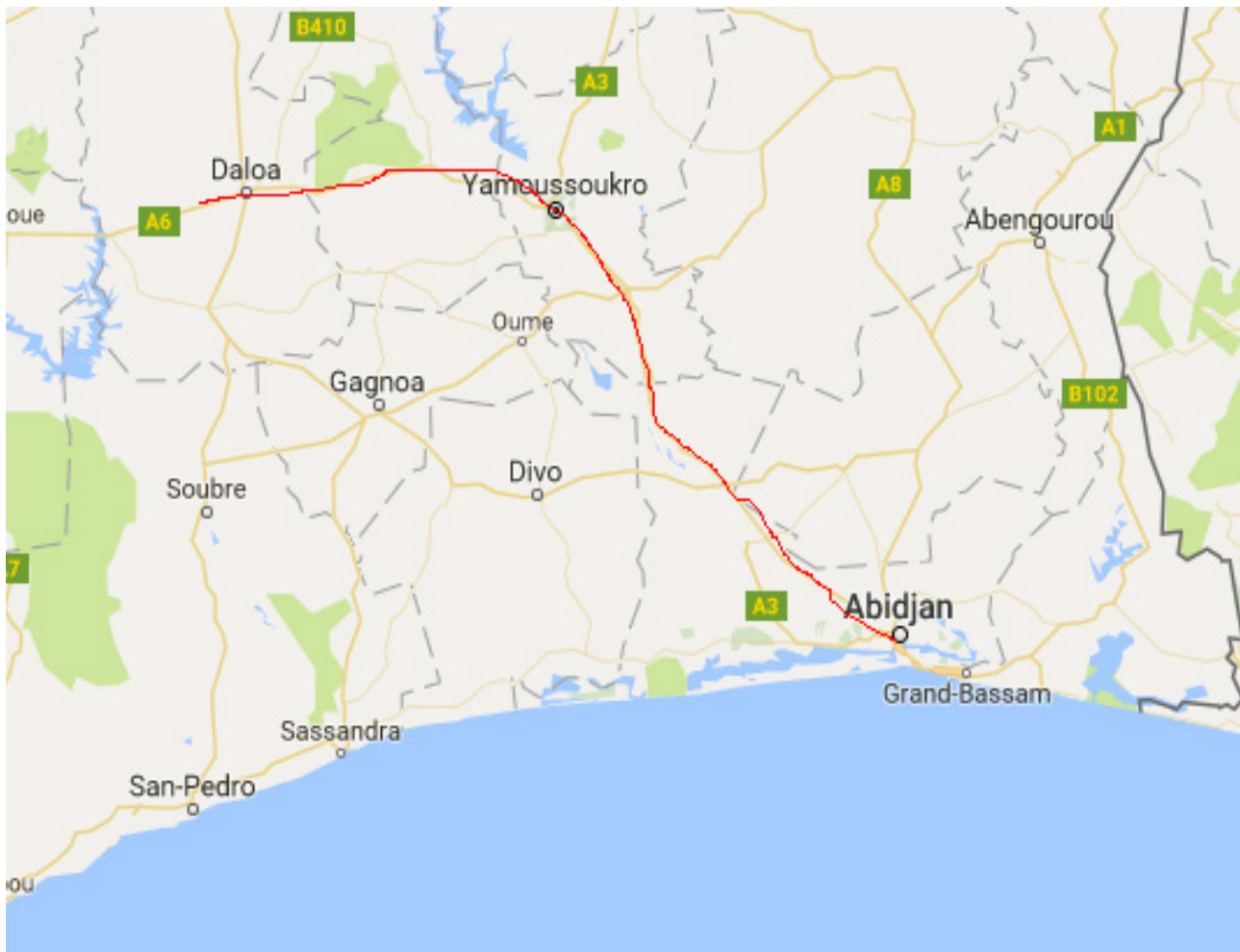
They arrived in Yamoussoukro around 10 PM. The following day, they visited the Basilique Notre Dame de la Paix, the largest church in the world, according to the *Guinness Book of World Records*. Côte d'Ivoire is less than 30% Christian, and this edifice which cost around \$600 million was erected to glorify the country's president and founder, Felix Houphouët-Boigny. Yamoussoukro is built on the land that the president's family owned.



The sign depicted at the right lists what is not allowed beyond the fence: no cats, dogs, horses, pipe smoking, skimpy clothes, guns or knives.



After visiting the basilica, they drove past Yamoussoukro (pronounced YAM SO KRO) lake, which is obviously an old river bed of the neighboring Bandama River, as it forms a sharp V. The Presidential Palace, which cannot be photographed for security reasons, is right across this river. In the left photo, one sees lotuses with gorgeous flowers. In the right photo, one sees one of many of the crocodiles that were stocked into the river after the palace was built. Years after this photo was taken, the old man who tended them was attacked and eaten.



The travelers drove West from Yamoussoukro to Daloa, where they checked into a hotel. They then drove west of Daloa to Battaguedea.



Left, the sign announcing the town of Battaguedea. Right, the travelers immediately met with the chief and with members of the village. Tom probably gave his usual spiel about how the chocolate system takes advantage of the farmers' difficult situation caused by a collusion of middlemen to drive down prices and by traders in London and New York who determine world cocoa prices. At this point, Tom had not come up with his idea of building chocolate factories in villages.



These photos were all taken by Stan Thompson, who was a professional reporter working for a small newspaper that required he be excellent in photography and writing. The lower left picture shows a woman getting water for the evening's meal and showers. The lower right picture shows two cocoa farmers holding a pod that has been attacked by myrids that spread brown pod fungus to the interior and damage the yield.



The travelers spent about an hour speaking with the villagers. They donated machetes (left), machete sharpeners, and boots.



A cocoa farmer demonstrates the use of a slingshot, mostly used to scare away birds from the rice fields.