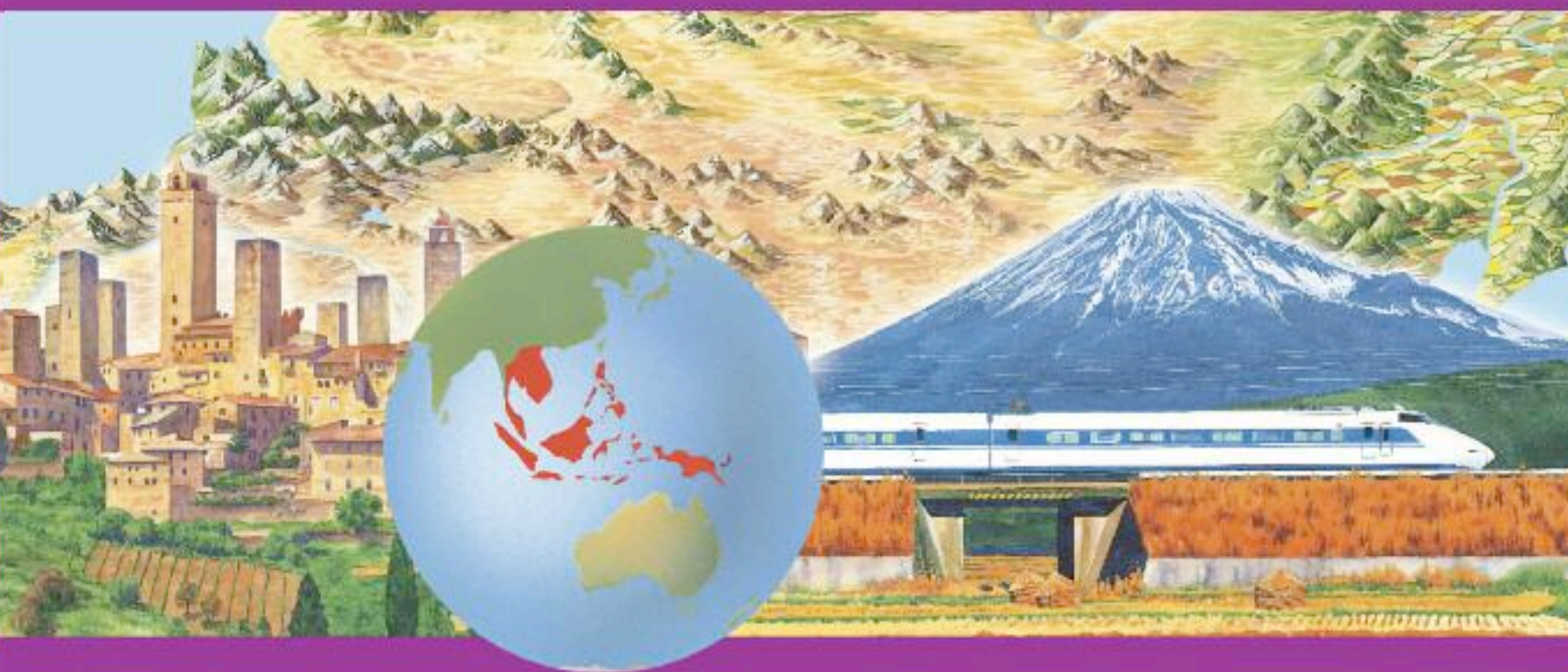


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NATIONS



More than 250 keywords

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NATIONS

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CONTENTS

THE WORLD 6

NORTH AMERICA 8

MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA 10



SOUTH AMERICA 12

NORTH AFRICA 14

SOUTHERN AFRICA 16

WESTERN & NORTHERN EUROPE 18

CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE 20



RUSSIA & CENTRAL ASIA 22

MIDDLE EAST 24

EAST ASIA 26

INDIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA 28

OCEANIA 30

INDEX 31



ABOUT THIS BOOK

Each double page contains a brief introduction, explaining the general subject, followed by key words arranged in alphabetical order. To look up a specific word, turn to the index at the back of this book: this will tell you which page to go to. If you want to learn more about a subject, take a look at the factfile, or follow the arrows to read related entries.



INTRODUCTION

This provides a basic outline of the region covered.

FACTFILE

Factfiles provide the area, population, capital, languages and flag of each country

BOLD WORDS

These highlight useful words that do not have their own entry.

PAGE NUMBER

Page numbers are easy to find at the side of the page.

INDIA & SOUTHEAST ASIA

SOUTH

AFGHANISTAN	Area 652,230 sq km Pop. 28.875,297 Capital Kabul Languages Pashto, Dari
BANGLADESH	Area 147,584 sq km Pop. 143,574,025 Capital Dhaka Languages Bengali, English
BHUTAN	Area 38,394 sq km Population 708,427 Capital Thimphu Languages Dzongkha
INDIA	Area 2,973,193 sq km Population 1,091,727,900 Capital New Delhi Languages Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Urdu, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, English
INDONESIA	Area 1,919,440 sq km Population 234,299,999 Capital Jakarta Language Indonesian
NEPAL	Area 147,181 sq km Population 24,391,883 Capital Kathmandu Language Nepali
PAKISTAN	Area 797,075 sq km Pop. 167,342,211 Capital Islamabad Languages Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, English
SRI LANKA	Area 65,610 sq km Population 21,281,913 Capital Colombo Languages Sinhala, Tamil, English

INTRODUCTION
Bangkok The capital of Thailand on the banks of the Chao Phraya. In Thailand it is known as Krung Thep Maha Nakhon, meaning "city of angels".
Borneo The third largest island in the world, divided between Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia. It is covered mainly in rainforest. Tree felling in the area is seriously threatening wild animals, such as orang-utans, as it destroys their habitats.

FACTFILE
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BOLD WORDS
Ho Chi Minh City A major city and port on the south coast of Vietnam, formerly known as Saigon.
Indus A river that flows 3200 km from the Tibetan Plateau to the Arabian Sea. The Indus valley was the site of one of the world's first civilizations.
Irrawaddy The main river in Burma, which flows 2700 km through the country. It is an important waterway for commercial boats.
Karakoram Range A mountain range on the borders of Pakistan and India. It contains the second highest mountain in the world, K2, which is 8611 m high.
Khorat Plateau A region of flat, high land in northeast Thailand, used for farming.
Malay Peninsula A long, narrow area of land along the western edge of the South China Sea. It is occupied by Malaysia along with parts of Burma.
Mekong A river that flows 4180 km from Tibet through southern China, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam to the South China Sea. It forms the border between Laos, Burma and Thailand.

MAPS
A map on each page shows countries, cities and major geographical features.

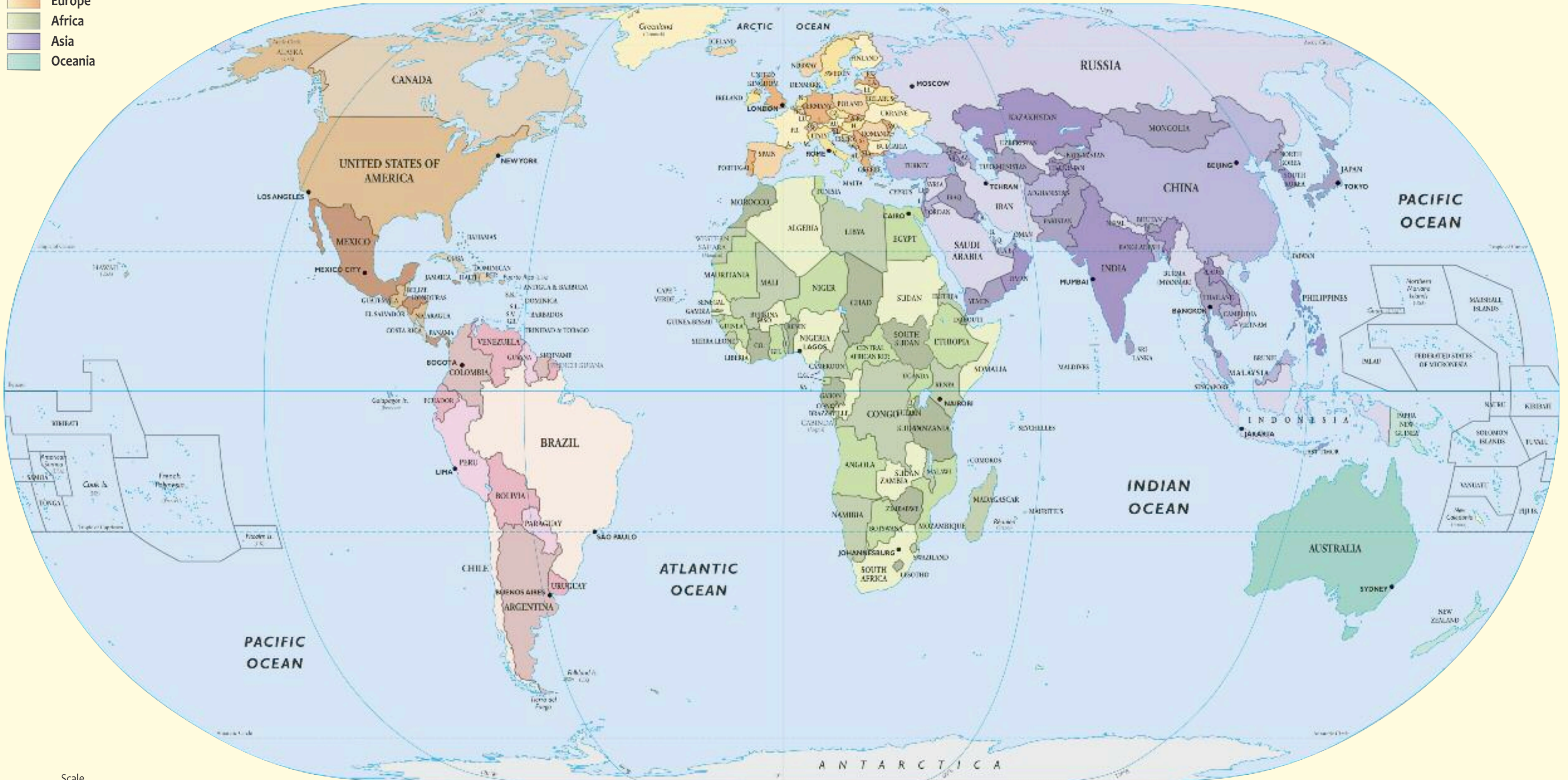
ARROWS
These arrows show you where to look up other words mentioned in the entry. For example, (→26) tells you to go forward to page 26 and (←6) tells you to turn back to page 6.

KEY WORDS AND ENTRIES
Key words are arranged alphabetically across each double page. Each entry provides a short explanation of what the key word means.

THE WORLD

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. Andorra | BU. Burundi | GH. Ghana | LI. Lithuania | R. Rwanda | S.L. St. Lucia |
| AL. Albania | CO. Côte d'Ivoire | GR. Grenada | LU. Luxembourg | S. San Marino | S.V. St. Vincent & the Grenadines |
| AR. Armenia | CR. Croatia | H. Hungary | MA. Macedonia | SA. São Tomé & Príncipe | T. Togo |
| AZ. Azerbaijan | CZ. Czech Republic | I. Israel | MN. Montenegro | SE. Serbia | U.A.E. United Arab Emirates |
| AU. Austria | E.G. Equatorial Guinea | K. Kuwait | M. Monaco | SK. Slovakia | V. Vatican City |
| B. Bahrain | ES. Estonia | LA. Latvia | MO. Moldova | SL. Slovenia | |
| BE. Belgium | FR. France | LE. Lebanon | N. Netherlands | SW. Switzerland | |
| BO. Bosnia and Herzegovina | GE. Georgia | L. Liechtenstein | Q. Qatar | S.K. St. Kitts and Nevis | |

- North America
- South America
- Europe
- Africa
- Asia
- Oceania



NORTH AMERICA

The continent of North America stretches from the Arctic islands of Greenland and northern Canada to the hot, tropical forests of Central America (►10). Canada and the United States of America take up around three-quarters of the continent. Before the first settlers arrived from Europe in the 16th century, the Native Americans were the only inhabitants of Canada and the USA. Today, most people in North America have ancestors from all parts of the world.

Alaska The largest state in the USA, separated from all other states by Canada.

Appalachian Mountains A mountain range in eastern North America, running 2500 km from New England to Alabama. Its highest peak, **Mt. Mitchell**, is 2037 m high.

California The third largest state in the USA. Located on the west coast, it has a warm, sunny climate. It lies on the San Andreas Fault, a giant crack in the Earth's surface.

Chicago A large city on the banks of Lake Michigan. It is the home of blues music and has some of the world's tallest skyscrapers.



CN tower



An Inuit **Great Plains** A large expanse of flat grasslands between the Mississippi lowlands and the Rocky Mountains.

Hawaii A state in the USA, consisting of 132 islands in the Pacific Ocean.

Inuit The native people of the Arctic regions of Canada, Greenland and Alaska. Other Arctic peoples are the Yupik and Aleut.

Los Angeles (LA) The largest city in California, with an urban population of 12.6 million. It is the home of Hollywood, the centre of the film industry in the USA.



The trunk of this giant sequoia tree in California is so broad that cars can drive through it

McKinley, Mount The highest mountain in North America, located in the state of Alaska. It is 6194 m high.

Mississippi The longest river in the USA, stretching 3730 km from Minnesota in the north to the Gulf of Mexico.

Native Americans The people that lived in North America thousands of years before Europeans arrived in the 16th century.

New England A region on the northeast coast of the USA. It was one of the earliest English settlements in North America.

New Orleans A city in Louisiana, near the mouth of the Mississippi. It is known for its festivals and music, especially jazz.

New York City The largest city in the USA, with an urban population of 19.3 million. Its skyline is dominated by skyscrapers.

CN tower A 553-metre-high tower in Toronto. It is a TV transmitter and a tourist attraction, with two observation decks.

Death Valley A deep desert valley in California, USA. It is the lowest, hottest and driest point in the country.

Eastern Seaboard The states along the eastern coast of the USA. It is the part of the country that was first settled by Europeans in the 16th century.

US Capitol building



Everglades A large area of wetlands in southern Florida. It is a haven for rare animals such as alligators and wading birds.

Golden Gate Bridge A long suspension bridge that crosses the entrance to the San Francisco Bay.

Grand Canyon A deep gorge in Arizona, carved out by the flow of the Colorado River. At its deepest, it is 1820 m deep.

Great Lakes Five large lakes formed from the meltwater of a prehistoric ice cap. Lake Superior, Huron, Erie and Ontario all lie on the USA-Canada border. Lake Michigan is entirely within the USA.



PACIFIC OCEAN

ARCTIC OCEAN

BAFFIN BAY

Scale 0 800 km

ATLANTIC OCEAN

Niagara Falls Two waterfalls formed where the Niagara River plunges 50 m over a cliff. The Horseshoe falls lie on the Canadian bank; the American Falls on the US bank. In the past, some daredevils have gone over the falls in barrels.

Ottawa The capital of Canada, situated on the Ottawa River in Ontario.

Québec The only predominantly French-speaking province of Canada.

Rocky Mountains A mountain range stretching 4830 km from northern Canada to the USA-Mexico border. Its highest peak, Mt. Elbert, is 4401 m high.

Golden Gate Bridge



Seattle The largest city in northwest USA, with an urban population of 2.7 million. It is home to many large corporations, including Boeing and Microsoft.

Sierra Nevada A mountain range in eastern California. Its highest point, Mt. Whitney, is 4421 m high.

Superior, Lake The largest lake in North America and the deepest of the Great Lakes.

Toronto The largest city in Canada, with an urban population of 5.4 million. It is built on the northwest shore of Lake Ontario.

US Capitol The meeting place of Congress, the legislative (law-making) branch of the US government. It is a domed building on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. The capital city of the United States of America and the home of the US government. It is not a part of any US state.

NATIONS



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



CANADA

CANADA Area 9,984,319 sq km Population 34,030,589 Capital Ottawa Languages English, French Religions Roman Catholic 43%, Protestant 23%, other 34% Currency Canadian dollar Main industries Wood, paper, metals, food, cars, chemicals, petroleum, telecommunications.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA Area 9,826,675 sq km Population 313,232,044 Capital Washington, D.C. Languages English, Spanish Religions Protestant 51%, Roman Catholic 24%, Judaism 2%, other 23% Currency US dollar Main industries Aircraft, cars, chemicals, computers, petroleum, steel, telecommunications, timber Major cities New York (19,378,102), Los Angeles (12,875,587), Chicago (9,524,673), Washington, D.C (8,241,912)

MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA

The countries that make up Central America form a link between the two continents of North and South America. To the north lies Mexico, a mountainous country bordering the USA. To the east lie the island nations of the Caribbean Sea. Central America has a tropical climate, and rainforest covers much of the uplands. The first European settlers of Mexico and Central America were Spanish, and Spanish is still the main language of the region today.

Antilles A group of islands that form the greater part of the Caribbean Islands. The Greater Antilles to the north and west, include the larger islands of Cuba and Jamaica. The Lesser Antilles to the south and east consist of smaller islands such as Grenada and Barbados.

Aztecs A people that dominated Central Mexico from 1200 to 1519. Their empire was based around the city of Tenochtitlán, where Mexico City stands today.

Baja California A long peninsula in northwest Mexico, separated from mainland Mexico by the Gulf of California.

Belize Barrier Reef A string of coral reefs along the coast of Belize. It is the second largest barrier reef in the world.

Caribbean Sea Part of the Atlantic Ocean lying between Central and South America and the Antilles islands. The warm waters of the Caribbean are full of wildlife.



Hand-weaving is an ancient Native American art, still practised in Mexico and Guatemala.

Central Mexican Plateau A large area of high, flat land in northern and central Mexico. It is mostly covered by desert.

Chichén Itzá A ruined ancient city on the Yucatán Peninsula, founded in AD 500 by the Maya civilization. It is famous for its stepped temple pyramids.

Guatemala City The capital of Guatemala, and the largest city in Central America. It has a population of around 1 million.

CENTRAL AMERICA



BELIZE Area 22,965 sq km Population 321,115 Capital Belmopan Language English, Spanish

COSTA RICA Area 51,100 sq km Population 4,576,562 Capital San José Language Spanish

EL SALVADOR Area 21,041 sq km Population 6,071,774 Capital San Salvador Language Spanish

GUATEMALA Area 108,889 sq km Population 13,824,463 Capital Guatemala City Language Spanish

HONDURAS Area 112,090 sq km Population 8,143,564 Capital Tegucigalpa Language Spanish

MEXICO Area 19,64,375 sq km Population 113,724,226 Capital Mexico City Language Spanish

NICARAGUA Area 130,370 sq km Population 5,666,301 Capital Managua Languages Spanish, English

PANAMA Area 75,420 sq km Population 3,460,462 Capital Panama City Language Spanish

Gulf of Mexico Part of the Atlantic Ocean, almost completely enclosed by the United States, Mexico and the island of Cuba.

Maya A civilization that flourished around the Yucatán Peninsula from the 3rd century BC to the 10th century AD. They built cities with stepped temple pyramids.

Mestizos People with both Spanish and Native American ancestors. Many of the people in Mexico and Central America are mestizos.



Arenal, a volcano in Costa Rica

Mexico City The capital of Mexico, and one of the largest cities in the world, with a population of 19.3 million. Located at about 2200 m above sea level, it is rimmed by mountains to the south and east.

Nicaragua, Lake The largest lake in Central America. It is the only freshwater lake in the world to contain oceanic wildlife, such as sharks and swordfish.

Panama Canal A man-made channel linking the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. The 64-kilometre-long canal was opened in 1915 and has six locks.



Steel band music is popular in Caribbean Islands.

Panama, Isthmus of A narrow strip of land joining the continents of North and South America and dividing the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

Pyramid of the Sun A huge pyramid built 2000 years ago in what is now central Mexico by the Teotihuacán civilization.

Rio Grande A river that flows 3051 km from Colorado in the USA to the Gulf of Mexico. For much of its length, the Rio Grande forms the border between the USA and Mexico.

Sierra Madre Two mountain ranges—the Occidental to the west and the Oriental to the east—that bound the Central Mexican Plateau. Their highest peak, Cerro San Rafael, is about 3710 m high.

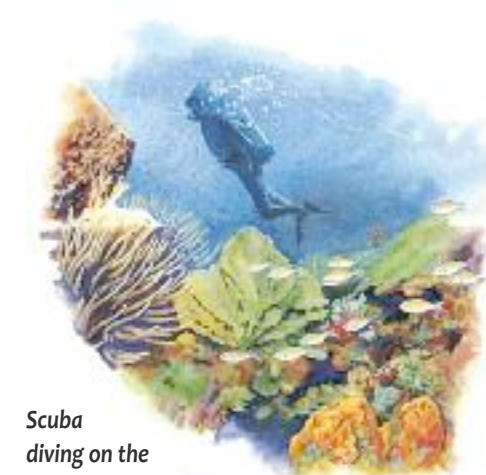


Panama Canal

Tikal An ancient city in Guatemala, which was once a centre of the Maya civilization. It contains five stepped pyramid temples as well as several large palaces

West Indies A group of island nations grouped around the eastern Caribbean Sea, so-called because European explorers originally thought they were part of Asia. The West Indies include the Lesser and Greater Antilles and the Bahamas.

Yucatán Peninsula A wide peninsula in southeastern Mexico, separating the Gulf of Mexico from the Caribbean Sea.



Scuba diving on the Belize Barrier Reef

CARIBBEAN



ANGUILLA Area 91 sq km Population 15,094 Capital The Valley Language English

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA Area 442 sq km Pop. 87,884 Capital St. John's Language English

BAHAMAS Area 10,010 sq km Population 313,312 Capital Nassau Language English

BARBADOS Area 430 sq km Population 286,705 Capital Bridgetown Language English

BERMUDA Area 54 sq km Population 68,679 Capital Hamilton Language English

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS Area 151 sq km Pop. 25,383 Capital Road Town Language English

CUBA Area 109,820 sq km Population 11,087,330 Capital Havana Language Spanish

DOMINICA Area 751 sq km Population 72,969 Capital Roseau Languages English, Creole

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC Area 48,320 sq km Population 9,956,648 Capital Santo Domingo Language Spanish

GRENADA Area 344 sq km Population 108,419 Capital St. George's Languages English, French patois

GADELOUPE Area 1629 sq km Population 405,500 Capital Basse-Terre Languages French, Creole

HAITI Area 27,560 sq km Population 9,719,932 Capital Port-au-Prince Languages French, Creole

JAMAICA Area 10,831 sq km Population 2,868,380 Capital Kingston Language English

MARTINIQUE Area 1128 sq km Population 436,131 Capital Fort-de-France Languages French, Creole

MONTSERAT Area 102 sq km Population 5,140 Capital Plymouth Language English

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES Area 800 sq km Pop. 199,929 Capital Willemstad Languages Dutch, Papiamentu

PUERTO RICO Area 8870 sq km Pop. 3,989,133 Capital San Juan Languages Spanish, English

ST. KITTS AND NEVIS Area 261 sq km Population 50,314 Capital Basseterre Language English

ST. LUCIA Area 616 sq km Population 161,557 Capital Castries Languages English, French patois

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES Area 389 sq km Pop. 103,869 Capital Kingstown Language English

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO 5127 sq km Pop. 1,227,505 Capital Port of Spain Languages English, French, Spanish, Hindi, Chinese

VIRGIN ISLANDS Area 346 sq km Pop. 109,666 Capital Charlotte Amalie Languages English, Spanish, Creole

SOUTH AMERICA

South America reaches from the tropical coast of the Caribbean to the icy seas of the Antarctic. Running the length of the continent in the west are the Andes Mountains. To the east lie vast river basins. Most of South America's farmland and cities are in the east, in southeastern Brazil and northern Argentina.

Altiplano A high plain of land in western South America. It is a level, semi-desert plain surrounded by the Andes Mountains and grazed by llamas and vicunas.

Amazon The second longest river in the world, flowing about 6510 km from the Andes, through Peru and Brazil to the Atlantic Ocean. It carries more than one fifth of the world's fresh water.

Amazon Basin A vast lowland area between the Andes and the Brazilian Highlands. It has a hot, wet climate.

Amazon rainforest The largest area of rainforest in the world, stretching across the Amazon Basin. It is home to more than one-fifth of all the plant and animal species in the world.



A native of the Amazon rainforest

Atacama Desert A desert in western Chile between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean. It is one of the driest places in the world.

Bogotá The capital of Colombia, sited 2265 m above sea level. It has a population of 8.3 million.

Brazilian Highlands A region of hills and mountains in the east of the country. They stretch from tropical forests in the north to the drier climate of the south.

Buenos Aires The capital of Argentina and the third largest city in South America, with a population of 13 million. It is the birthplace of tango music and dance.



Machu Picchu

Galápagos Islands A group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, off the coast of Ecuador. It is famous for its unique wildlife, including marine iguanas, penguins and giant tortoises.

Gran Chaco A dry scrubland covering northern Argentina and Paraguay.

Iguaçu Falls A series of waterfalls on the Argentina-Brazil border. Many of the falls are broken by rocky ledges that throw spray into the air and create rainbows.

La Paz The capital of Bolivia and the highest capital city in the world, located at 3650 m above sea level.

Llanos A grassland plain north of the Amazon. During the rainy season, it can flood under up to a metre of rainwater.



Angel Falls

Machu Picchu An ancient city in the Andes. It was built in the 15th century as a summer retreat for the Inca emperors. Lying 2000 m above sea level, the ruined city was discovered by explorers only in 1911.

Sugarloaf Mountain stands at the entrance to Rio de Janeiro harbour.



Reed boats are still used on Lake Titicaca

Maracaibo, Lake A bay on the coast of Venezuela, almost entirely surrounded by land. A narrow neck of water opens on to the Caribbean Sea.

Mato Grosso Plateau A high plain of land in central Brazil, between the Amazon and the River Paraguay.

Orinoco A river in South America, flowing 2140 km from Venezuela, through the Llanos lowlands, to the Atlantic.

Pampas A grassland area of Argentina and Uruguay, used largely for grazing cattle.

Paraná The second longest river in South America. It flows 4880 km from Brazil, through Paraguay and Argentina, emerging as the Rio de la Plata and flowing into the Atlantic Ocean.

Patagonia A region of dry scrublands and desert in the south of Argentina and Chile. With few inhabitants, it is used mostly for grazing animals.

NATIONS



ARGENTINA Area 2,736,690 sq km Pop. 41,769,726 Capital Buenos Aires Language Spanish

BOLIVIA Area 1,083,301 sq km Pop. 10,118,683 Capital La Paz Languages Spanish, Quechua, Aymara

BRAZIL Area 8,459,417 sq km Population 203,429,773 Capital Brasília Language Portuguese

CHILE Area 743,812 sq km Population 16,888,760 Capital Santiago Language Spanish

COLOMBIA Area 1,038,700 sq km Pop. 44,725,543 Capital Bogotá Language Spanish

ECUADOR Area 276,841 sq km Pop. 15,007,343 Capital Quito Languages Spanish, Quechua

FRENCH GUIANA Area 89,150 sq km Pop. 229,000 Capital Cayenne Languages French, Creole

GUYANA Area 196,849 sq km Pop. 744,768 Capital Georgetown Languages English, Hindi, Urdu

PARAGUAY Area 397,302 sq km Population 6,459,058 Capital Asunción Languages Spanish, Guaraní

PERU Area 1,279,996 sq km Population 29,248,943 Capital Lima Languages Spanish, Quechua, Aymara

SURINAME Area 156,000 sq km Population 491,989 Capital Paramaribo Languages Dutch, Hindi, Javanese

URUGUAY Area 175,015 sq km Population 3,308,535 Capital Montevideo Language Spanish

VENEZUELA Area 882,050 sq km Population 27,635,743 Capital Caracas Language Spanish

Rio de Janeiro The second largest city in Brazil, with a population of 11.8 million. Located by a natural harbour, the city is famous for a 40-metre-tall statue of Christ the Redeemer, atop Corcovado Mountain.

São Paulo The largest city in Brazil and in South America, with a population of nearly 20 million. Around the city, poor people live in crowded shantytowns known as *favelas*.

Titicaca, Lake The largest lake in South America, lying between Peru and Bolivia. It is 3811 m above sea level, and is the highest lake in the world that can be navigated by large ships.

NORTH AFRICA

Africa is the second largest continent after Asia. The north of the continent is dominated by the hot, barren Sahara Desert, edged with coastal areas that are cooler and wetter in winter. Further south, the desert gives way to a strip of semi-arid land, and then to vast areas of flat grassland. West Africa has a wetter climate and large areas of tropical rainforest.

Addis Ababa The capital of Ethiopia, in the Ethiopian Highlands. It has a population of about 8.7 million.

Ahaggar An area of flat-topped mountains in the centre of the Sahara.

Atlas Mountains A mountain range stretching about 2000 km along the northeastern edge of the Sahara.

Berbers The ancient native people of North Africa, west of the Nile. Today they live mostly in the uplands of Morocco.

Cairo The capital of Egypt, built on the banks of the River Nile. It is the largest city in Africa, with a population of around 17 million.



Round houses in a Côte d'Ivoire village

Cameroon, Mount. The highest peak in West and Central Africa, at 4095 m high. It is a volcano that last erupted in 2000.

Chad, Lake A large, shallow lake on the southern edge of the Sahara. It provides freshwater to more millions of people, but has shrunk considerably in the last 50 years.

Ethiopian Highlands A mountainous area in Ethiopia and Eritrea. It has a temperate climate with a rainy season. Its highest point, Ras Dahan, is 4550 m high.

WEST



BENIN Area 110,622 sq km Population 9,325,032 Capital Porto-Novo Language French

BURKINA FASO Area 273,800 sq km Pop. 16,751,455 Capital Ouagadougou Languages French, Mossi

CAMEROON Area 472,710 sq km Population 19,711,291 Capital Yaoundé Languages French, English

CAPE VERDE Area 4033 sq km Pop. 516,100 Capital Praia Languages Portuguese, Crioulo

CÔTE D'IVOIRE Area 318,003 sq km Pop. 21,504,162 Capitals Yamoussoukro Languages French, Malinke

EQUATORIAL GUINEA Area 28,051 sq km Pop. 668,225 Capital Malabo Language Spanish

GAMBIA Area 10,380 sq km Population 1,797,860 Capital Banjul Language English

GHANA Area 227,533 sq km Population 24,791,073 Capital Accra Languages English, Kwa languages

GUINEA Area 245,717 sq km Population 10,601,009 Capital Conakry Language Portuguese

GUINEA-BISSAU Area 28,120 sq km Pop. 1,596,677 Capital Bissau Language Portuguese

LIBERIA Area 96,320 sq km Pop. 3,786,764 Capital Monrovia Language English

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE Area 964 sq km Pop. 179,506 Capital São Tomé Language French

SENEGAL Area 192,530 sq km Population 12,643,799 Capital Dakar Language French

SIERRA LEONE Area 71,620 sq km Pop. 5,363,669 Capital Freetown Languages English, Krio, Mende, Limba, Temne

TOGO Area 54,385 sq km Population 6,771,993 Capital Lomé Languages French, Kabiye

A Berber girl from Morocco



Giza An Egyptian city on the west bank of the Nile from Cairo. It is the site of the Great Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, built around 4500 years ago.

Guinea Highlands A high plateau stretching from southeastern Guinea to Côte D'Ivoire and covered in dense forest.

Horn of Africa The horn-shaped region of East Africa that juts out into the Indian Ocean. It includes the countries of Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia.

Lagos The former capital of Nigeria, and the second largest city in Africa. It has a population of about 10 million.

Maghreb The northwest region of Africa, encompassing the Atlas Mountains and the coast of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

Nasser, Lake An enormous reservoir, created in the 1960s when the Aswan Dam was built across the Nile. The dam controls the flooding of the Nile downstream.

Niger The third longest river in Africa. It flows 4180 km from the Guinea Highlands forming a large delta at its mouth in the Gulf of Guinea.

Nile The longest river in the world, flowing 6650 km from the highlands to the west of Lake Victoria (17) to the Mediterranean Sea. Five thousand years ago, the fertile Nile valley was the setting for the great civilization of ancient Egypt.

Red Sea A sea separating northeastern Africa from the Arabian Peninsula.

Sahara Desert A bare, rocky desert stretching across Northern Africa. About the size of the USA, it is the largest hot desert in the world.

Sahel A strip of grassland to the south of the Sahara. It is relatively dry and suffers from frequent droughts, devastating for the population who farm the land.

Sudd A large swamp in South Sudan formed by part of the Nile. It is so thick with floating vegetation that some boats carry saws in order to clear a channel.



Abu Simbel in Egypt, built in the 13th century BC

Suez Canal A canal, opened in 1869, that cuts across the narrow strip of land dividing the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.

Tibesti Mountains A mountain range in the Sahara. The highest peak is the volcano Emi Koussi, which is 3415 m high.

Volta, Lake The largest reservoir in the world, built in Ghana in the 1960s. It is filled with water from the White and Black Volta Rivers, held back by the Akosombo Dam.

A village built around an oasis in Egypt



NORTH



ALGERIA Area 2,381,741 sq km Population 34,994,937 Capital Algiers Languages Arabic, French

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC Area 622,984 sq km Pop. 4,950,027 Capital Bangui Languages French, Sango

CHAD Area 1,259,200 sq km Population 10,758,945 Capital N'Djamena Languages French, Arabic

DJIBOUTI Area 23,180 sq km Population 757,074 Capital Djibouti Languages Arabic, French

EGYPT Area 995,450 sq km Population 82,079,636 Capital Cairo Language Arabic

ERITREA Area 101,000 sq km Population 5,939,484 Capital Asmara Language Tigrinya

ETHIOPIA Area 1,000,000 sq km Pop. 90,873,739 Capital Addis Ababa Language Amharic

LIBYA Area 1,759,540 sq km Population 6,597,960 Capital Tripoli Language Arabic

MALI Area 1,220,190 sq km Population 14,159,904 Capital Bamako Language French

MAURITANIA Area 1,030,700 sq km Pop. 3,281,634 Capital Nouakchott Languages Arabic, Poular, Wolof

MOROCCO Area 446,300 sq km Pop. 31,968,361 Capital Rabat Languages Arabic, Berber, Spanish, French

NIGER Area 1,266,700 sq km Pop. 16,468,886 Capital Niamey Languages French, Hausa, Djerma

NIGERIA Area 910,768 sq km Population 155,215,573 Capital Abuja Languages English, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo

SOMALIA Area 627,337 sq km Pop. 9,925,640 Capital Mogadishu Languages Somali, Arabic, English, Italian

SUDAN Area 1,861,484 sq km Population about 44 million Capital Khartoum Languages Arabic, English

SUDAN, SOUTH Area 644,329 sq km Population about 10 million Capital Khartoum Languages Arabic, English

TUNISIA Area 155,360 sq km Population 10,629,186 Capital Tunis Languages Arabic, Berber, French



SOUTHERN AFRICA

Much of central Africa is occupied by the tropical rainforest of the Congo Basin, through which the River Congo winds. To the south and east is a high plateau. This dry region is covered mostly in grassland, called savannah, home to grazing animals, such as giraffes, zebras and elephants. Further east lies the Great Rift Valley. In the southwest, grassland gives way to desert. The extreme south has a climate similar to that in Mediterranean lands.

A Maasai woman from East Africa. The Maasai wear the same beautiful ornaments that their ancestors did centuries ago.



African Great Lakes A series of lakes around the Great Rift Valley. They include Lake Victoria, Tanganyika, Malawi, Turkana, Albert, Kivu and Edward.

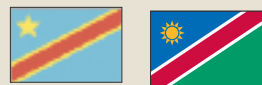
Bié Plateau A region of high, flat land occupying most of central Angola at a height of around 1500 m.

Cape of Good Hope A rocky headland near the southern tip of Africa. It is named because it is the point at which a ship sailing from Europe to India starts to sail east.

SOUTHERN



GABON ANGOLA REPUBLIC OF CONGO



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO NAMIBIA

ANGOLA Area 1,246,700 sq km Pop. 13,338,541 Capital Luanda Languages Bantu, Portuguese

CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF (DRC) Area 2,267,048 sq km Population 71,712,867 Capitals Kinshasa Languages Swahili, Lingala, French

CONGO, REPUBLIC OF Area 341,500 sq km Population 4,243,929 Capital Brazzaville Language French

GABON Area 257,667 sq km Population 1,576,665 Capital Libreville Languages Bantu, Fang, French

NAMIBIA Area 823,290 sq km Pop. 2,147,585 Capital Windhoek Languages English, Afrikaans, German

Cape Agulhas The most southerly point of Africa. It is officially the dividing point between the Atlantic and Indian oceans.

Cape Town The second largest city in South Africa, near the Cape of Good Hope. It has a population of around 3.4 million.

Congo Basin A vast lowland area around the River Congo. It contains the second largest rainforest in the world, home to animals such as the mountain gorilla.

Congo The second longest river in Africa, with a total length of 4700 km and some channels as deep as 230 m.

Copper Belt An area of land in northern Zambia and southern DRC, well known for its rich copper resources.

Drakensberg A mountain range stretching about 1000 km along the southeastern coast of Africa.

Great Rift Valley A long "crack" in the Earth's surface, running through East Africa. The valley is some 5000 km long. Deep valleys, volcanoes and huge lakes have formed along the Great Rift Valley.

Johannesburg The largest city in South Africa, with a population of 3.6 million. It is home to a rich trade in gold and diamonds, mined from the Witwatersrand hills.

Kalahari Desert A desert in southern Africa covering much of Botswana and parts of Namibia and South Africa.

Karoo An arid region that occupies the western part of South Africa.

Kenya, Mount The second highest African mountain, at 5199 m. It is an extinct volcano, topped with snow and glaciers.

Kilimanjaro, Mount An inactive volcano in eastern Tanzania. At 5895 m, it is the highest mountain in Africa.

Kinshasa The capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is the third largest city in Africa, with a population of 8.4 million.



Victoria Falls

Madagascar A large island off the southeastern coast of Africa. Its wildlife includes species found nowhere else, such as lemurs.

Namib Desert A cool desert stretching along the southwestern coast of Namibia.

Orange The longest river in South Africa, flowing 2200 km from the Drakensberg to the Atlantic Ocean.

Rwenzori Mountains A mountain range on the border between Uganda and the DRC. Reaching heights of 5109 m, its peaks are among the few in Africa to be covered with snow all year round.



Giraffes roaming the savannah grasslands

Savannah Dry grasslands covering much of southern Africa. National parks protect their wildlife, such as giraffes and zebras, and attract thousands of tourists each year.

Tanganyika, Lake The longest freshwater lake in the world, at 660 km long.

Victoria Falls A waterfall on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe, where River Zambezi drops 128 metres. It is known to the local people as Mosi-oa-Tunya, meaning "the smoke that thunders".

Victoria, Lake The largest lake in Africa, which feeds into the River Nile.



Flat-topped Table Mountain overlooks Cape Town, South Africa.

EASTERN



KENYA UGANDA TANZANIA



RWANDA BURUNDI MALAWI



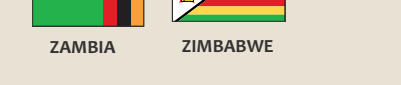
MOZAMBIQUE SEYCHELLES COMOROS



BOTSWANA SOUTH AFRICA LESOTHO



SWAZILAND MADAGASCAR MAURITIUS



ZAMBIA ZIMBABWE

BOTSWANA Area 566,730 sq km Population 2,065,398 Capital Gaborone Languages Setswana, English

BURUNDI Area 25,680 sq km Population 10,216,190 Capital Bujumbura Languages Kirundi, Swahili, Arabic, French

COMOROS Area 2235 sq km Population 794,683 Capital Moroni Languages Arabic, French

KENYA Area 569,140 sq km Population 41,070,934 Capital Nairobi Languages Swahili, Kikuyu, Luo, English

LESOTHO Area 30,355 sq km Pop. 1,924,886 Capital Maseru Languages Sesotho, Zulu, Xhosa, English

MALAWI Area 94,081 sq km Pop. 15,879,252 Capital Lilongwe Languages Chichewa, English

MADAGASCAR Area 581,540 sq km Population 21,926,221 Capital Antananarivo Languages Malagasy, French, English

MAURITIUS Area 2030 sq km Population 1,303,717 Capital Port Louis Languages English, Creole

MOZAMBIQUE Area 786,380 sq km Population 22,948,858 Capital Maputo Languages Ronga, Shangaan, Muchope, Portuguese

RWANDA Area 24,668 sq km Pop. 11,370,425 Capital Kigali Languages Kinyarwanda, Swahili, English, French

SEYCHELLES Area 455 sq km Population 89,188 Capital Victoria Languages English, Creole

SOUTH AFRICA Area 1,214,470 sq km Pop. 49,004,031 Capitals Pretoria, Cape Town Language Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans, English

SWAZILAND Area 17,204 sq km Population 1,370,424 Capital Mbabane Languages siSwati, English

TANZANIA Area 885,800 sq km Pop. 42,746,620 Capital Dodoma Languages Swahili, English

UGANDA Area 197,100 sq km Population 34,612,250 Capital Kampala Languages Luganda, English

ZAMBIA Area 743,398 sq km Population 13,881,336 Capital Lusaka Languages Lozi, English

ZIMBABWE Area 386,847 sq km Population 12,084,304 Capital Harare Languages Shona, Ndebele, English

WESTERN & NORTHERN EUROPE

The continent of Europe is actually the western part of a single landmass that also includes Asia. In the north, Europe borders the Arctic Ocean. In the west, the Atlantic Ocean brings cooling breezes in summer, but also mild weather in winter. Further south, beyond the mountains of the Pyrenees and the Alps, lie the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Western Europe is, for the most part, densely populated. Only a few large areas of uninhabited land remain in the north.

Alps A mountain range stretching from the Mediterranean coast of France to Central Europe. The highest peak is Mont Blanc in France, which is 4807 m high.

Apennines A mountain range stretching nearly 1400 km down the centre of the Italian Peninsula.

Baltic Sea Part of the Atlantic Ocean enclosed by the Scandinavian Peninsula and the rest of Europe.

Berlin The capital of Germany, in the east of the country. It was once divided into East and West by the Berlin Wall, which came down in 1989.

British Isles The group of islands off the northwestern coast of Europe. They include Britain, Ireland and other small island groups.

Brussels The capital of Belgium and the European Union.



Venice

English Channel Part of the Atlantic Ocean that separates Great Britain from mainland Europe. At its narrowest point, it is only 34 km wide.

Iberian Peninsula Part of southwestern Europe that separates the Atlantic Ocean from the Mediterranean. It is shared by Spain and Portugal.

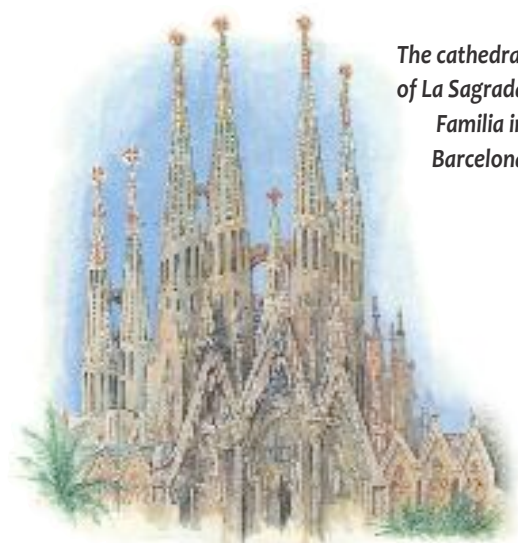


A scene in the Netherlands

Italian Peninsula A boot-shaped area of land bordered by the Mediterranean Sea on three sides.

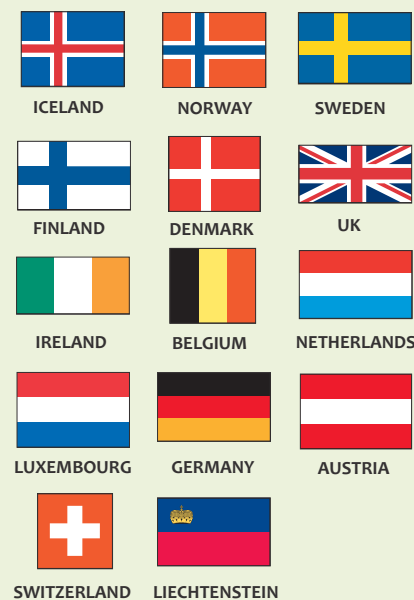
Loire The longest river in France, flowing 1015 km from the Cévennes Mountains in the south to the Atlantic Ocean. The Loire Valley is dotted with vineyards, orchards and chateaux (castles).

London The capital of the United Kingdom, built on the River Thames in south-east England. It is home to many historic buildings, such as the Tower of London and Houses of Parliament.



The cathedral of La Sagrada Familia in Barcelona

NORTHWEST



AUSTRIA Area 82,445 sq km Population 8,217,280 Capital Vienna Language German

BELGIUM Area 30,278 sq km Pop. 10,431,477 Capital Brussels Languages Dutch (Flemish), French, German

DENMARK Area 42,434 sq km Pop. 5,529,888 Capital Copenhagen Language Danish

FINLAND Area 303,815 sq km Population 5,259,250 Capital Helsinki Languages Finnish, Swedish

GERMANY Area 348,672 sq km Population 81,471,834 Capital Berlin Language German

ICELAND Area 100,250 sq km Population 311,058 Capital Reykjavik Language Icelandic

IRELAND Area 68,883 sq km Population 4,670,976 Capital Dublin Languages English, Irish

LIECHTENSTEIN Area 160 sq km Population 35,236 Capital Vaduz Language German

LUXEMBOURG Area 2586 sq km Population 503,302 Capital Luxembourg Languages German, Letzeburgesch, French

NETHERLANDS Area 33,893 sq km Pop. 16,847,007 Capitals Amsterdam, The Hague Language Dutch

NORWAY Area 304,282 sq km Population 4,691,849 Capital Oslo Language Norwegian

SWEDEN Area 410,335 sq km Pop. 9,088,728 Capital Stockholm Languages Swedish, Finnish, Lappish

SWITZERLAND Area 39,997 sq km Pop. 7,639,961 Capital Bern Languages German, French, Italian

UNITED KINGDOM Area 241,930 sq km Pop. 62,698,362 Capital London Languages English, Welsh

Madrid The capital of Spain, built on a high plateau in the centre of Spain. It is most famous for its football team.

Massif Central A range of mountains and high plateaus in central France, including around 450 extinct volcanoes.

Mediterranean Sea The sea that lies between Africa, Europe and Asia. It is linked to the Atlantic by the Strait of Gibraltar.

Pyrenees A mountain range that stretches 430 km from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean Sea. The highest peak is Aneto, in Spain, which is 3404 m high.

Rhine A river flowing 1233 km from the Swiss Alps to the North Sea. It is one of Europe's most important waterways.

Rhône A river flowing 813 km from Switzerland, through France to the Mediterranean Sea.

Rome The capital of Italy, built on the River Tiber. It was once the capital of the Roman Empire, and many ancient buildings still stand in the city.

Paris The capital of France, on the banks of the Seine. It is home to many famous monuments, such as the Eiffel Tower.

Scandinavia The countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Together with Finland, Greenland and Iceland, they form the Nordic countries.

Seine The second longest river in France, flowing 776 km through Paris and into the English Channel.

Vatican City The smallest independent state in the world with a population of 829. Lying within the city of Rome, it is home to the Pope, the head of the Catholic Church.

SOUTHWEST



ANDORRA Area 468 sq km Population 84,825 Capital Andorra Language Catalan

FRANCE Area 549,970 sq km Population 65,312,249 Capital Paris Language French

ITALY Area 294,140 sq km Population 61,016,804 Capital Rome Language Italian

MALTA Area 316 sq km Population 408,333 Capital Valletta Languages Maltese, English, Italian

MONACO Area 2 sq km Population 30,539 Capital Monaco Language French

PORTUGAL Area 91,470 sq km Population 10,760,305 Capital Lisbon Language Portuguese

SAN MARINO Area 61 sq km Population 31,817 Capital San Marino Language Italian

SLOVENIA Area 20,151 sq km Pop. 2,000,092 Capital Ljubljana Languages Slovene

SPAIN Area 498,980 sq km Pop. 46,754,784 Capital Madrid Languages Spanish, Catalan, Basque, Galician

VATICAN CITY STATE Area 0.44 sq km Population 829 Capital Vatican City Languages Latin, Italian

Venice An Italian city built on islands in a shallow bay. Instead of streets it has canals, and instead of cars, water buses and gondolas ferry people from place to place.



Brandenburg Gate in Berlin



CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE

The northern part of Central and Eastern Europe is mostly low-lying, arable land. Further south, the forested Sudetes and Carpathian Mountains curve across the region, but the fertile lowlands surrounding the River Danube are planted with crops. Some of the countries on the Mediterranean coast are popular tourist destinations.

The Parliament Building of Hungary stands on the eastern bank of the River Danube in Budapest.



Aegean Sea Part of the Mediterranean Sea that lies between Turkey and Greece.

Athens The capital of Greece. At the heart of the city is the flat-topped Acropolis, where several ancient temples stood.

Balaton, Lake The largest lake in Central Europe, also known as the Hungarian Sea.

Balkan Mountains A mountain range that stretches 550 km across Bulgaria to the Black Sea. Its highest point is Botev Peak, which is 2376 m high.

Black Sea A sea almost completely enclosed by Eastern Europe, Russia and Turkey.

Bosporus A narrow channel of water that divides Europe and Asia and connects the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

Bucharest The capital of Romania. Once known as the “Paris of the East” because of its French-style architecture, today it is a major centre of industry.

Budapest The capital of Hungary, situated on the banks of the Danube River. It is Europe’s largest spa town with more than 100 natural hot springs.



Alexander Nevski Cathedral in Sofia, Bulgaria

Carpathian Mountains The second longest mountain range in Europe, stretching over 1500 km from the Czech Republic to the Iron Gate. Its highest point is Gerlach Peak in Slovenia, which is 2655 m high.

Isthmus of Corinth A strip of land joining the Peloponnese Peninsula to mainland Greece. It is cut across by the Corinth Canal.

Danube The second longest river in Europe, flowing 2860 km from western Germany to the Black Sea in the Ukraine.

Dardanelles A narrow body of water linking the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara.

Dinarides A mountain range spanning 645 km from Croatia to Montenegro. Its highest point is Maja Jezercë in Albania, which is 2694 m high.



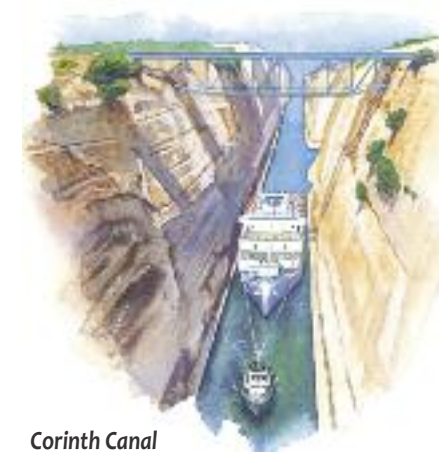
Ancient Greek ruins in Delphi

Dnieper A river that flows 2290 km from Russia, through Belarus and the Ukraine to the Black Sea.

Iron Gate A deep gorge through which the Danube flows. It forms part of the Romanian-Serbian border.

Kiev The capital of Ukraine and one of the largest cities in Eastern Europe, with a population of 2.8 million.

Odesa A major industrial port on the south coast of Ukraine.



Corinth Canal

Pannonian Plain A lowland area in Central Europe, bordered by the Alps, Carpathians and Dinarides.

SOUTHEAST



CROATIA	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	MONTENEGRO
SERBIA	MACEDONIA	ALBANIA
BULGARIA	ROMANIA	GREECE
CYPRUS	ALBANIA Area 27,398 sq km Population 2,994,667 Capital Tiranë Language Albanian	
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA Area 51,187 sq km Pop. 4,622,163 Capital Sarajevo Language Serbo-Croat		
BULGARIA Area 108,489 sq km Population 7,093,635 Capital Sofia Languages Bulgarian, Turkish		
CROATIA Area 55,974 sq km Population 4,483,804 Capital Zagreb Language Serbo-Croat		
CYPRUS Area 9241 sq km Population 1,120,489 Capital Nicosia Languages Greek, Turkish, English		
GREECE Area 130,647 sq km Population 10,760,136 Capital Athens Language Greek		
MACEDONIA Area 25,433 sq km Population 2,077,328 Capital Skopje Languages Macedonian, Albanian		
MONTENEGRO Area 13,452 sq km Population 661,807 Capital Podgorica Languages Montenegrin, Serbian		
ROMANIA Area 229,891 sq km Pop. 21,904,551 Capital Bucharest Languages Romanian, Hungarian, German		
SERBIA Area 77,474 sq km Pop. 7,310,555 Capital Belgrade Languages Serbo-Croat, Albanian, Hungarian		

Prague The capital of the Czech Republic, on the banks of the Vltava River. The city is overlooked by Prague Castle.

Pripet Marshes A vast region of low-lying marshes in southern Belarus and northern Ukraine, surrounding the River Pripet.

Sudetes A mountain range stretching from eastern Germany to the Czech Republic. The highest point is 1602 m high.

Warsaw The capital of Poland and its cultural and educational centre, with many universities, libraries and museums.



EASTERN



HUNGARY	CZECH REPUBLIC	SLOVAKIA
POLAND	LITHUANIA	LATVIA
ESTONIA	BELARUS	UKRAINE
MOLDOVA	CZECH REPUBLIC Area 77,247 sq km Pop. 10,190,213 Capital Prague Language Czech	
ESTONIA Area 42,388 sq km Population 1,282,963 Capital Tallinn Languages Estonian, Russian		
HUNGARY Area 89,608 sq km Population 9,976,062 Capital Budapest Language Hungarian		
LATVIA Area 62,249 sq km Population 2,204,708 Capital Riga Languages Latvian, Russian		
LITHUANIA Area 62,680 sq km Population 3,535,547 Capital Vilnius Languages Lithuanian, Russian, Polish		
MOLDOVA Area 32,891 sq km Population 4,314,377 Capital Chisinau Languages Romanian (Moldovan), Ukrainian, Russian		
POLAND Area 304,255 sq km Population 38,441,588 Capital Warsaw Language Polish		
SLOVAKIA Area 48,105 sq km Population 5,477,038 Capital Bratislava Languages Slovak, Hungarian, Czech		
UKRAINE Area 579,330 sq km Population 45,134,707 Capital Kiev Languages Ukrainian, Russian		



Prague castle

RUSSIA & CENTRAL ASIA

Straddling two continents, Europe and Asia, Russia is the largest country in the world. Most Russians live west of the Ural Mountains in the European part, many in big cities such as Moscow. Bordered by Russia to the north, China to the east and the Middle East to the south, lie the Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. South of the Caucasus Mountains are Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, in a region occupied by fertile mountain valleys.

Amur A river flowing 2824 km along the border between Russia and northern China.

Aral Sea A saltwater lake on the border between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In recent years, the waters flowing into the Aral sea have been diverted to irrigate crops, causing large parts of it to dry up.

St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow



Baykal, Lake The deepest lake in the world, located in the far east of Russia. It contains around one-fifth of the world's total amount of fresh water.

Balkhash, Lake A large lake in eastern Kazakhstan. It is all that remains of a sea that once covered much of Central Asia.

Caspian Sea The largest lake in the world with a surface area of 371,000 square km. It is named after the Caspi, the ancient people who lived on its southern shore.



A train on the Trans-Siberian Railway

Caucasus Mountains A mountain range stretching 1100 km from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea. Its highest point is Europe's highest mountain, **Mt. Elbrus**, which is 5642 m high.

Karakum Desert A desert in Central Asia, east of the Caspian Sea. It covers 70% of Turkmenistan.

Kamchatka Peninsula Part of northeast Russia that juts out into the Pacific Ocean. The peninsula contains around 160 volcanoes, 29 of which are still active. The highest is Klyuchevskoi, the largest active volcano in the Northern Hemisphere

Kuril Islands A chain of 56 volcanic islands stretching between the Kamchatka Peninsula and Japan.

Kyzyl Kum A desert stretching from the Aral Sea to the Pamir Mountains, covering parts of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.



The Motherland statue in Volgograd, Russia is an 80-metre-tall monument to a battle in World War II.

Lena A river in eastern Siberia that flows 4400 km to the Arctic Ocean. The Lena Basin is rich in gold and diamonds.

Moscow Russia's capital, the largest city in Europe, with a population of 10.5 million. At its heart is the Kremlin, a medieval fortress, now home to Russia's president.

Ob A major river in western Siberia, flowing 2962 km into the Arctic Ocean.



Many people in Tajikistan work make textiles.

Pamir Mountains A mountain range in Tajikistan. The highest peak is Ismoil Somoni, which is 7495 m high.

St. Petersburg A city in northwest Russia. Once Russia's capital, it is still its second largest city, with a population of 4.5 million. It was founded in 1703 and its squares and palaces were built in the style of Paris.



Sakhalin A large island off the eastern coast of Russia. From 1905 to 1946 it was occupied by Russia in the north and Japan in the south. Today, it is all part of Russia.

Samarkand One of the oldest cities in the world, located in eastern Uzbekistan. It was once a major stop on the trade route from Asia to Europe and an important centre of Islamic learning.

Siberia The part of Russia lying between the Ural Mountains in the west and the Pacific Ocean in the east. It is only sparsely populated but is rich in coal, oil, gas and metal ores.

Syr Darya A river stretching 2212 km from the Tian Shan Mountains to the Aral Sea.

Tashkent The capital of Uzbekistan, in the foothills of the Tian Shan Mountains.

Tian Shan A mountain range, stretching 2400 km from Kyrgyzstan eastwards into northern China. Its highest point, Jenish Chokusu, is 7439 m high.

Trans-Siberian Railway

A railway line stretching 9297 km from Moscow to Vladivostok. It is the longest railway in the world; a journey from one end to the other takes nearly eight days.

Ural Mountains A mountain range running 2500 km through Russia. It marks the boundary between Europe and Asia. The highest peak, Mt. Narodnaya, is 1894 m high.



The gateway of an ancient Islamic building in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Volga The longest river in Europe. It flows 3692 km through western Russia to the Caspian Sea.

White Sea Part of the Arctic Ocean, almost entirely enclosed by northwest Russia.

NATIONS

RUSSIA	GEORGIA	AZERBAIJAN
ARMENIA	KAZAKHSTAN	TURKMENISTAN
UZBEKISTAN	TAJIKISTAN	KYRGYZSTAN

ARMENIA Area 28,203 sq km Population 2,967,975 Capital Yerevan Language Armenian
AZERBAIJAN Area 82,629 sq km Population 8,372,373 Capital Baku Language Azeri
GEORGIA Area 69,700 sq km Population 4,585,874 Capital Tbilisi Language Georgian
KAZAKHSTAN Area 2,699,700 sq km Population 15,522,373 Capital Akmola Languages Kazakh, Russian
KYRGYZSTAN Area 191,801 sq km Pop. 5,587,443 Capital Bishkek Language Kyrgyz
RUSSIA Area 16,377,742 sq km Population 138,739,892 Capital Moscow Languages Russian, 38 others
TAJIKISTAN Area 141,510 sq km Population 7,627,200 Capital Dushanbe Language Tajik
TURKMENISTAN Area 469,930 sq km Pop. 4,997,503 Capital Ashkhabad Language Turkmen
UZBEKISTAN Area 425,400 sq km Pop. 28,128,600 Capital Tashkent Language Uzbek

Yenisey A river flowing 5539 km from Lake Baykal in Russia, north to the Arctic Ocean. A series of dams along the river use the water's power to generate electricity.

MIDDLE EAST

The countries of southwestern Asia are known as the Middle East. Much of this region is covered with mountains or desert, and has a hot, dry climate. The most fertile areas are along the Mediterranean coast. Some Middle Eastern countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, have become very wealthy because they have huge reserves of oil, which they export to the rest of the world.

An Nafud A red, sandy desert in the north of the Arabian Peninsula. Frequent storms, pile the sand into enormous, crescent-shaped dunes.

Anatolian Plateau A broad area of land, between the Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea, joining Europe and Asia.



Kurdish woman from the border of Iran and Iraq

Anti-Lebanon Mountains A mountain range on the Syria-Lebanon border. The highest peak, Mt. Hermon, is 2814 m high.

Arabian Peninsula The part of Asia that is surrounded on three sides by the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea.

Baghdad The capital of Iraq. It is the second largest city in the Middle East, with a population of 5.75 million.



Bedouins Desert-dwelling Arabs who traditionally live as nomads, wandering from place to place.

Beirut The capital of Lebanon and the country's main port, built on the Mediterranean coast. It is one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world.

Damascus The capital of Syria, built around an oasis near the Anti-Lebanon Mountains. It is thought to be the oldest inhabited city in the world, first settled 4000 years ago.

Dasht-e Kavir A large desert in Iran, dotted with shallow lakes. These are covered in a thick crust of salt, formed when surface water evaporates in the heat.

An oil tanker in the Persian Gulf



Dead Sea A saltwater lake between Israel and Jordan, surrounded by arid hills. It is more than eight times saltier than the ocean. Located 423 m below sea level, it is the lowest point on the Earth's surface.

Dubai A city in the United Arab Emirates. It is home to the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa, which is 828 m high.

Elburz Mountains A mountain range in Iran, running over 1500 km around the southern edge of the Caspian Sea. It includes the tallest mountain in the Middle East, Mt. Damavand, which is 5621 m high.

Euphrates A river that flows 2800 km from eastern Turkey to meet the Tigris in Iraq, from where it flows into the Persian Gulf.

Istanbul The largest city in Turkey, on the European side of the Bosphorus Strait. It has a population of around 10 million.

Jerusalem An ancient city in the Middle East. It is an important holy place to Muslims, Christians and Jews.

Jordan A river that flows 251 km from the Anti-Lebanon Mountains to the Dead Sea.

Litani A river that flows 140 km through Lebanon to the Mediterranean Sea.



A Jewish man praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the site of an ancient temple.

Mecca A city in Saudi Arabia which is holy for Muslims, because it is where the founder of their religion, the Prophet Mohammed, was born.

Mesopotamia The land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in present-day Iraq. Thousands of years ago, it was home to some of the first civilizations.

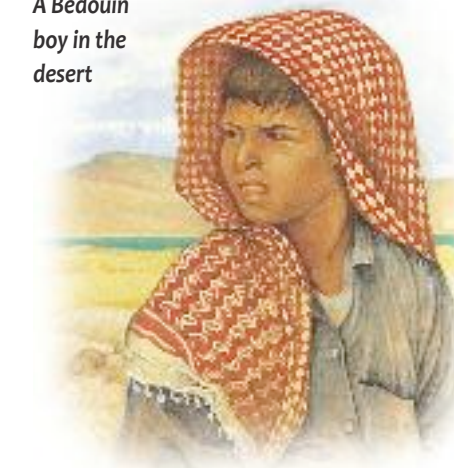
Orontes A river that flows 400 km from Lebanon to the Mediterranean Sea.

Persian Gulf Part of the Arabian Sea, almost completely enclosed by the Arabian Peninsula in the west and Iran in the east.

Petra A historical city in Jordan, cut out of a sandstone cliff face around 2500 years ago by the Nabataean people.

Pontic Mountains A mountain range in northern Turkey, running around the northern edge of the Black Sea. The highest peak, Kaçkar Dağı, is 3931 m high.

A Bedouin boy in the desert



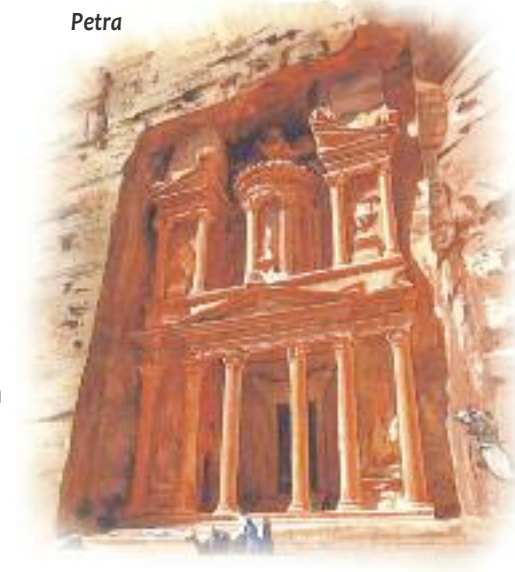
Rub al Khali A vast uninhabited desert in the Arabian Peninsula. It is one of the largest areas of sandy desert in the world.

Taurus Mountains A mountain range in Turkey, bordering the Anatolian Plateau.

Tehran The capital of Iran, in the foothills of the Elburz Mountains. It is the largest city in the Middle East, with a population of around 7.19 million.

Tigris A river that flows 1850 km from the Taurus Mountains to southern Iraq where it meets the Euphrates and empties into the Persian Gulf.

Petra



Urmia, Lake A saltwater lake in northwest Iran. It is the largest lake in the Middle East and the third largest saltwater lake in the world.

Van, Lake The largest lake in Turkey, in the far east of the country.

Zagros Mountains A mountain range running 1500 km along the Iran-Iraq border. The highest point, Zard Kuh, is 4548 m high.

NATIONS

TURKEY	SYRIA	LEBANON
ISRAEL	JORDAN	IRAQ
IRAN	KUWAIT	SAUDI ARABIA
YEMEN	OMAN	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
QATAR	BAHRAIN	

BAHRAIN Area 760 sq km Population 1,214,705 Capital Manama Language Arabic

IRAN Area 1,531,595 sq km Population 77,891,220 Capital Tehran Language Farsi

IRAQ Area 437,367 sq km Population 30,399,572 Capital Baghdad Language Arabic

ISRAEL Area 20,330 sq km Population 7,473,052 Capital Jerusalem Languages Hebrew, Arabic

JORDAN Area 88,802 sq km Population 6,508,271 Capital Amman Language Arabic

KUWAIT Area 17,818 sq km Population 2,595,628 Capital Kuwait Language Arabic

LEBANON Area 10,230 sq km Population 4,143,101 Capital Beirut Language Arabic

OMAN Area 309,500 sq km Population 3,027,959 Capital Muscat Language Arabic

QATAR Area 11,586 sq km Population 848,016 Capital Doha Language Arabic

SAUDI ARABIA Area 2,149,690 sq km Pop. 26,131,703 Capital Riyadh Language Arabic

SYRIA Area 183,630 sq km Population 22,517,750 Capital Damascus Language Arabic

TURKEY Area 769,632 sq km Population 78,785,548 Capital Ankara Language Turkish

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES Area 83,600 sq km Pop. 5,148,664 Capital Abu Dhabi Language Arabic

YEMEN Area 527,968 sq km Population 24,133,492 Capital San'a Language Arabic

EAST ASIA

China is the largest country in the world by population: it is home to around one-fifth of the world's population. Most people live in the east, where there is rich farmland and many large cities. The mountain and desert regions of the west are, by contrast, sparsely populated. East of China, Japan is made up of four main islands—Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku—as well as several smaller islands. Most of Japan is mountainous and forested.

Altai Mountains A mountain range that stretches around 2000 km through west Mongolia and northern China. The highest peak, Belukha Mountain, is 4506 m high.

Beijing The capital of China, in the northeast of the country. At its centre lies the Forbidden City, once the home of China's emperors, named because ordinary people were not allowed to enter its walls.

Everest, Mount The highest mountain in the world, at 8848 m high. It is part of the Himalayan Mountain Range on the border between Tibet and Nepal.

A high-speed "bullet train" rushes past Mount Fuji



The Great Wall of China

Fuji, Mount Japan's highest mountain, on the main island of Honshu. It has a striking cone shape and is 3776 m high. It is a volcano, but has been dormant since 1707.

Gobi Desert A vast desert that stretches across China and Mongolia. Its name means "waterless place" in Mongolian. Most of the Gobi Desert is not sand but bare, dry rock.

Grand Canal The world's longest man-made waterway, which stretches 1790 km from Beijing to Hangzhou. The oldest part of the canal was built 2500 years ago.

Great Wall of China A stone wall built between the 5th century BC and the 16th century to protect the north of China from attack by its enemies. The wall is about 600 km long and 10 m high.

Hong Kong A large industrial port on the southeast coast of China. The city is famous for its skyscrapers and the density of its population.

Huang One of China's major rivers. It flows 5460 km across regions of soil, called loess, which turns the river the yellow colour of muddy water before it reaches the Yellow Sea.

Koko Nor A saltwater lake in central China. It is the largest lake in China.

Kunlun Mountains A mountain range stretching 3000 km along the north of the Tibetan Plateau. Its highest point, Kunlun Goddess, is 7167 m high.



A Chinese poultry farmer takes his produce to market

North China Plain A large area of flat land surrounding the Huang. Its fertile, yellow soil is deposited by the river when it floods and makes it an ideal location for arable farming.

Northeastern Plain A large area of low-lying land in northeastern China. Its dark soil is very fertile, and large parts of the plain are planted with crops.

Shanghai China's largest city, situated on the east coast. It has a population of around 16.6 million. It is one of the largest ports in the world and is a centre of industry in China.

Shenzhen A large city that has grown up immediately next to Hong Kong and is now one of the world's largest centres of manufacturing.



Takla Makan A large desert in the Tarim Basin in Central Asia. It has a cold climate and is almost entirely covered in sand. Its name means "abandoned place".



Himeji castle in Japan

Tarim Basin A vast area of low-lying land, drained by the Tarim River and surrounded by the Kunlun, Pamir and Tian Shan mountains. The Takla Makan occupies much of the Basin.

Three Gorges Dam A dam across the River Yangtse. It controls flooding downstream and uses the river's power to generate electricity. It is one of the largest dams in the world.

Tibetan Plateau The largest and highest area of raised land in the world. It has an average height of 4500 m. It is sometimes called "the roof of the world".

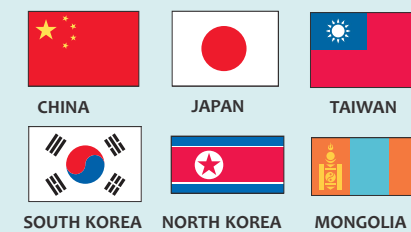
Tokyo The capital of Japan on the Pacific coast of the main island, Honshu. Together with its port Yokohama, it is often considered the largest city in the world, with a population of around 35 million.

Yangtse The longest river in Asia and the third longest in the world, flowing 6380 km from the Tibetan Plateau across China to the East China Sea at Shanghai.

A traditional funeral procession in Korea



NATIONS



CHINA Area 9,569,901 sq km Pop. 1,336,718,015 Capital Beijing Language Chinese (many dialects)	JAPAN Area 364,485 sq km Population 126,475,664 Capital Tokyo Language Japanese	TAIWAN Area 32,260 sq km Population 23,071,779 Capital Taipei Language Chinese
MONGOLIA Area 1,553,556 sq km Pop. 3,133,318 Capital Ulan Bator Language Khalkha Mongol	NORTH KOREA Area 120,408 sq km Pop. 24,457,492 Capital Pyongyang Language Korean	SOUTH KOREA Area 96,920 sq km Pop. 48,754,657 Capital Seoul Language Korean

INDIA & SOUTHEAST ASIA

South of the Himalayan Mountains lies the Indian subcontinent, an area encompassing the countries of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. India has the world's second largest population after China and the world's fastest growing economy. More than two-thirds of its people live in the countryside. The southeast corner of Asia, together with thousands of islands further south, make up the region of Southeast Asia. It has a tropical climate, with areas of dense rainforest.

Andaman Islands A chain of Islands in the Bay of Bengal between India and Burma. Most of the islands belong to India.

Angkor Wat A huge temple in Cambodia, built 800 years ago at the centre of a city. It was first Hindu, then Buddhist.

Bangkok The capital of Thailand on the banks of the Chao Phraya. In Thailand it is known as Krung Thep Maha Nakhon, meaning "city of angels".

Borneo The third largest island in the world, divided between Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia. It is covered mainly in rainforest. Tree-felling in the area is seriously threatening wild animals, such as orang-utans, as it destroys their habitats.



Taj Mahal

Brahmaputra A river that flows 2900 km from China, through India to Bangladesh, where it meets the Ganges.

Chao Phraya A major river that flows about 370 km from Thailand, through Bangkok into the Gulf of Thailand. There are many rice fields surrounding the river.

Deccan Plateau A high area of land in central India, lying between the Eastern and Western Ghats.

SOUTH

 AFGHANISTAN	 NEPAL	 BHUTAN
 MALDIVES	 SRI LANKA	 BANGLADESH
 PAKISTAN	 INDIA	

AFGHANISTAN Area 652,230 sq km Pop. 29,835,392
Capital Kabul Languages Pashtun, Tajik

BANGLADESH Area 130,168 sq km Pop. 158,570,535
Capital Dhaka Languages Bengali, English

BHUTAN Area 38,394 sq km Population 708,427
Capital Thimphu Language Dzongkha

INDIA Area 2,973,193 sq km Population 1,189,172,906
Capital New Delhi Languages Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Urdu, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, English

MALDIVES Area 298 sq km Population 394,999
Capital Malé Language Divehi

NEPAL Area 143,351 sq km Population 29,391,883
Capital Kathmandu Language Nepali

PAKISTAN Area 770,875 sq km Po. 187,342,721 Capital Islamabad Languages Urdu, Punjabi, Pashtu, English

SRI LANKA Area 64,630 sq km Population 21,283,913
Capital Colombo Languages Sinhala, Tamil, English

Ganges A river that flows 2500 km from the Himalayas, through India and Bangladesh to the Bay of Bengal. For followers of the Hindu religion, the Ganges is a holy river.

Ghats Two mountain ranges in India, the East and West Ghats, bordering its eastern and western coasts.

Hanoi The capital of Vietnam, in the north, with a population of about 6.5 million.

Himalayas A mountain range, running 2400 km between the Tibetan Plateau and Pakistan. It is home to many of the highest peaks in the world, including Mt. Everest (26).



Angkor Wat

Ho Chi Minh City A major city and port on the south coast of Vietnam, formerly known as Saigon.

Indus A river that flows 3200 km from the Tibetan Plateau to the Arabian Sea. The Indus valley was the site of one of the world's first civilizations.

Irrawaddy The main river in Burma, which flows 2170 km through the country. It is an important waterway for commercial boats.

Karakoram Range A mountain range on the borders of Pakistan and India. It contains the second highest mountain in the world, K2, which is 8611 m high.

Khorat Plateau A region of flat, high land in northeast Thailand, used for farming.



Children cross a bamboo bridge over the Mekong in Vietnam

Malay Peninsula A long, narrow area of land along the western edge of the South China Sea. It is occupied by Malaysia along with parts of Burma.

Mekong A river that flows 4180 km from Tibet through southern China, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam to the South China Sea. It forms the border between Laos, Burma and Thailand.

Salween A river that flows 2815 km from China, through Burma to the sea, cutting through deep, narrow gorges.



Elephants are still used in Thailand to clear forests and haul logs.

Taj Mahal A tomb in India built by the Mogul emperor Shah Jahan as a tomb for his wife, Mumtaz. Work on the tomb started in 1632 and continued for 22 years. The Taj Mahal is considered to be one of the most beautiful buildings in the world.

Tenasserim Hills A mountain range that runs 1700 km along the border between Burma and Thailand and down the length of the Malay Peninsula.



Rice is the main crop of Southeast Asia, grown in waterlogged fields and planted by hand.

Thar Desert A large desert in northwest India and Pakistan, also known as the Great Indian Desert. Much of the desert is covered by large sand dunes.

Tonlé Sap A lake in central Cambodia. During the dry season, the lake is small but after the monsoon rains in the autumn, water from the Mekong fills it to more than seven times its normal size.

SOUTHEAST



BRUNEI Area 5265 sq km Pop. 401,890 Capital Bandar Seri Begawan Languages Malay, Chinese

BURMA (MYANMAR) Area 653,508 sq km Pop. 3,999,804 Capital Yangon Language Burmese

CAMBODIA Area 176,515 sq km Population 14,701,717 Capital Phnom Penh Language Khmer

EAST TIMOR Area 14,874 sq km Pop. 1,177,834 Capital Dili Languages Tetum, Portuguese, Indonesian, English

INDONESIA Area 1,811,569 sq km Pop. 245,613,043 Capital Jakarta Language Indonesian

LAOS Area 230,800 sq km Population 6,477,211 Capital Viangchan Languages Lao, French

MALAYSIA Area 328,657 sq km Population 28,728,607 Capital Kuala Lumpur Language Malay

PHILIPPINES Area 298,170 sq km Pop. 101,833,938 Capital Manila Languages English, Filipino

SINGAPORE Area 687 sq km Pop. 4,740,737 Capital Singapore Languages Chinese, English, Malay, Tamil

THAILAND Area 510,890 sq km Population 66,720,153 Capital Bangkok Language Thai

VIETNAM Area 310,070 sq km Population 90,549,390 Capital Hanoi Languages Vietnamese, French



Scale 0 1000 km

OCEANIA

Oceania is the group of countries comprising Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Much of Australia has a hot and dry climate, so most of the population live on the southeast or southwest coasts, where it is cooler and the land is fertile. New Zealand is made up of two main, mountainous islands.

Aboriginals The descendants of people who arrived in Australia from Asia about 50,000 years ago.

Canberra The capital of Australia, with a population of 384,000. It lies in a territory separate from the surrounding state of New South Wales.

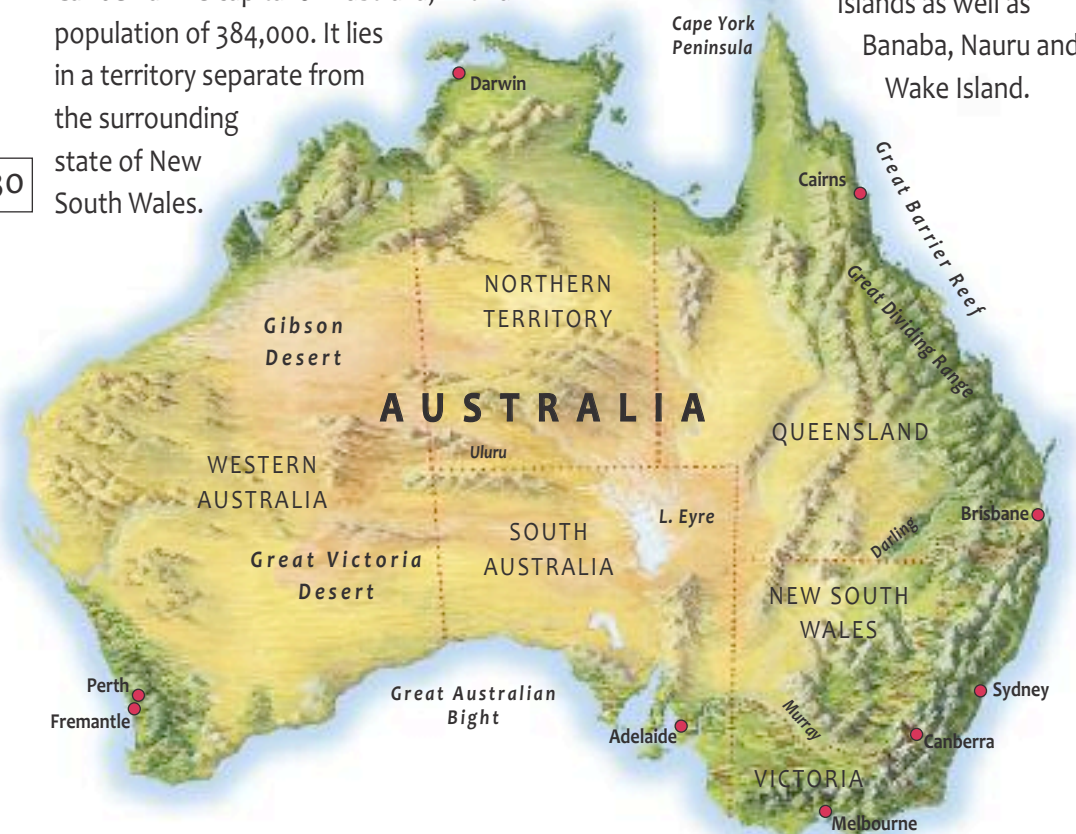


Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House

Great Dividing Range The third longest mountain range in the world, running 3500 km along the east coast of Australia.

Melanesia A region of Oceania northeast of Australia, consisting of New Guinea, the Bismark Archipelago, the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Vanatu and Fiji.

Micronesia The northwest region of Oceania, including the Gilbert, Mariana, Marshall and Caroline Islands as well as Banaba, Nauru and Wake Island.



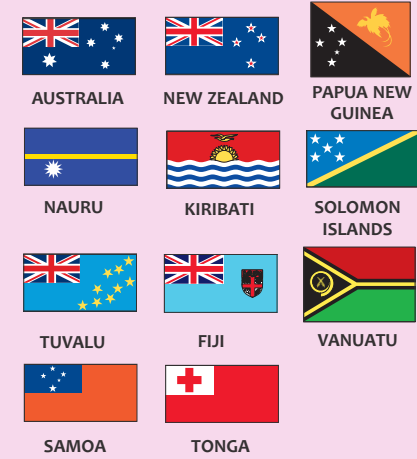
Cape York Peninsula The northernmost part of Australia.

Eyre, Lake The lowest point in Australia, lying about 15 m below sea level. It is usually dry but may flood in heavy rain.

Great Barrier Reef The longest coral reef in the world, stretching 2000 km along the northeast coast of Australia.

Polynesia The easternmost region of Oceania, containing over 1000 islands in the southern Pacific Ocean, including the Cook Islands, Easter Island, French Polynesia, Samoa and Hawaii (8) among others.

NATIONS



AUSTRALIA Area 7,682,300 sq km Pop. 21,766,711 Capital Canberra Language English

FIJI Area 18,274 sq km Pop. 883,125 Capital Suva Languages Fijian, Hindi, English

KIRIBATI Area 811 sq km Population 100,743 Capital Tarawa Languages I-Kiribati, English

NAURU Area 21 sq km Population 9,322 Capital Yaren District Languages Nauruan, English

NEW ZEALAND Area 267,710 sq km Pop. 4,290,347 Capital Wellington Languages English, Maori

PAPUA NEW GUINEA Area 452,860 sq km Population 6,187,591 Capital Port Moresby Languages Pidgin, English, Motu

SAMOA Area 2821 sq km Population 193,161 Capital Apia Languages Samoan, English

SOLOMON ISLANDS Area 27,986 sq km Pop. 571,890 Capital Honiara Languages English, Pidgin

TONGA Area 717 sq km Population 105,916 Capital Nuku'alofa Languages Tongan, English

TUVALU Area 26 sq km Population 10,544 Capital Funafuti Languages Tuvaluan, English

VANUATU Area 12,189 sq km Population 224,564 Capital Port Vila Languages Bislama, English, French

Sydney The largest city in Australia, on the southeast coast around a natural harbour. It has a population of around 4.4 million.

Uluru A large rock formation in central Australia. Uluru, once known as **Ayers Rock**, is a sacred place to Australia's aboriginal peoples.



INDEX

A

aboriginals 30
Aconcagua, Mount 12
Addis Ababa 14
Aegean Sea 20
Afghanistan 7, 28
Africa 6, 14-18
African Great Lakes 16
Ahaggar 14
Alaska 6, 8-9
Albania 6-7, 20-21
Algeria 7, 14-15
Alps 18-19, 21
Altai Mountains 26-27
Altiplano 12
Amazon, River 12
Amazon Basin 12
Amazon rainforest 12
Amur, River 22-23
An Nafud 24
Anatolian Plateau 24-25
Andaman Islands 28
Andes Mountains 12-13
Andorra 6-7, 19
Angel Falls 12-13
Angkor Wat 28-29
Angola 7, 16
Antarctica 12
Antigua and Barbuda 6, 10-11
Anti-Lebanon Mountains 24
Antilles 10
Apennines 18-19
Appalachian Mountains 8-9
Arabian Peninsula 15, 24-25
Aral Sea 22-23
Arctic Ocean 18, 22-23
Argentina 6, 12-13
Armenia 6-7, 22-23
Asia 6, 14, 18, 22-29
Atacama Desert 12
Athens 20
Atlantic Ocean 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18-19
Atlas Mountains 14
Australia 7, 30
Austria 6-7, 18-19
Ayers Rock see Uluru
Azerbaijan 6-7, 22-23
Aztecs 10

B

Baghdad 24
Bahamas 6, 10-11
Bahrain 6-7, 24-25
Baja California 10
Balaton, Lake 20
Balkan Mountains 20
Balkhash, Lake 22-23
Baltic Sea 18-19
Bangkok 7, 28
Bangladesh 7, 28
Barbados 6, 10-11
Barcelona 18-19
Baykal, Lake 22-23
Bedouins 24
Beijing 7, 26-27
Beirut 24
Belarus 7, 20-21
Belgium 6-7, 18-19
Belize 6, 10
Belize Barrier Reef 10-11
Benin 7, 14
Berbers 14-15
Berlin 18-19
Bhutan 7, 28
Bié Plateau 16
Black Sea 20-21, 22, 24-25
Bogotá 6, 12
Bolivia 6, 12-13
Borneo 28
Bosnia and Herzegovina 6-7, 20-21
Bosporus 20-21, 25
Botswana 7, 16-17
Brahmaputra 28
Brazil 6, 12-13
Brazilian Highlands 12
British Isles 18-19
Brunei 7, 28-29
Brussels 18-19
Budapest 20-21
Buenos Aires 6, 12
Bulgaria 7, 20-21
Burkina Faso 6, 14
Burma (Myanmar) 7, 28-29
Burundi 6-7, 16-17

D

Damascus 24
Danube 20-21
Dardanelles 20-21
Dasht-e Kavir 24
Dead Sea 24
Death Valley 8-9
Deccan Plateau 28
Denmark 7, 18-19
Dinarides 20-21
Djibouti 7, 14-15
Dnieper, River 20-21
Dominica 6, 10-11
Dominican Republic 6, 10-11
Drakensberg 16-17
Dubai 24

C

Cairo 7, 14-15
California 8-9
Cambodia 7, 28-29
Cameroon 6, 14
Cameroon, Mount 14
Canada 6, 8-9
Canberra 30

E

East Timor 7, 28-29
Eastern Seaboard (USA) 8
Ecuador 6, 12-13
Egypt 7, 14-15
El Salvador 6, 10
Elbrus, Mount 22-23
Elburz Mountains 24
English Channel 18-19
Equatorial Guinea 6, 14
Estonia 6-7, 20
Ethiopia 7, 14-15
Ethiopian Highlands 14
Euphrates, River 24-25
Europe 6, 8, 11, 16, 18-25
Everest, Mount 26-28
Everglades 8
Eyre, Lake 30

F

Fiji 7, 30
Finland 7, 18-19
France 6-7, 18-19
French Guiana 6, 12-13
Fuji, Mount 26-27

G

Gabon 7, 16
Galápagos Islands 12
Gambia 6, 14
Ganges, River 28
Georgia 6-7, 22-23
Germany 7, 18-19, 21
Ghana 6, 14
Ghats 28
Giza 15
Gobi Desert 26-27
Golden Gate Bridge 8
Gran Chaco 12
Grand Canal (China) 26-27
Grand Canyon 8-9
Great Barrier Reef 30
Great Dividing Range 30
Great Lakes (North America) 8
Great Plains 8
Great Rift Valley 16
Great Wall of China 26-27
Greece 7, 20-21
Greenland 6, 8
Grenada 6, 10-11
Guatemala 6, 10
Guatemala City 10
Guinea 6, 14
Guinea Highlands 14-15

Guinea-Bissau 6, 14
Gulf of Mexico 8, 10-11
Guyana 6, 12-13

H

Haiti 6, 10-11
Hanoi 28
Hawaii 6, 8-9, 30
Himalayas 26-28
Ho Chi Minh City 28-29
Hokkaido 26-27
Honduras 6, 10
Hong Kong 26-27
Honshu 26-27
Horn of Africa 15
Huang, River 26-27
Hungary 7, 20-21

I

Iberian Peninsula 18-19
Iceland 7, 18-19
Iguaçu Falls 13
India 7, 28-29
Indian Ocean 7, 15, 16
Indonesia 7, 28-29
Indus 28-29
Inuit 8
Iran 7, 24-25
Iraq 7, 24-25
Ireland 6, 18-19
Iron Gate 21
Irrawaddy 28-29
Israel 7, 24-25
Istanbul 24-25
Italian Peninsula 18-19
Italy 7, 18-19

J

Jamaica 6, 10-11
Japan 7, 23, 26-27
Jerusalem 24-25
Johannesburg 7, 16-17
Jordan 7, 24-25

K

Kalahari Desert 16-17
Kamchatka Peninsula 22-23
Karakoram Range 28-29
Karakum Desert 22-23
Karoo 16-17
Kazakhstan 7, 22-23
Kenya 7, 16-17
Kenya, Mount 16-17
Khorat Plateau 28-29

Kiev 21
Kinshasa 16-17
Kiribati 7, 30
Koko Nor 26-27
Kunlun Mountains 26-27
Kuril Islands 22-23
Kuwait 7, 24-25
Kyrgyzstan 7, 22-23
Kyushu 26-27
Kyzyl Kum 22-23

L

La Paz 12-13
Lagos 7, 14-15
Laos 7, 28-29
Latvia 7, 20
Lebanon 7, 24-25
Lena 22-23
Lesotho 7, 16-17
Liberia 6, 14
Libya 7, 14-15
Liechtenstein 7, 18-19
Litani, River 25
Lithuania 7, 20
Llanos 12-13
Loire, River 18-19
London 18-19
Los Angeles 8-9
Luxembourg 7, 18-19

M

Macedonia 7, 20-21
Machu Picchu 12-13
Madagascar 7, 16-17
Madrid 18-19
Maghreb 14-15
Malawi 7, 16-17
Malay Peninsula 28-29
Malaysia 7, 28-29
Maldives 7, 28
Mali 6, 14-15
Malta 7, 19
Maracaibo, Lake 12-13
Massif Central 18-19
Mato Grosso Plateau 12-13
Mauritania 6, 14-15
Mauritius 7, 16-17
Maya 10-11
McKinley, Mount 8
Mecca 24-25
Mediterranean Sea 14-16,
18-21, 24-25
Mekong 28-29
Melanesia 30
Mesopotamia 24-25
mestizos 10
Mexico 6, 10-11

Mexico City 6, 10-11
Micronesia 30
Mississippi, River 8-9
Mitchell, Mount 8
Moldova 7, 20
Monaco 7, 19
Mongolia 7, 26-27
Montenegro 7, 20-21
Morocco 6, 14-15
Moscow 22-23
Mozambique 7, 16-17
Mynamar see Burma

N

Namib Desert 16-17
Namibia 7, 16-17
Nasser, Lake 14-15
Native Americans 8
Nauru 7, 30
Nepal 7, 26-28
Netherlands 7, 18-19
New England 8
New Orleans 8-9
New York City 6, 8-9
New Zealand 7, 30
Niagara Falls 9
Nicaragua 6, 10
Nicaragua, Lake 10-11
Niger 7, 14-15
Niger, River 14-15
Nigeria 7, 14-15
Nile, River 14-15
North Africa 14-15
North America 6-8, 10
North China Plain 26-27
North Korea 7, 27
Northeastern Plain
(China) 26-27
Northern Europe 18-19
Norway 7, 18-19

O

Ob, River 22-23
Oceania 20
Odesa 21
Oman 7, 24-25
Orange, River 16-17
Orinoco, River 12-13
Orontes, River 25
Ottawa 9

P

Pacific Ocean 6-8, 10, 12,
22-23, 16, 18, 30
Pakistan 7, 28-29

Pampas 12-13
Panama 6, 10
Canal 10-11
Isthmus of 11
Pannonian Plain 20-21
Papua New Guinea 7, 30
Paraguay 6, 12-13
Paraná 12-13
Paris 19
Patagonia 12-13
Persian Gulf 24-25
Peru 6, 12-13
Petra 24-25
Philippines 7, 28-29
Poland 7, 20-21
Polynesia 30
Pontic Mountains 24-25
Portugal 6, 18-19
Prague 21
Pripet Marshes 21
Pyramid of the Sun 11
Pyrenees 18-19

QR

Qatar 7, 24-25
Québec 9
Red Sea 14-15, 24
Rhine, River 19
Rhône, River 19
Rio de Janeiro 12-13
Rio Grande 10-11
Rocky Mountains 8-9
Romania 7, 20-21
Rome 7, 19
Rub al Khali 24-25
Russia 21, 22-23
Rwanda 7, 16-17
Rwenzori Mountains 16-17

S

Sahara Desert 14-15
Sahel 14-15
St. Kitts and Nevis 6, 10-11
St. Lucia 6, 10-11
St. Petersburg 22-23
St. Vincent 6, 10-11
Sakhalin 23
Salween 28-29
Samarkand 23
Samoa 7, 30
San Francisco 8-9
San Marino 7, 19
São Paulo 6, 12-13
São Tomé and Príncipe 6, 14
Saudi Arabia 7, 24-25
savannah 16-17

Scandinavia 19
Seattle 9
Seine, River 19
Senegal 6, 14
Serbia 7, 20-21
Seychelles 7, 16-17
Shanghai 26-27
Shenzhen 26-27
Shikoku 26-27
Siberia 22-23
Sierra Leone 6, 14
Sierra Madre 11
Sierra Nevada 9
Singapore 7, 28-29
Slovakia 7, 20
Slovenia 7, 19, 21
Solomon Islands 7, 30
Somalia 7, 14-15
South Africa 7, 16-17
South America 6, 10, 12-13
South Korea 7, 27
Southeast Asia 28-29
Spain 7, 18-19
Sri Lanka 7, 28
Sudan 7, 14-15
Sudan, South 7, 14-15
Sudd 14-15
Sudetes 20-21
Suez Canal 14-15
Superior, Lake 8-9
Suriname 6, 12-13
Swaziland 7, 16-17
Sweden 7, 18-19
Switzerland 7, 18-19
Sydney 7, 30
Syr Darya 23

T

Taiwan 7, 27
Taj Mahal 28-29
Tajikistan 7, 22-23
Takla Makan 27
Tanganyika, Lake 16-17
Tanzania 7, 16-17
Tarim Basin 27
Tashkent 23
Taurus Mountains 24-25
Tehran 24-25
Tenasserim Hills 28-29
Thailand 7, 28-29
Thar Desert 28-29
Three Gorges Dam 27
Tian Shan 23, 27
Tibesti Mountains 14-15
Tibet 26-27, 29
Tibetan Plateau 26-28
Tigris 24-25

Tikal 11
Titicaca, Lake 12-13
Togo 6, 14
Tokyo 7, 27
Tonga 7, 30
Tonlé Sap 28-29
Toronto 8-9
Trans-Siberian Railway 23
Trinidad and Tobago 6, 10-11
Tunisia 7, 14-15
Turkey 7, 24-25
Turkmenistan 7, 22-23
Tuvalu 7, 30

U

Uganda 7, 16-17
Ukraine 7, 20-21
Uluru 30
United Arab Emirates 7, 24-25
United Kingdom 6, 18-19
Ural Mountains 22-23
Urmia, Lake 24-25
Uruguay 6, 12-13
US Capitol 8-9
United States of America 6, 8-11
Uzbekistan 7, 22-23

V

Van, Lake 24-25
Vanuatu 7, 30
Vatican City 7, 19
Venezuela 6, 12-13
Venice 19
Victoria Falls 16-17
Victoria, Lake 15, 16-17
Vietnam 7, 28-29
Volga, River 23
Volta, Lake 14-15

WY

Warsaw 21
Washington, D.C. 9
West Indies 11
White Sea 23
Yangtse, River 27
Yellow Sea 26-27
Yemen 7, 24-25
Yenisey, River 23
Yucatán Peninsula 10-11

Z

Zagros Mountains 24-25
Zambia 7, 16-17
Zimbabwe 7, 16-17