

children's illustrated encyclopedia

# World Nations



 Orpheus

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# FACTFILE



Brightly-coloured wooden totem poles have been carved for generations by families of Native Americans on the northwest coast of Canada. The images depict the family's history, and which clan they belong to.

## CANADA

**Area** 9,958,319 sq km **Population** 33,212,696 **Capital** Ottawa (population 1,168,788) **Languages** English, French **Religions** Roman Catholic 47%, Protestant 25%, other 28% **Currency** Canadian dollar **Highest point** Mount Logan 6050 m **Main industries** Wood and paper, metals, food, cars, chemicals, petroleum, telecommunications

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Area** 9,372,614 sq km **Population** 303,824,646 **Capital** Washington, D.C. **Languages** English, Spanish **Religions** Protestant 56%, Roman Catholic 28%, Jewish 2%, other 14% **Currency** US dollar **Highest point** Mount McKinley, Alaska 6194 m **Main industries** Aircraft, cars, chemicals, computers, petroleum, steel, telecommunications, timber **Major cities** New York (18,815,988), Los Angeles (12,875,587), Chicago (9,524,673), Washington D.C. (8,241,912), San Francisco (7,200,322)

## MEXICO

**Area** 1,972,547 sq km **Population** 109,955,400 **Capital** Mexico City (pop. 23,913,000) **Language** Spanish **Religions** Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 6%, other 5% **Currency** Mexican peso **Highest point** Citlaltépetl 5700 m **Main industries** Petroleum, iron and steel, food, drink, cars, chemicals, tourism

## CENTRAL AMERICA



**BELIZE**  
**Area** 22,965 sq km **Population** 301,270 **Capital** Belmopan **Languages** English, Spanish

**COSTA RICA**  
**Area** 50,700 sq km **Population** 4,195,914 **Capital** San José **Language** Spanish

**EL SALVADOR**  
**Area** 21,041 sq km **Population** 7,066,403 **Capital** San Salvador **Language** Spanish

**GUATEMALA**  
**Area** 108,889 sq km **Population** 13,002,206 **Capital** Guatemala **Language** Spanish

**HONDURAS**  
**Area** 112,088 sq km **Population** 7,639,327 **Capital** Tegucigalpa **Language** Spanish

**NICARAGUA**  
**Area** 130,000 sq km **Population** 5,785,846 **Capital** Managua **Languages** Spanish, English

**PANAMA**  
**Area** 75,517 sq km **Population** 3,292,693 **Capital** Panama **Language** Spanish

## CARIBBEAN



**ANGUILLA**  
**Area** 91 sq km **Population** 14,108 **Capital** The Valley **Language** English

**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**  
**Area** 442 sq km **Population** 69,842 **Capital** St. John's **Language** English

**BAHAMAS**  
**Area** 13,939 sq km **Population** 307,451 **Capital** Nassau **Language** English

**BARBADOS**  
**Area** 430 sq km **Population** 281,968 **Capital** Bridgetown **Language** English

**BERMUDA**  
**Area** 53 sq km **Population** 66,536 **Capital** Hamilton **Language** English

**BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS**  
**Area** 153 sq km **Population** 24,004 **Capital** Road Town **Language** English

**CUBA**  
**Area** 110,860 sq km **Population** 11,423,952 **Capital** Havana **Language** Spanish

**DOMINICA**  
**Area** 750 sq km **Population** 72,514 **Capital** Roseau **Languages** English, Creole

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**  
**Area** 48,422 sq km **Population** 9,507,133 **Capital** Santo Domingo **Language** Spanish

**GRENADA**  
**Area** 345 sq km **Population** 90,343 **Capital** St. George's **Languages** English, French patois

**GUADELOUPE**  
**Area** 1779 sq km **Population** 408,000 **Capital** Basse-Terre **Languages** French, Creole

**HAITI**  
**Area** 27,750 sq km **Population** 8,924,553 **Capital** Port-au-Prince **Languages** French, Creole

**JAMAICA**  
**Area** 10,991 sq km **Population** 2,804,332 **Capital** Kingston **Language** English

**MARTINIQUE**  
**Area** 1102 sq km **Population** 401,000 **Capital** Fort-de-France **Languages** French, Creole

**MONTSERAT**  
**Area** 102 sq km **Population** 9,638 **Capital** Plymouth **Language** English

**NETHERLANDS ANTILLES**  
**Area** 800 sq km **Population** 225,369 **Capital** Willemstad **Languages** Dutch, Papiamentu

**PUERTO RICO**  
**Area** 8959 sq km **Population** 3,958,128 **Capital** San Juan **Languages** Spanish, English

**ST. KITTS AND NEVIS**  
**Area** 262 sq km **Population** 39,619 **Capital** Basseterre **Language** English

**ST. LUCIA**  
**Area** 616 sq km **Population** 172,884 **Capital** Castries **Languages** English, French patois

**ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**  
**Area** 388 sq km **Population** 118,432 **Capital** Kingstown **Language** English

**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**  
**Area** 5127 sq km **Population** 1,047,366 **Capital** Port of Spain **Languages** English, French, Spanish, Hindi, Chinese

**US VIRGIN ISLANDS**  
**Area** 355 sq km **Population** 108,210 **Capital** Charlotte Amalie **Languages** English, Spanish, Creole

# SOUTH AMERICA

**S**OUTH AMERICA is a continent of extremes. The world's longest mountain range, the Andes, stretches along the west coast. Between the snow-capped mountains lies a high, cold and windswept plain called the altiplano. Between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean coast is the Atacama Desert, the driest place on earth. Rain may not fall here for hundreds of years at a time.

In the north, most people live near the Caribbean coast or in the mountains. Further inland, the vast rainforests of the Amazon basin dominate. The Amazon River originates in the Andes, and winds its way eastwards through Peru and Brazil before reaching the Atlantic Ocean.

To the east of the Amazon rainforest lie the Brazilian Highlands. Further south are wide areas of fertile grasslands, known as pampas, which cover parts of Argentina and Uruguay. In the extreme south of

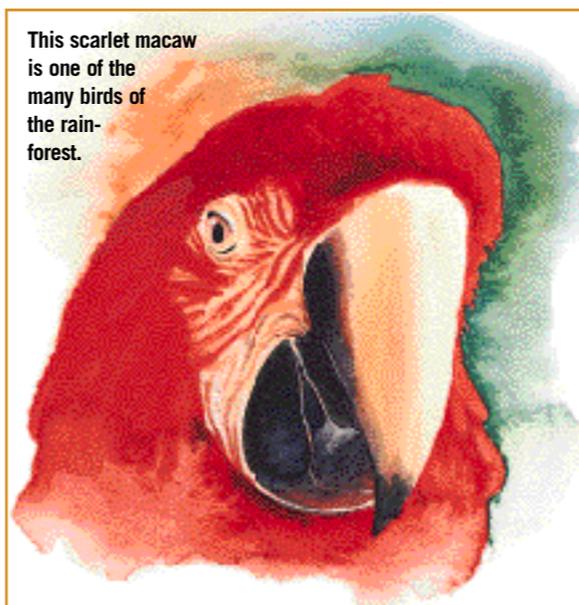
Argentina, grasslands give way to the dry, bleak scrublands of Patagonia. The southern Andes is an region of glaciers and volcanoes, breaking up into bleak, rocky islands at its tip.

Many people in South America are descended from Europeans, especially the Spanish and Portuguese, who began to arrive during the 15th century. Most South American people today still speak these languages. Others are descendents of African slaves brought over by the Europeans. The numbers of native peoples of South America fell dramatically after the arrival of the Europeans, but some still live in the mountains and the rainforest, keeping their own languages and traditions.

A Chilean boy. Many people living in South America today are of mixed European and native Indian descent. They are known as mestizos.



This scarlet macaw is one of the many birds of the rainforest.



The destruction of the rainforests does not only mean a loss of habitat for plants and animals. The bare landscape that is left also leads to soil erosion, while some scientists think that the loss of so many trees may affect the world's climate.



# AMAZON RAINFOREST

The Amazon basin is the largest area of rainforest in the world. Many kinds of plants and animals live there, and new species are constantly being discovered. The mighty Amazon River and its tributaries flow through the forest, providing a vital

transport route and source of food for the native peoples who live in forest villages. A few of these peoples still follow a traditional way of life, hunting, fishing and growing crops. Many also take advantage of modern technology, such as engines for their boats.

Today, the rainforest is disappearing at an alarming rate, because of logging for the timber industry, roadbuilding, and clearing space for cattle farming or crop planting. The poor-quality rainforest soil means that it cannot support grazing or crops for long before the farmers must move on to new areas. So even more of the forest is lost.

Some rainforest peoples live in one part of the forest for a while, where they hunt and grow basic crops, and then move on to another site to give the soil a chance to recover. As more and more of the forest is cut down, their homelands are depleted. They have also suffered from persecution and illness as outsiders have moved into the forest.



# FACTFILE



The oil wells of Lake Maracaibo are very important to the economy of Venezuela.

**NORTHERN**

 Colombia	 Venezuela	 Ecuador
 Guyana	 Surinam	 Peru
 Bolivia		

**BOLIVIA**  
**Area** 1,098,581 sq km **Population** 9,247,816 **Capitals** La Paz, Sucre  
**Languages** Spanish, Quechua, Aymara  
**COLOMBIA**  
**Area** 1,141,748 sq km **Pop.** 45,013,674  
**Capital** Bogotá **Language** Spanish  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 95%, other 5%  
**ECUADOR**  
**Area** 272,045 sq km **Population** 13,927,650 **Capital** Quito **Languages** Spanish, Quechua  
**FRENCH GUIANA**  
**Area** 91,000 sq km **Pop.** 209,000 **Capital** Cayenne **Languages** French, Creole  
**GUYANA**  
**Area** 214,969 sq km **Population** 770,794  
**Capital** Georgetown **Languages** English, Hindi, Urdu

**PERU**  
**Area** 1,285,216 sq km **Population** 29,180,899 **Capital** Lima **Languages** Spanish, Quechua, Aymara **Religions** Roman Catholic 89%, other 11%  
**SURINAM**  
**Area** 163,265 sq km **Population** 475,996  
**Capital** Paramaribo **Languages** Dutch, Hindi, Javanese  
**VENEZUELA**  
**Area** 912,050 sq km **Population** 26,414,815 **Capital** Caracas **Language** Spanish **Religions** Roman Catholic 96%, other 4%

 **BRAZIL**  
**Area** 8,511,996 sq km **Population** 191,908,598 **Capital** Brasília **Language** Portuguese **Religions** Roman Catholic 90%, other 10% **Currency** Real  
**Highest point** Pico da Neblina 3014 m  
**Main industries** Cars, aircraft, machinery, textiles, clothing, chemicals, steel



A native American woman steers a boat on the highest navigable lake in the world, Lake Titicaca (right), which stretches between Peru and Bolivia. The boat is made from tough, tightly bundled reeds. People also live on floating island villages in the lake, made from thickly-piled reeds. When the reeds at the bottom rot away, more layers are piled up on top.



Rio de Janeiro, or "January River" (below), lies on the coast of Brazil. It was named after the month in which Portuguese explorer Goncalo Coelho sailed into its bay in 1503. A great city has since grown up beneath the famous Sugar Loaf mountain. In the 19th century, Rio de Janeiro was an important port trading gold and diamonds mined in the interior of the country. Today, poverty-stricken shantytowns cluster on the outskirts, crowded with people desperate for work.

**SOUTHERN**

 Chile	 Paraguay	 Uruguay	 Argentina
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**ARGENTINA**  
**Area** 2,766,889 sq km **Population** 40,677,348 **Capital** Buenos Aires  
**Language** Spanish **Religions** Roman Catholic 90%, Protestant 2%, other 8%  
**Currency** Argentine peso  
**CHILE**  
**Area** 756,626 sq km **Population** 16,454,143 **Capital** Santiago **Language** Spanish **Religions** Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 11%  
**PARAGUAY**  
**Area** 406,752 sq km **Population** 6,831,306 **Capital** Asunción **Languages** Spanish, Guaraní **Religions** Roman Catholic 90%, Protestant 10%  
**URUGUAY**  
**Area** 176,215 sq km **Pop.** 3,477,778  
**Capital** Montevideo **Language** Spanish **Religions** Roman Catholic 66%, Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 30%



# FACTFILE I



The west coast of Scotland (above), in the UK, is an area of mountains and sea lochs.



Iceland

## NORTHERN



Norway



Sweden



Finland



Denmark



UK



Ireland



Belgium



Netherlands



Luxembourg

### BELGIUM

**Area** 30,519 sq km **Population** 10,403,951 **Capital** Brussels **Languages** Dutch (Flemish), French, German **Religions** Roman Catholic 75%, Protestant 15%, Muslim 3%, other 7%

### DENMARK

**Area** 43,093 sq km **Population** 5,484,723 **Capital** Copenhagen **Language** Danish **Religions** Protestant 90%, other 10%

### FINLAND

**Area** 338,145 sq km **Population** 5,244,749 **Capital** Helsinki **Languages** Finnish, Swedish **Religions** Protestant 89%, other 11%

### ICELAND

**Area** 103,000 sq km **Population** 304,367 **Capital** Reykjavik **Language** Icelandic **Religions** Protestant 96%, other 4%

### IRELAND

**Area** 70,283 sq km **Population** 4,156,119 **Capital** Dublin **Languages** English, Irish **Religions** Roman Catholic 93%, Protestant 3%, other 4%

### LUXEMBOURG

**Area** 2586 sq km **Population** 486,006 **Capital** Luxembourg **Languages** German, Letzeburgesch, French **Religions** Roman Catholic 97%, other 3%

### NETHERLANDS

**Area** 33,936 sq km **Population** 16,645,313 **Capitals** Amsterdam, The Hague **Language** Dutch **Religions** Roman Catholic 36%, Protestant 27%, Muslim 2%, other 35%

### NORWAY

**Area** 323,877 sq km **Pop.** 4,644,457 **Capital** Oslo **Language** Norwegian **Religions** Protestant 88%, other 12%

The castle of Vianden (below) lies among the wooded hills of Luxembourg.



### SWEDEN

**Area** 449,964 sq km **Pop.** 9,045,389 **Capital** Stockholm **Languages** Swedish, Finnish, Lappish **Religions** Protestant 94%, Roman Catholic 2%, other 4%

### UNITED KINGDOM

**Area** 242,533 sq km **Pop.** 60,943,912 **Capital** London **Languages** English, Welsh **Religions** Protestant 51%, Roman Catholic 9%, Muslim 3%, other 37% **Highest point** Ben Nevis 1343 m **Main industries** Cars, machinery, aircraft, chemicals, textiles, tourism, banking



France

## SOUTHERN



Portugal



Spain



Andorra



Monaco



Italy



Vatican City



San Marino



Malta



Cyprus



Greece

### ANDORRA

**Area** 468 sq km **Population** 72,413 **Capital** Andorra **Languages** Catalan, French, Spanish, Portuguese

### CYPRUS

**Area** 9251 sq km **Pop.** 792,604 **Capital** Nicosia **Languages** Greek, Turkish, English

### FRANCE

**Area** 543,965 sq km **Pop.** 64,057,790 **Capital** Paris **Language** French **Religions** Roman Catholic 90%, other 10% **Main industries** Cars, chemicals, machinery, steel, aircraft, electronics, food, tourism

### GREECE

**Area** 131,957 sq km **Pop.** 10,722,816 **Capital** Athens **Language** Greek **Religions** Orthodox 98%, other 2%

### ITALY

**Area** 301,277 sq km **Population** 58,145,321 **Capital** Rome **Language** Italian **Religion** Roman Catholic 90%, Protestant, Jewish and others 10% **Main industries** Clothing, chemicals, cars, ceramics, food, tourism

### MALTA

**Area** 316 sq km **Population** 403,532 **Capital** Valletta **Languages** Maltese, English, Italian

### MONACO

**Area** 2 sq km **Population** 32,796 **Capital** Monaco **Language** French

### PORTUGAL

**Area** 92,389 sq km **Population** 10,676,910 **Capital** Lisbon **Language** Portuguese **Religions** Roman Catholic 97%, Protestant 1%, other 2%

### SAN MARINO

**Area** 60.5 sq km **Population** 29,973 **Capital** San Marino **Language** Italian

### SPAIN

**Area** 504,782 sq km **Population** 40,491,051 **Capital** Madrid **Languages** Spanish, Catalan, Basque, Galician **Religions** Roman Catholic 94%, other 6% **Main industries** Cars, clothing, shoes, chemicals, metals, food and drink, tourism

### VATICAN CITY

**Area** 0.44 sq km **Population** 824

The fifteen towers of San Gimignano (below), in Tuscany, central Italy, are all that remain of 72 built 600 years ago.



# FACTFILE II



A typical Swiss house

## CENTRAL



**AUSTRIA**  
**Area** 83,859 sq km **Population** 8,205,533  
**Capital** Vienna **Language** German  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 85%, other 15%

**CZECH REPUBLIC**  
**Area** 78,864 sq km **Population** 10,220,911  
**Capital** Prague **Language** Czech  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 39%, Protestant 4% other 57%

Prague Castle (below), known to the Czechs as Hradcany, overlooks the city from the top of a hill.

**GERMANY**  
**Area** 356,854 sq km **Pop.** 82,369,548  
**Capital** Berlin **Language** German  
**Religions** Protestant 34%, Roman Catholic 34%, other 32% **Highest point** Zugspitze 2962 m  
**Main industries** Cars, machinery, chemicals, electronic goods, banking

**HUNGARY**  
**Area** 93,030 sq km **Population** 9,930,915  
**Capital** Budapest **Language** Hungarian  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 68%, Protestant 25%, other 7%

**LIECHTENSTEIN**  
**Area** 160 sq km **Pop.** 34,498 **Capital** Vaduz  
**Language** German

**POLAND**  
**Area** 312,683 sq km **Pop.** 38,500,696  
**Capital** Warsaw **Language** Polish  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 95%, other 5%

**SLOVAKIA**  
**Area** 49,035 sq km **Population** 5,455,407  
**Capital** Bratislava **Languages** Slovak, Hungarian, Czech  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 64%, Protestant 8%, other 28%

**SLOVENIA**  
**Area** 20,251 sq km **Population** 2,007,711  
**Capital** Ljubljana **Language** Slovene  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 96%, other 4%

**SWITZERLAND**  
**Area** 41,293 sq km **Population** 7,581,520  
**Capital** Bern **Languages** German, French, Italian  
**Religions** Roman Catholic 48%, Protestant 44%, other 8%



Croatia

## BALKANS



Bosnia and Herzegovina



Serbia



Macedonia



Albania



Bulgaria



Romania

**ALBANIA**  
**Area** 27,398 sq km **Population** 3,619,778  
**Capital** Tiranë **Language** Albanian

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**  
**Area** 51,129 sq km **Population** 4,590,310  
**Capital** Sarajevo **Language** Serbo-Croat

**BULGARIA**  
**Area** 110,994 sq km **Population** 7,262,675  
**Capital** Sofia **Languages** Bulgarian, Turkish, Macedonian

**CROATIA**  
**Area** 56,538 sq km **Population** 4,491,543  
**Capital** Zagreb **Language** Serbo-Croat

**MACEDONIA**  
**Area** 25,713 sq km **Pop.** 2,061,315  
**Capital** Skopje **Languages** Macedonian, Albanian

**ROMANIA**  
**Area** 237,500 sq km **Population** 22,246,862  
**Capital** Bucharest **Languages** Romanian, Hungarian, German

**SERBIA**  
**Area** 102,350 sq km **Population** 10,159,046  
**Capital** Belgrade **Languages** Serbo-Croat, Albanian, Hungarian

## EASTERN



Lithuania



Latvia



Estonia



Belarus



Ukraine



Moldova

**BELARUS**  
**Area** 207,600 sq km **Pop.** 9,685,768  
**Capital** Minsk **Language** Belorussian

**ESTONIA**  
**Area** 45,125 sq km **Population** 1,307,605  
**Capital** Tallinn **Languages** Estonian, Russian

**LATVIA**  
**Area** 64,589 sq km **Population** 2,245,423  
**Capital** Riga **Languages** Latvian, Russian

**LITHUANIA**  
**Area** 65,200 sq km **Population** 3,565,205  
**Capital** Vilnius **Languages** Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, Belorussian

**MOLDOVA**  
**Area** 33,700 sq km **Population** 4,324,450  
**Capital** Chisinau **Languages** Romanian (Moldovan), Ukrainian, Russian

**UKRAINE**  
**Area** 603,700 sq km **Population** 45,994,287  
**Capital** Kiev **Languages** Ukrainian, Russian



## RUSSIA

**Area** 17,075,400 sq km **Population** 140,702,094  
**Capital** Moscow **Languages** Russian, 38 other languages  
**Religions** Russian Orthodox 75%, other 25%

**Currency** Rouble **Highest point** Elbrus 5642 m  
**Main industries** Petroleum, machines, chemicals, steel, aircraft, weapons, trains, textiles  
**Major cities** Moscow (10,382,754), St. Petersburg (4,662,547), Novosibirsk (1,425,508), Nizhniy Novgorod (1,311,252), Yekaterinburg (1,293,537)

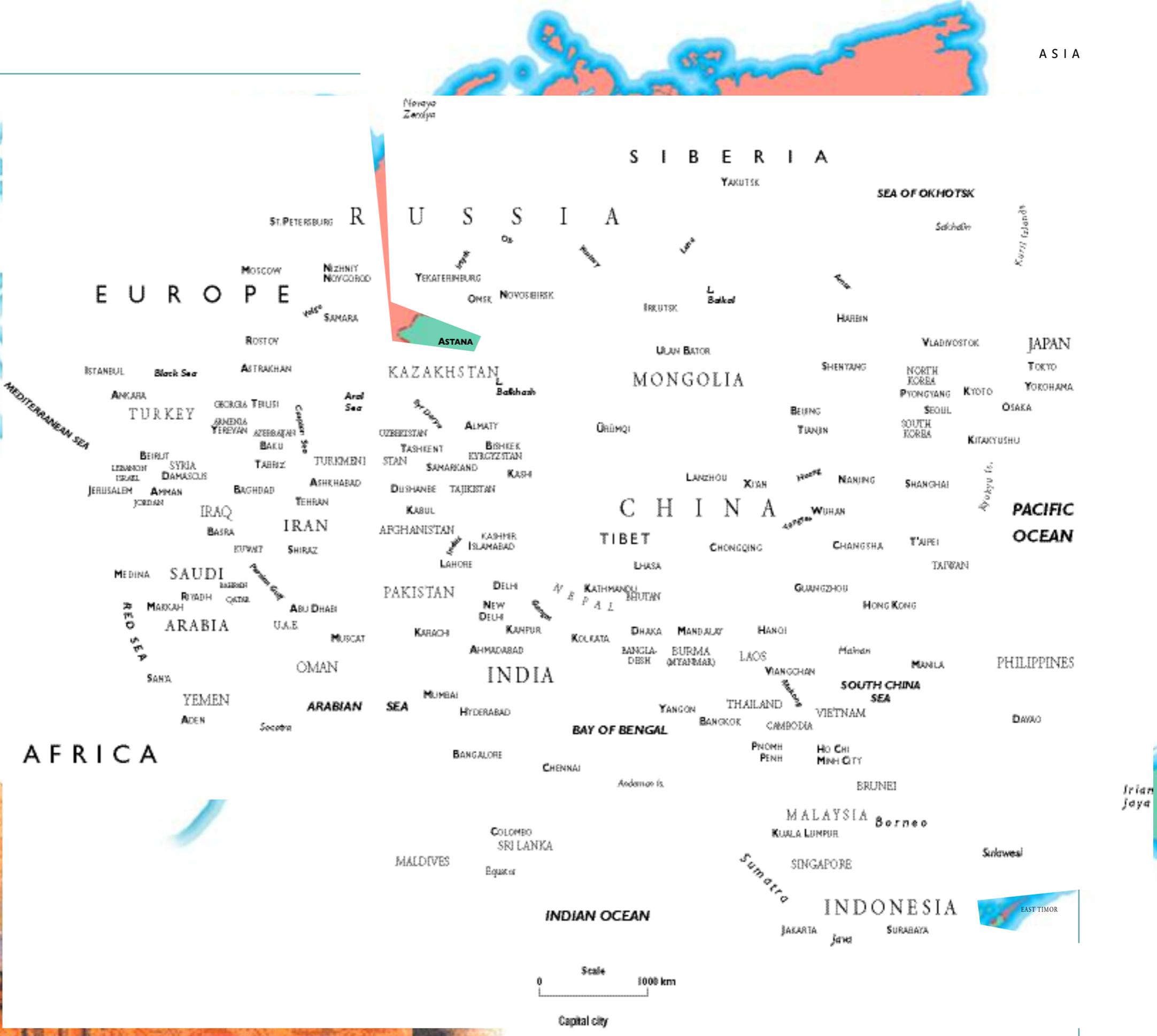
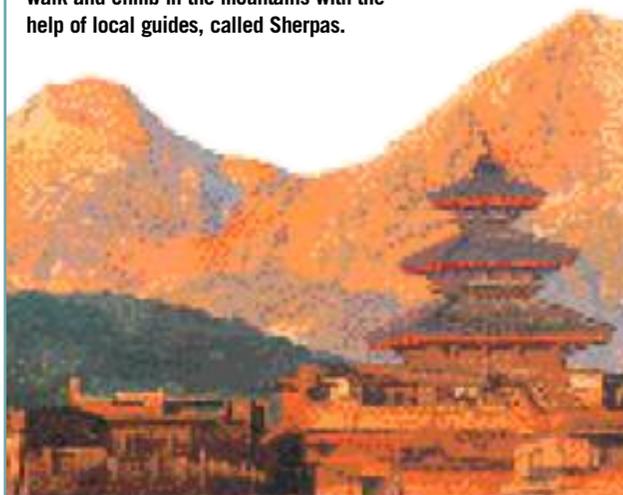
# ASIA

ASIA is the largest continent. The northern part is taken up entirely by Russia, where icy tundra and coniferous forests dominate the landscape. Further south are the barren grasslands, or steppes, of Central Asia. These merge into vast areas of desert that are bitterly cold in winter.

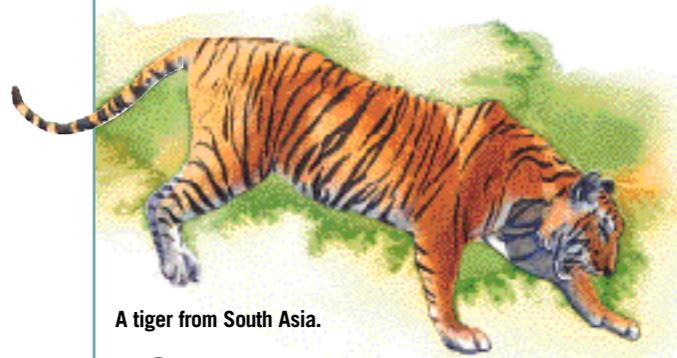
Much of southwest Asia, known as the Middle East, is also covered by desert, but this is hot, dry and often sandy. South of the world's highest mountain range, the Himalayas, the countries of southern Asia have a monsoon climate. Long periods of hot, dry weather are followed by heavy rains. To the southeast, a peninsula reaches out towards the many islands of Indonesia, where important areas of dense tropical rainforest are found.

Large areas of Asia are virtually uninhabited, but Asia still has much the largest population of any continent. In the south and east, several countries have become wealthy from their rich reserves of oil or their successful technological industries. In many other countries, however, poverty is rife. Most people farm for a living, and are vulnerable to floods or droughts. Asian cities are growing larger as more and more people move in from the countryside to try to find work.

Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, lies in a Himalayan valley. Tourists visit Nepal to walk and climb in the mountains with the help of local guides, called Sherpas.



# FACTFILE I



A tiger from South Asia.

## SOUTH



### AFGHANISTAN

**Area** 652,225 sq km **Pop.** 32,738,376  
**Capital** Kabul **Languages** Pashtun, Tajik

### BANGLADESH

**Area** 143,998 sq km **Pop.** 153,546,901  
**Capital** Dhaka **Languages** Bengali, English

### BHUTAN

**Area** 47,000 sq km **Population** 682,321  
**Capital** Thimphu **Language** Dzongkha

### MALDIVES

**Area** 298 sq km **Population** 379,174  
**Capital** Malé **Language** Divehi

### NEPAL

**Area** 147,181 sq km **Pop.** 29,519,114  
**Capital** Kathmandu **Language** Nepali

### SRI LANKA

**Area** 64,453 sq km **Pop.** 21,128,773  
**Capital** Colombo **Languages** Sinhala, Tamil, English



## PAKISTAN

**Area** 803,943 sq km **Population** 167,762,040 **Capital** Islamabad **Language** Urdu **Religions** Muslim 97% (Sunni 77%, Shi'a 20%), Other 3%



## INDIA

**Area** 3,287,590 sq km **Population** 1,147,995,898 **Capital** New Delhi  
**Languages** Hindi, Bengali, Bihari, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil, English **Religions** Hindu 83%, Muslim 11%, Christian 2%, Sikh 2%, other 2% **Currency** Rupee

## WEST AND CENTRAL



### ARMENIA

**Area** 29,800 sq km **Population** 2,968,586  
**Capital** Yerevan **Language** Armenian

### AZERBAIJAN

**Area** 88,600 sq km **Population** 8,177,717  
**Capital** Baku **Language** Azeri

### GEORGIA

**Area** 69,700 sq km **Population** 4,630,841  
**Capital** Tbilisi **Language** Georgian

### KAZAKHSTAN

**Area** 2,717,300 sq km **Population** 15,340,533 **Capital** Astana **Languages** Kazakh, Russian

### KYRGYZSTAN

**Area** 198,500 sq km **Population** 5,356,869 **Capital** Bishkek **Languages** Kyrgyz, Russian

### TAJIKISTAN

**Area** 143,100 sq km **Pop.** 7,211,884  
**Capital** Dushanbe **Language** Tajik

### TURKMENISTAN

**Area** 488,100 sq km **Pop.** 5,179,571  
**Capital** Ashkhabad **Language** Turkmen

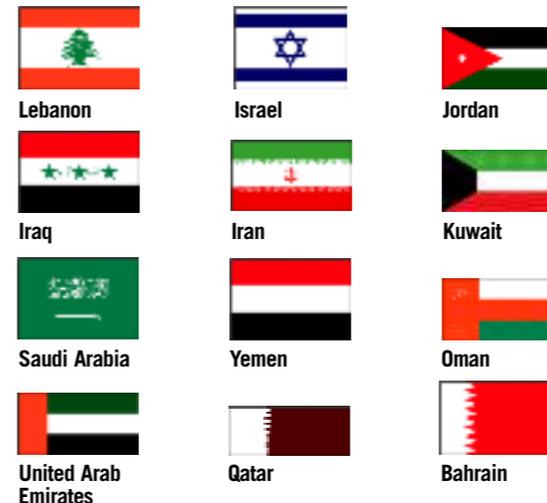
### UZBEKISTAN

**Area** 447,400 sq km **Pop.** 28,268,440  
**Capital** Tashkent **Language** Uzbek



## MIDDLE EAST

Syria



### BAHRAIN

**Area** 691.2 sq km **Population** 718,306  
**Capital** Manama **Language** Arabic

**Religions** Muslim 85%, Christian 7%, other 7%

### IRAN

**Area** 1,648,000 sq km **Population** 65,875,223 **Capital** Tehran **Language** Farsi **Religions** Muslim 99%, other 1%

### IRAQ

**Area** 438,317 sq km **Pop.** 28,221,181  
**Capital** Baghdad **Language** Arabic **Religions** Muslim 97%, other 3%

### ISRAEL

**Area** 21,946 sq km **Population** 7,112,359  
**Capital** Jerusalem **Languages** Hebrew, Arabic **Religions** Jewish 82%, Muslim 14%, Christian 2%, other 2%

### JORDAN

**Area** 97,740 sq km **Population** 6,198,677  
**Capital** Amman **Language** Arabic

**Religions** Muslim 92%, other 8%

### KUWAIT

**Area** 17,818 sq km **Population** 2,596,799  
**Capital** Kuwait **Language** Arabic

**Religions** Muslim 85%, other 15%

### LEBANON

**Area** 10,452 sq km **Population** 3,971,941  
**Capital** Beirut **Language** Arabic

**Religions** Muslim 75%, Christian 25%

### OMAN

**Area** 271,950 sq km **Population** 3,311,640 **Capital** Muscat **Language** Arabic **Religion** Muslim 100%

### QATAR

**Area** 11,437 sq km **Population** 928,635  
**Capital** Doha **Language** Arabic **Religions** Muslim 95%, other 5%

### SAUDI ARABIA

**Area** 2,400,900 sq km **Population** 28,161,417 **Capital** Riyadh **Language** Arabic **Religion** Muslim 100%

### SYRIA

**Area** 185,180 sq km **Population** 19,747,586 **Capital** Damascus **Language** Arabic **Religions** Muslim 90%, other 10%

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

**Area** 75,150 sq km **Population** 4,621,399  
**Capital** Abu Dhabi **Language** Arabic **Religions** Muslim 96%, other 4%

### YEMEN

**Area** 477,530 sq km **Population** 23,013,376 **Capital** San'a **Language** Arabic **Religions** Muslim 97%, other 3%

A street vendor in Jerusalem (*below*) pours a glass of tamarindy, a fruit drink.



## TURKEY

**Area** 779,452 sq km **Population** 71,892,807 **Capital** Ankara **Language** Turkish **Religions** Muslim 99%, other 1% **Currency** Turkish lira

# FACTFILE II

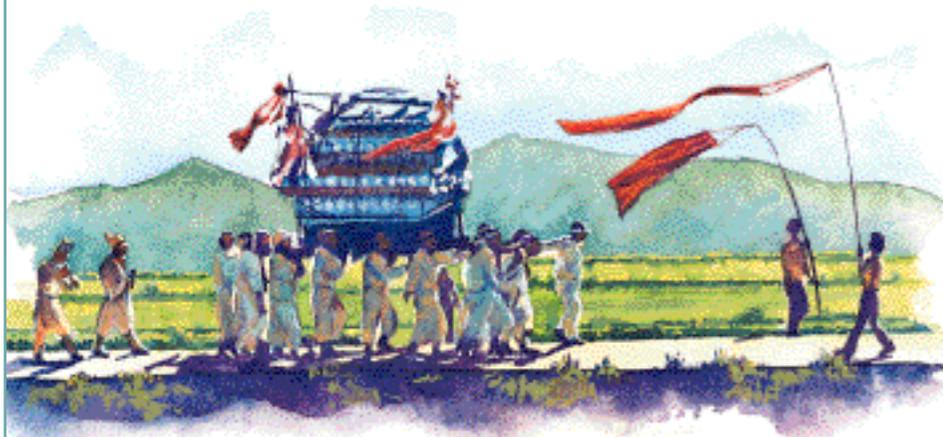


This Hani girl (above) is one of the many non-Chinese peoples from Yunnan province in the south of China.



## CHINA

**Area** 9,571,300 sq km **Population** 1,330,044,605 **Capital** Beijing **Language** Chinese (many dialects) **Religions** Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, Muslim **Currency** Yuan **Highest point** Mount Everest 8863 m **Main industries** Textiles, clothing, iron and steel, fertilizers, weapons, electronics, toys **Major cities** Shanghai (18,450,000), Beijing (17,430,000), Tianjin (10,240,000), Qingdao (7,311,200), Shenyang (7,204,000)



A traditional funeral procession in South Korea. Most South Koreans are Buddhists or Christians, but some people still hold the ancient belief of shamanism—that a spirit world lies alongside the earthly world. A priest, or shaman (male or female), acts as a link between the worlds.



## JAPAN

**Area** 377,815 sq km **Population** 127,288,419 **Capital** Tokyo **Language** Japanese, **Religions** Shinto and Buddhist 92%, other 8% **Currency** Yen **Highest point** Mount Fuji 3776 m **Main industries** Cars, electronic goods, ships, steel, metals, textiles, telecommunications



Taiwan

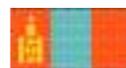
## EASTERN



South Korea



North Korea



Mongolia

## MONGOLIA

**Area** 1,565,000 sq km **Population** 2,996,081 **Capital** Ulan Bator **Language** Khalkha Mongol

## NORTH KOREA

**Area** 120,538 sq km **Population** 23,479,089 **Capital** Pyongyang **Language** Korean

## SOUTH KOREA

**Area** 99,222 sq km **Population** 49,232,844 **Capital** Seoul **Language** Korean

## TAIWAN

**Area** 35,590 sq km **Population** 22,920,946 **Capital** Taipei **Language** Chinese

## SOUTHEAST



Philippines



Brunei



Singapore



Burma



Thailand



Malaysia



Cambodia



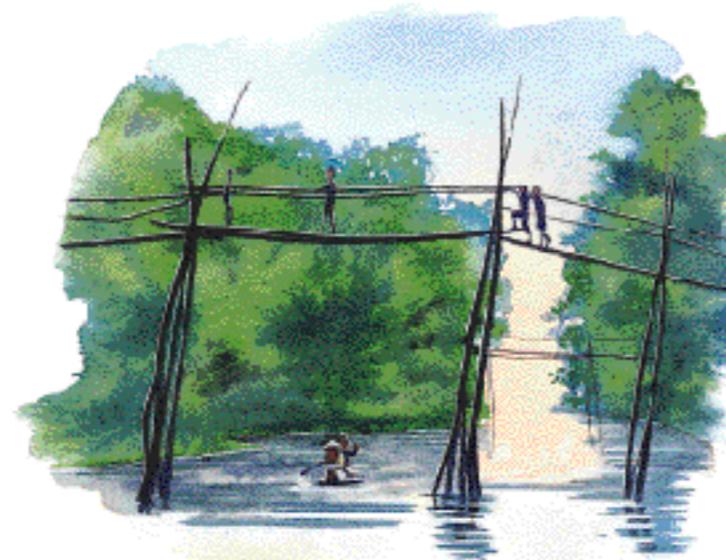
Laos



Vietnam

## BRUNEI

**Area** 5765 sq km **Population** 381,371 **Capital** Bandar Seri Begawan **Languages** Malay, Chinese **Religions** Muslim 66%, Buddhist 14%, Christian 10%, other 10% **BURMA (MYANMAR)** **Area** 672,552 sq km **Population** 47,758,181 **Capital** Yangon **Language** Burmese **Religions** Buddhist 89%, Muslim 4%, Christian 4%, other 3%



A bridge over the Mekong river in Vietnam.

## CAMBODIA

**Area** 181,035 sq km **Pop.** 14,241,640 **Capital** Phnom Penh **Language** Khmer **Religions** Buddhist 95%, other 5%

## LAOS

**Area** 236,800 sq km **Pop.** 6,677,534 **Capital** Viangchan **Languages** Lao, French **Religions** Buddhist 85%, other 5%



A boy from Vietnam.

## MALAYSIA

**Area** 329,758 sq km **Population** 25,274,133 **Capital** Kuala Lumpur **Language** Malay **Religions** Muslim 53%, Buddhist 18%, Chinese religions 11%, Hindu 7%, Christian 7%, other 4%

## PHILIPPINES

**Area** 300,000 sq km **Pop.** 92,681,453 **Capital** Manila **Languages** English, Filipino **Religions** Roman Catholic 83%, Protestant 9%, Muslim 5%, other 3%

## SINGAPORE

**Area** 616 sq km **Pop.** 4,608,167 **Languages** Chinese, English, Malay, Tamil **Religions** Taoist 29%, Buddhist 27%, Muslim 16%, Christian 10%, other 18%

## THAILAND

**Area** 513,115 sq km **Pop.** 65,493,298 **Capital** Bangkok **Language** Thai **Religions** Buddhist 95%, other 5%

## VIETNAM

**Area** 328,566 sq km **Population** 86,116,559 **Capital** Hanoi **Languages** Vietnamese, French **Religions** Buddhist 55%, Christian 7%, other 38%



## INDONESIA

**Area** 1,904,569 sq km **Population** 237,512,355 **Capital** Jakarta **Language** Indonesian **Religions** Muslim 87%, Protestant 6%, Catholic 3%, other 4% **Currency** Rupiah

# OCEANIA

**S**TRETCHING ACROSS a vast region of the Pacific Ocean, Oceania is made up of the large island of Australia (almost a continent in itself) together with New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and thousands of small Pacific islands.

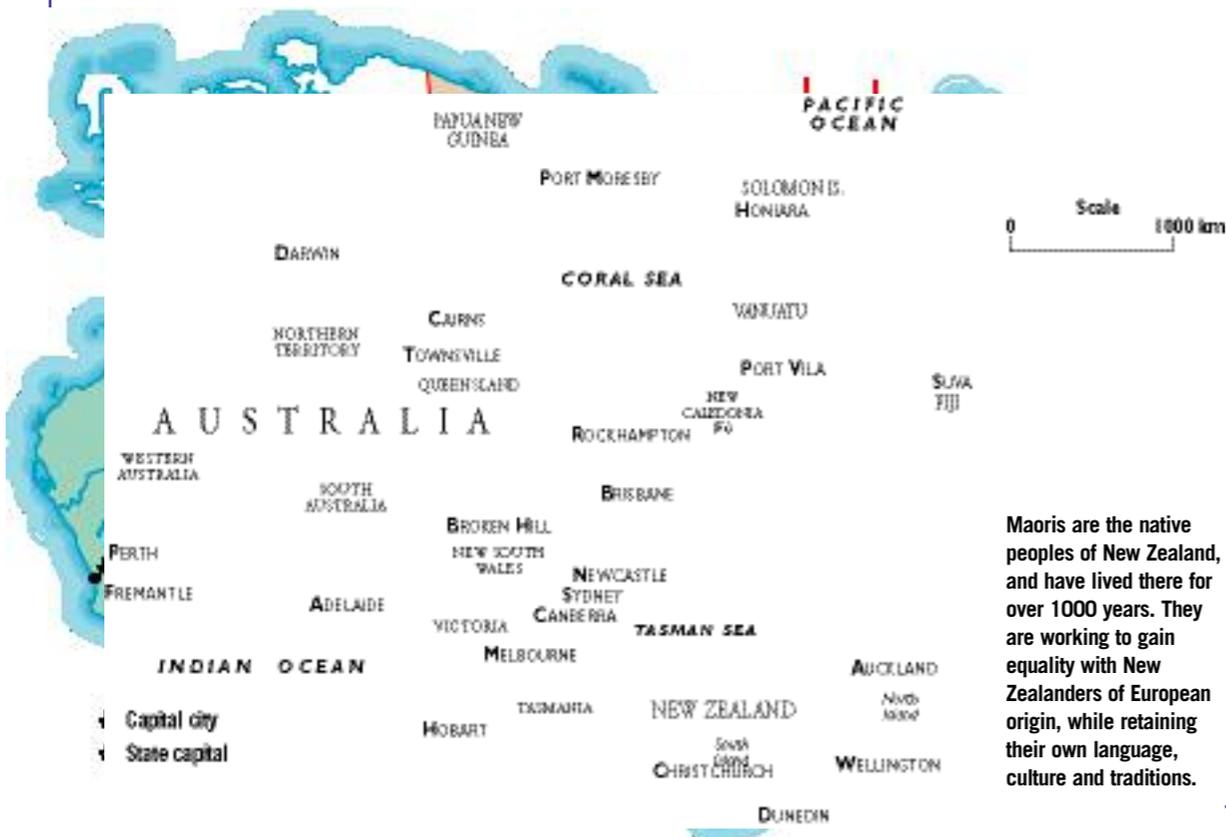
Much of Australia is covered with hot, dry desert and flat, open grassland known as the outback. Most people live in towns and cities near the coasts, especially the south coast. Papua New Guinea, in contrast, is a country of high mountains and dense rainforests. Many tribes of native peoples live in mountain valleys so isolated that they have only recently come into contact with the outside world.

New Zealand is made up of two islands, the north of which is warm and volcanic, while the south island is cooler, with mountains and forests. The grassy lowlands are fertile, and ideal for farming. The remote position of New Zealand, and also of Australia and Papua New Guinea, means that they are home to animals that are not found anywhere else in the world.



The world's longest coral reef, the Great Barrier reef, stretches for 2000 kilometres along the northeastern coast of Australia.

The Pacific islands are the remains of volcanoes that have erupted beneath the ocean. Some islands, such as Hawaii, still have active volcanoes. The islands are grouped together into nations. Some of these are independent, while others, such as New Caledonia, are colonies of European countries or the USA. Many Pacific islands are very beautiful, with rich vegetation and a warm climate. This makes them popular tourist destinations, and also gives them plenty of fertile land for farming crops.



Maoris are the native peoples of New Zealand, and have lived there for over 1000 years. They are working to gain equality with New Zealanders of European origin, while retaining their own language, culture and traditions.

# FACTFILE

Stilt house, Solomon Islands.



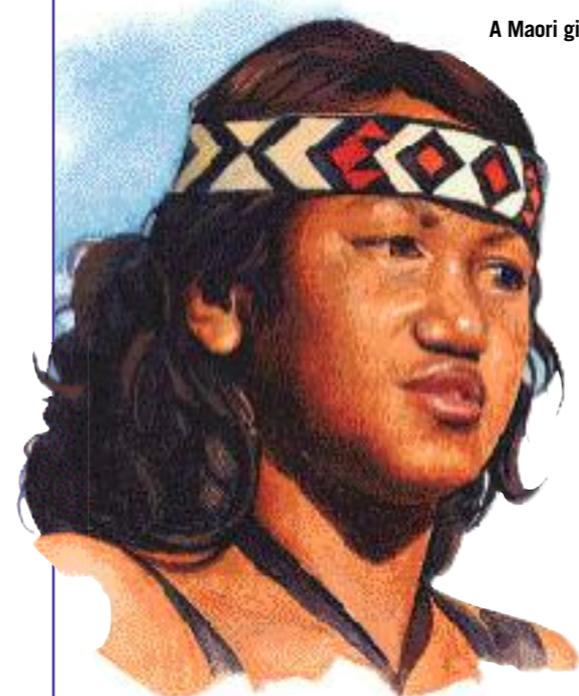
## AUSTRALIA

**Area** 7,682,300 sq km **Population** 20,600,856 **Capital** Canberra **Language** English **Religions** Anglican 26%, Roman Catholic 26%, other Christian 24%, other 24% **Currency** Australian dollar **Highest point** Mount Kosciusko 2228 m



## NEW ZEALAND

**Area** 270,534 sq km **Pop.** 4,173,460 **Capital** Wellington **Languages** English, Maori **Religions** Protestant 47%, Roman Catholic 15%, other 22%, non-religious 16% **Currency** New Zealand dollar



A Maori girl.

# PACIFIC ISLANDS



Papua New Guinea



Nauru



Kiribati



Solomon Islands



Tuvalu



Fiji



Vanuatu



Samoa



Tonga

## FIJI

**Area** 18,376 sq km **Pop.** 931,741 **Capital** Suva **Languages** Fijian, Hindi, English

**KIRIBATI**  
**Area** 811 sq km **Pop.** 110,356 **Capital** Tarawa **Languages** I-Kiribati, English

**NAURU**  
**Area** 21 sq km **Pop.** 13,770 **Capital** Yaren District **Languages** Nauruan, English

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**  
**Area** 462,840 sq km **Pop.** 5,931,769 **Capital** Port Moresby **Languages** Pidgin, English, Motu



A duck-billed platypus.

## SAMOA

**Area** 2831 sq km **Population** 217,083 **Capital** Apia **Languages** Samoan, English

**SOLOMON ISLANDS**  
**Area** 27,556 sq km **Pop.** 581,318 **Capital** Honiara **Languages** English, Pidgin

**TONGA**  
**Area** 748 sq km **Pop.** 119,009 **Capital** Nuku'alofa **Languages** Tongan, English

**TUVALU**  
**Area** 26 sq km **Pop.** 12,177 **Capital** Funafuti **Languages** Tuvaluan, English

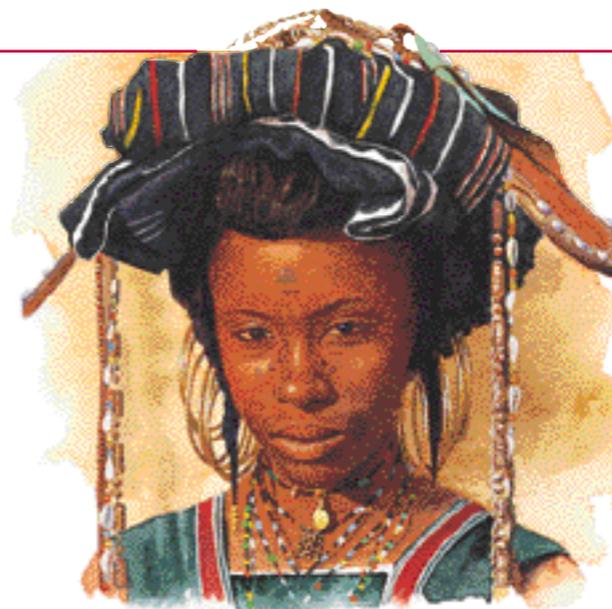
**VANUATU**  
**Area** 12,190 sq km **Population** 215,446 **Capital** Port Vila **Languages** Bislama, English, French

# AFRICA

THE SECOND largest continent after Asia, Africa is almost completely surrounded by water, apart from the narrow point at which it joins on to Asia. The north of the continent is mostly hot, barren

desert, edged with coastal areas that are cooler and wetter in winter.

Further south, the desert gives way to areas of flat grassland. The Equator runs right through the centre of Africa. The countries on or close to the Equator are dominated by the largest area of tropical rainforest outside South America. Here the climate is hot and wet.



Wodaabe girl from Niger.

The rainforest is home to many different plants and animals, including gorillas and chimpanzees. Many rivers weave their way through central Africa. To the east and south are large areas of open grassland scattered with trees, known as savanna. Animals such as elephants, zebra and wildebeest, roam the savanna, along with predators such as lions, wild dogs and hyenas.

## AFRICAN PEOPLES

North of the Sahara desert, the people of Africa are mainly Arabs and Berbers, who follow the religion of Islam. South of the Sahara, most people are black. They follow a variety of religions. Much of Africa was at one time controlled by Europe, and today people of European descent still live there, mostly in the south.

Africa exports its natural resources of metals and oil, as well as crops such as coffee and cocoa. However, many African countries are poor compared to the rest of the world. Few have established manufacturing industries. Most people live in the countryside, and rely on producing only enough crops, or farming enough cattle to support their families. They suffer from frequent droughts, floods and periods of starvation. Wars between and within countries also threaten their lives.

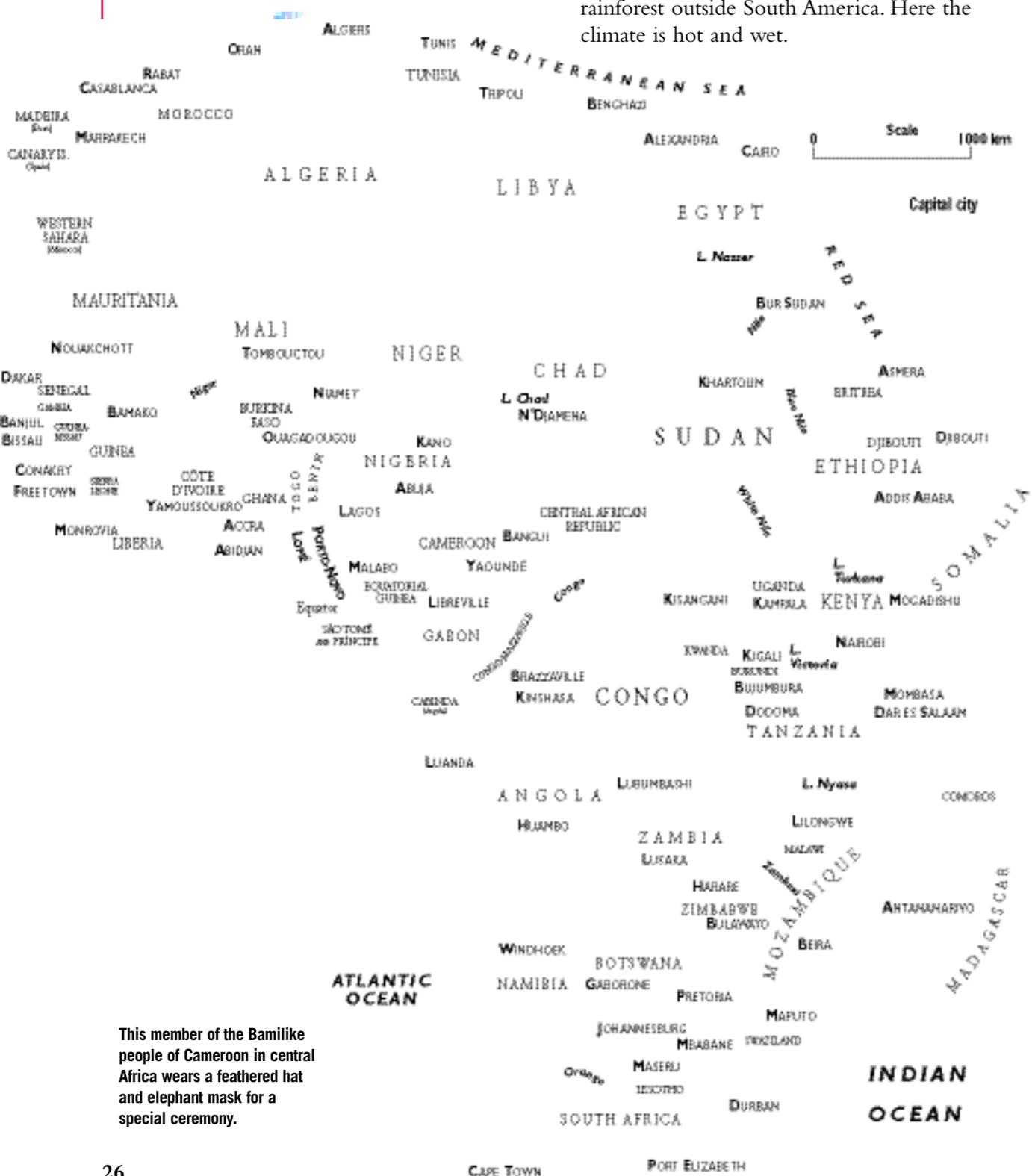
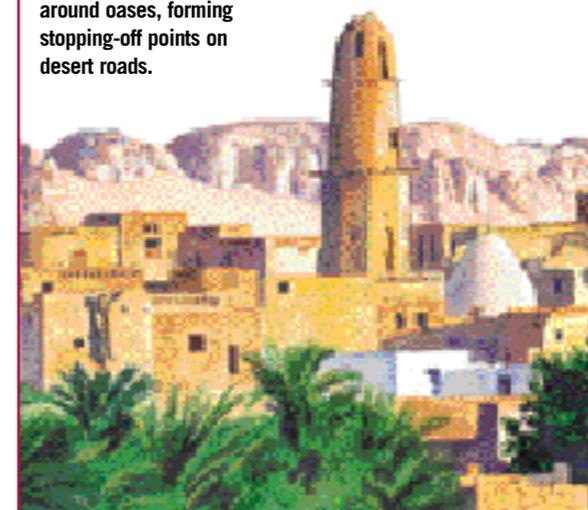
# SAHARA DESERT

THE WORLD'S largest desert, the Sahara stretches across an area of Northern Africa that is almost the size of the USA. It is constantly growing larger as the sparse grassland at its edges dies away. The Sahara is a hot desert, where rain may fail to fall for years on end. During the day, temperatures can reach over 50°C in the shade, but nights are often cold. There are areas of sand that often drift into large dunes, but much of the Sahara is made up of rocky ground and mountains.

Despite these harsh conditions, the Sahara desert is not without life. Animals that are specially adapted for life with little water and intense heat can survive there. Many take shelter in burrows during the day, coming out at night to feed.

People also live in the Sahara desert. Small towns are able to survive around oases in the desert. Groups of nomads also travel across the harsh landscape to trade in the town markets. For thousands of years, they carried their goods and supplies by camel, an animal that can cope extremely well with desert life. It also provided the nomads with milk and meat. Today motor vehicles are more often used to cross the desert.

**An oasis is a place in the desert where water comes up from beneath the ground. Here the land is fertile, and crops such as dates and olives can be grown. Towns are built around oases, forming stopping-off points on desert roads.**



This member of the Bamilike people of Cameroon in central Africa wears a feathered hat and elephant mask for a special ceremony.

# FACTFILE I

A Berber girl from Morocco.



## NORTHWEST



### ALGERIA

**Area** 2,381,741sq km **Pop.** 33,769,669  
**Capital** Algiers **Languages** Arabic, French

**MALI**  
**Area** 1,240,192 sq km **Pop.** 12,324,029  
**Capital** Bamako **Language** French

**MAURITANIA**  
**Area** 1,030,700 sq km **Population** 3,364,940 **Capital** Nouakchott **Languages** Arabic, Poular, Wolof, Solinke

**MOROCCO**  
**Area** 446,550 sq km **Population** 34,343,219 **Capital** Rabat **Languages** Arabic, Berber, Spanish, French

**NIGER**  
**Area** 1,267,000 sq km **Population** 13,272,679 **Capital** Niamey **Languages** French, Hausa, Tuareg, Djerma, Fulani

**TUNISIA**  
**Area** 164,150 sq km **Population** 10,383,577 **Capital** Tunis **Languages** Arabic, Berber, French

## NORTHEAST



### CHAD

**Area** 1,284,000 sq km **Population** 10,111,337 **Capital** N'Djamena  
**Languages** French, Arabic

### DJIBOUTI

**Area** 23,200 sq km **Pop.** 506,221 **Capital** Djibouti **Languages** Arabic, French

### EGYPT

**Area** 997,739 sq km **Pop.** 81,713,517  
**Capital** Cairo **Language** Arabic

### ERITREA

**Area** 121,144 sq km **Pop.** 5,028,475  
**Capital** Asmera **Language** Tigrinya

### ETHIOPIA

**Area** 1,128,221 sq km **Pop.** 78,254,090  
**Capital** Addis Ababa **Language** Amharic

### LIBYA

**Area** 1,775,500 sq km **Pop.** 6,173,579  
**Capital** Tripoli **Language** Arabic

### SOMALIA

**Area** 637,657 sq km **Population** 9,558,666 **Capital** Mogadishu **Languages** Somali, Arabic, English, Italian

### SUDAN

**Area** 2,505,813 sq km **Population** 40,218,455 **Capital** Khartoum **Languages** Arabic, English



## NIGERIA

**Area** 923,768 sq km **Population** 138,283,240 **Capital** Abuja **Languages** English, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo **Religions** Muslim 50%, Christian 40%, Animist 10%  
**Currency** Naira

## WEST



### BENIN

**Area** 112,622 sq km **Population** 8,294,941 **Capital** Porto-Novo **Language** French

### BURKINA FASO

**Area** 274,200 sq km **Population** 15,264,735 **Capital** Ouagadougou  
**Languages** French, Mossi

### CAMEROON

**Area** 475,442 sq km **Population** 18,467,692 **Capital** Yaoundé **Languages** French, English

### CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

**Area** 4033 sq km **Population** 426,998  
**Capital** Praia **Languages** Portuguese, Crioulo

### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

**Area** 622,984 sq km **Population** 4,434,873 **Capital** Bangui **Languages** French, Sango

### CÔTE D'IVOIRE

**Area** 322,462 sq km **Population** 18,373,060 **Capitals** Yamoussoukro, Abidjan **Languages** French, Dioula

### GAMBIA

**Area** 11,295 sq km **Population** 1,735,464  
**Capital** Banjul **Language** English

### GHANA

**Area** 238,537 sq km **Population** 23,382,848 **Capital** Accra **Languages** English, Kwa languages

### GUINEA

**Area** 245,857 sq km **Population** 10,211,437 **Capital** Conakry **Languages** French, Soussou, Manika

### GUINEA-BISSAU

**Area** 36,125 sq km **Population** 1,503,182  
**Capital** Bissau **Language** Portuguese

### LIBERIA

**Area** 97,754 sq km **Population** 3,334,587  
**Capital** Monrovia **Language** English

### SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

**Area** 964 sq km **Population** 206,178  
**Capital** São Tomé **Language** Portuguese

### SENEGAL

**Area** 196,192 sq km **Pop.** 12,853,259  
**Capital** Dakar **Language** French

### SIERRA LEONE

**Area** 71,740 sq km **Population** 6,294,774  
**Capital** Freetown **Languages** English, Krio, Mende, Limba, Temne

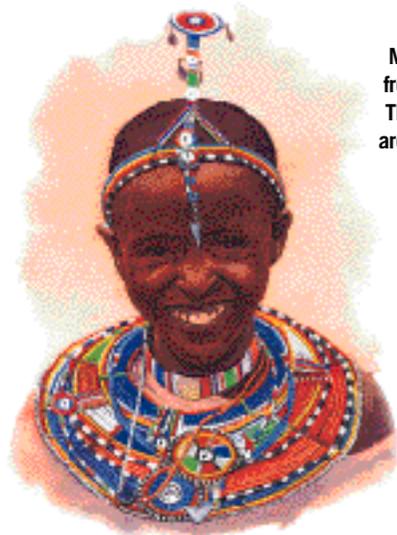
### TOGO

**Area** 56,785 sq km **Population** 5,858,673  
**Capital** Lomé **Languages** French, Kabiye

An African market.



# FACTFILE II



Maasai girl from Kenya. The Maasai are nomadic cattle herders.

## CENTRAL



**ANGOLA**  
**Area** 1,246,700 sq km **Pop.** 12,531,357  
**Capital** Luanda **Languages** Portuguese, Bantu languages

**CONGO (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC)**  
**Area** 2,344,885 sq km **Pop.** 66,514,506  
**Capital** Kinshasa **Languages** Swahili, Lingala, French

**CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE**  
**Area** 342,000 sq km **Pop.** 3,903,318 **Capital** Brazzaville **Language** French

**EQUATORIAL GUINEA**  
**Area** 28,051 sq km **Pop.** 616,459 **Capital** Malabo **Language** Spanish

**GABON**  
**Area** 267,667 sq km **Pop.** 1,485,832 **Capital** Libreville **Languages** French, Fang, Bantu languages

**ZAMBIA**  
**Area** 752,614 sq km **Pop.** 11,669,534 **Capital** Lusaka **Languages** English, Lozi

## EAST



**BURUNDI**  
**Area** 27,834 sq km **Population** 8,691,005  
**Capital** Bujumbura **Languages** French, Kirundi, Swahili

**COMOROS**  
**Area** 1862 sq km **Population** 731,775  
**Capital** Moroni **Languages** Arabic, French

**KENYA**  
**Area** 580,367 sq km **Population** 37,953,838 **Capital** Nairobi **Languages** Swahili, English, Kikuyu, Luo

**MALAWI**  
**Area** 118,484 sq km **Population** 13,931,831 **Capital** Lilongwe **Languages** English, Chichewa

**MOZAMBIQUE**  
**Area** 799,380 sq km **Population** 21,284,701 **Capital** Maputo **Languages** Portuguese, Ronga, Shangaan, Muchope

**RWANDA**  
**Area** 26,338 sq km **Population** 10,186,063 **Capital** Kigali **Languages** French, Kinyarwanda, Swahili, English

**SEYCHELLES**  
**Area** 454 sq km **Population** 82,247  
**Capital** Victoria **Languages** English, Creole

**TANZANIA**  
**Area** 945,087 sq km **Population** 40,213,162 **Capital** Dodoma **Languages** Swahili, English

**UGANDA**  
**Area** 241,139 sq km **Population** 31,367,972 **Capital** Kampala **Languages** English, Luganda

## SOUTHERN

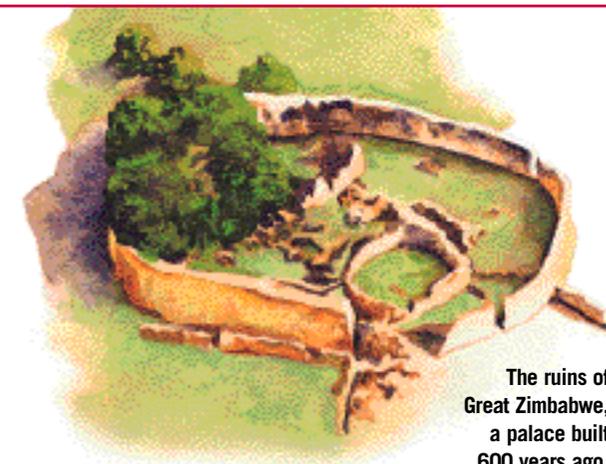


**BOTSWANA**  
**Area** 582,000 sq km **Population** 1,842,323 **Capital** Gaborone **Languages** English, Setswana

**LESOTHO**  
**Area** 30,355 sq km **Population** 2,128,180  
**Capital** Maseru **Languages** English, Sesotho, Zulu, Xhosa

**MADAGASCAR**  
**Area** 587,041 sq km **Population** 20,042,551 **Capital** Antananarivo  
**Languages** Malagasy, French, English

**MAURITIUS**  
**Area** 2040 sq km **Pop.** 1,274,189 **Capital** Port Louis **Languages** English, Creole



The ruins of Great Zimbabwe, a palace built 600 years ago.

**NAMIBIA**  
**Area** 824,292 sq km **Pop.** 2,088,669  
**Capital** Windhoek **Languages** English, Afrikaans, German

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Area** 1,221,037 sq km **Pop.** 43,786,115  
**Capitals** Pretoria, Cape Town **Languages** Afrikaans, English, Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho

**SWAZILAND**  
**Area** 17,363 sq km **Pop.** 1,128,814 **Capital** Mbabane **Languages** English, siSwati

**ZIMBABWE**  
**Area** 390,759 sq km **Population** 12,382,920 **Capital** Harare **Languages** English, Shona, Ndebele



A flat-topped mountain called Table Mountain overlooks the city of Cape Town, in South Africa. The city lies near the Cape of Good Hope.

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