

Benin

Continent: Africa

Languages Spoken: French (official), Fon, Yoruba, Bariba, Dendi

Population: 13,700,000

Currency: West African CFA franc (XOF)

Area: 114,763

Main Landmarks:

- {'name': 'Pendjari National Park', 'writeup': 'A UNESCO Biosphere Reserve known for its diverse wildlife including elephants, lions, and hippos.'}
- {'name': 'Royal Palaces of Abomey', 'writeup': 'Historic palaces of the Kingdom of Dahomey, showcasing traditional architecture and cultural heritage.'}
- {'name': 'Ouidah Museum of History', 'writeup': "Museum dedicated to the history of the transatlantic slave trade and Benin's cultural past."}

Head of State / Government:

President Patrice Talon

Main Cultural Events:

- {'name': 'Voodoo Festival', 'writeup': 'Annual celebration honoring the traditional Vodun religion with rituals, music, and dance.'}
- {'name': 'Ganvie Festival', 'writeup': 'Festival in the lake village of Ganvie celebrating the unique stilt village culture.'}

Food & Cuisine:

Beninese cuisine features staple foods like maize, rice, yams, and cassava, often served with spicy sauces and stews made from peanuts, tomatoes, and local vegetables.

Brief History:

Benin, formerly known as Dahomey, was a powerful kingdom before becoming a French colony in the 19th century. It gained independence in 1960 and has since developed a stable democratic government.

Important People:

- Hubert Maga - First President of Benin
- Mathieu Kérékou - Former President and influential political figure
- Angélique Kidjo - Grammy-winning singer and activist

Current Conflicts:

Benin is generally stable with no significant internal or external conflicts reported as of 2024.

Youtube Links:

- Discover Benin: Culture, History and Nature

- Top 10 Places to Visit in Benin
- Benin Voodoo Festival Explained
- A Day in Cotonou, Benin's Largest City
- Wildlife Safari in Pendjari National Park, Benin