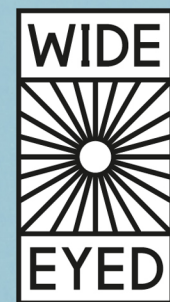




Maps

OF THE WORLD



50

Maps
OF THE WORLD

Publisher's note:

The maps in this book have been designed to tell a story, and show the natural curve of the Earth. They are not drawn to scale, nor do they reflect the longitudinal and latitudinal lines of each country. Please consult an atlas after using this book to plan your journey around the world!

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WIDE EYED EDITIONS

WELCOME TO 50 MAPS OF THE WORLD

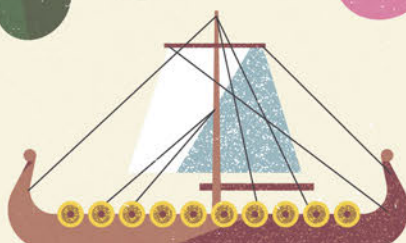
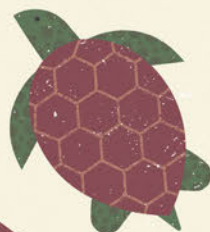
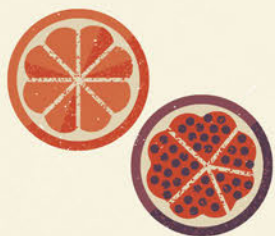
One of the questions that might pop up for you as you read this book is:

What is a country?

And it's a very good question. After all, the land you're standing on was there long before it became known as a country!

The truth is that a country might exist for a while, and then not exist anymore. This coming and going of countries happens all the time. Some countries become one country over time, like East and West Germany did in 1990, while others separate like Czechoslovakia did when it became Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 1993. There are about 30 more countries today than there were in 1990. It's worth remembering that when we look at an area of land and call it a country, we might be including people and history that, in years past, might not have been part of the country we know today at all.

So, are you ready to explore? Read on and start your discovery—hopefully you'll plan a great adventure through these places and visit them all one day!



WELCOME TO THE LAND OF SILVER

Argentina is a vast, ruggedly beautiful country with a rich history. It's a land of diverse landscapes, from the snow-capped Andes to the vast, open plains. The country is home to a variety of people, each with their own unique traditions and customs. Welcome to Argentina, a land of endless possibilities.

WELCOME BOX

With so much to investigate, it's good to have a plan! For each country, you may want to start by reading the short introduction.



EVA PERÓN

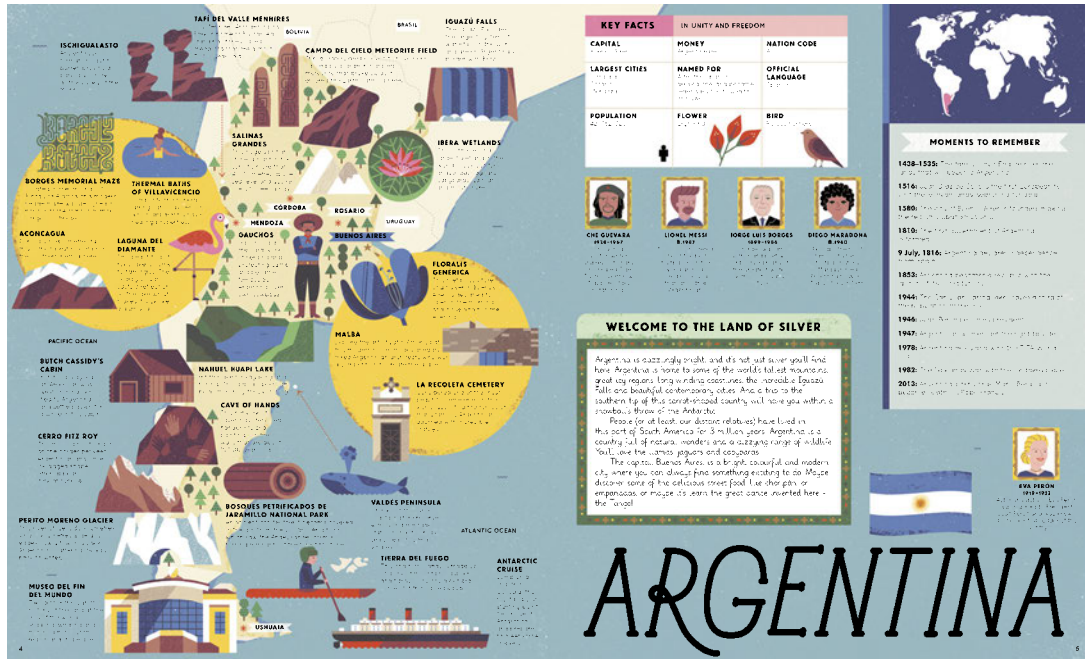
1919–1952

First lady and activist Eva Perón

PEOPLE OF NOTE

Meet five people who are part of the history and story of each country.

EXPLORING THIS BOOK



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

1438-1535: The famous Inca Empire rules the lands that will become Argentina.

1516: Juan Díaz de Solís is the first European to visit these Incan lands, searching for gold.

1580: The city of Buenos Aires is founded, marking the beginning of a Spanish colony.

1810: The first government of Argentina is established.

1852: Argentina declares its independence from Spain.

1916: Argentina becomes a member of the League of Nations.

1943: Argentina becomes a member of the United Nations.

1954: Argentina becomes a member of the Organization of American States.

1979: Argentina becomes a member of the Southern Cone Association of States.

1982: Argentina becomes a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

1990: Argentina becomes a member of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

1995: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2000: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2005: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2010: Argentina becomes a member of the African Union.

2015: Argentina becomes a member of the European Union.

2020: Argentina becomes a member of the United Nations.

2025: Argentina becomes a member of the World Health Organization.

2030: Argentina becomes a member of the International Monetary Fund.

2035: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2040: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2045: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2050: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2055: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2060: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2065: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2070: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2075: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2080: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2085: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2090: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2095: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2100: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2105: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2110: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2115: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2120: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2125: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2130: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2135: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2140: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2145: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2150: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2155: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2160: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2165: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2170: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2175: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2180: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2185: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2190: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2195: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2200: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2205: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

2210: Argentina becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.

2215: Argentina becomes a member of the World Bank.

2220: Argentina becomes a member of the Inter-American Development Bank.

COUNTRY ICONS

Let your eyes wander over the icons that celebrate a country's people, places, and history—history that we continue to make every day!

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL	MONEY
Buenos Aires	Argentine peso
LARGEST CITIES	NAMED FOR
Córdoba Rosario Mendoza	After the Spaniards arrived, the land was named for the legendary land of silver.
POPULATION	FLOWER
42,762,320	Erythrina

KEY FACTS

These provide a quick snapshot of each country, including the capital city, the country's motto, and birds and flowers that are culturally important, popular or unique.

Each of these maps contains information about a different country to give you a look at what you'll find there today and a glimpse of some **HISTORICAL SITES** that show how it looked in times past. Within each of these countries, we welcome you to explore the many **NATIONAL PARKS, ANCIENT HISTORICAL SITES, BEAUTIFUL FORESTS,** and **GLIMMERING BODIES OF WATER,** and hope they will inspire you to respect and explore the great outdoors. Just remember: these maps have been designed to tell a story: they aren't drawn to scale. At the back of this book, you'll find a **SEARCH-AND-FIND ADVENTURE**, which invites you to travel back through the book and uncover lots of different elements that you might have missed on your first trip around the world.

GET TO KNOW THESE SYMBOLS ON EVERY MAP

CAPITAL CITY

LARGEST CITIES

COUNTRY

BODY OF WATER

BORDERING COUNTRY

BORDER LINE

PEOPLE OF NOTE





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- AD 481–511:** During his reign, King Clovis I of the Franks takes over much of Gaul, that we now call France.
- 768–814:** Charlemagne, known as Charles the Great, rules France and forms an empire across Western Europe.
- 1431:** Joan of Arc is executed for heresy.
- 1789:** The Bastille is stormed during the French Revolution.
- 1804:** Napoleon Bonaparte becomes emperor and subsequently takes control of most of Western Europe.
- 1900:** Impressionist artist Claude Monet paints *The Artist's Garden at Giverny*.
- 1914–1918:** World War I takes place with fierce fighting in France, killing more than 1.3 million French people.
- 1914:** Marie Curie develops and uses a mobile X-ray machine to treat wounded at the Battle of Marne.
- 1940:** Germany completes its World War II invasion of France.
- 1944:** Paris is liberated from Germany.
- 1959:** Charles de Gaulle becomes president of France.
- 1969:** Concorde, the world's first supersonic passenger jet, takes off.
- 1998:** France wins its first soccer World Cup.
- 2013:** Same-sex marriage becomes legal in France.
- 2018:** France wins the soccer World Cup again!
- 2019:** Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris catches fire and is almost destroyed.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF ROMANCE AND CROISSANTS!

Are you ready to make decisions? Because there are so many versions of France that you can't possibly experience them all! There's fashion France, with its rich and famous stylings from Paris to the French Riviera; there's food France, which is absolutely everywhere; there's natural France with its beautiful rivers, gorges, and forests; and there's ancient France with prehistoric paintings and monuments. And that's just the beginning! No wonder this is the most visited country in the world.

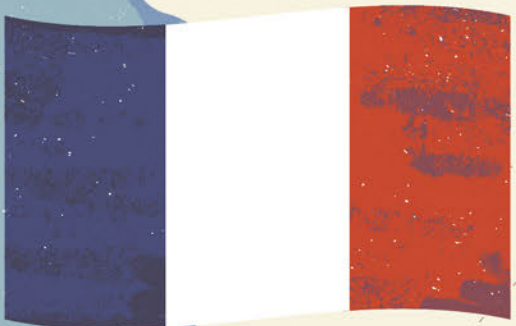
The capital of France is Paris, the "City of Light," and it is full of art in its many beautiful galleries and on the street too! If there's one thing that Paris is famous for, it's sitting in a café, ordering a coffee and watching the world go by. You may want to order a flaky croissant as well...

KEY FACTS		LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ (LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY)	
CAPITAL Paris	MONEY Euro	NATION CODE FR	
LARGEST CITIES Paris Marseille Lyon Toulouse	NAMED FOR The Franks, a Germanic tribe who took control of Gaul in the 5th century	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE French	
POPULATION 67,075,000	FLOWER Fleur-de-lys (yellow iris) 	BIRD Gallic rooster 	



ATLANTIC OCEAN

FRANCE





COCO CHANEL
1883–1971

A fashion designer, she created and ran one of the world's most famous luxury labels.

LA JUMENT

The rocky, wild waters off Brittany have sunk many boats, so lighthouses like La Jument pop up in the middle of the ocean to save lives.



MONT SAINT-MICHEL

This island is a short walk from the mainland and its medieval buildings and abbey make it look like a fairy-tale kingdom.

ROUEN CATHEDRAL

This has been a church since AD 400 and over hundreds of years was built into a cathedral.



CAMEMBERT

Visit the town where one of the most famous cheeses in the world comes from!

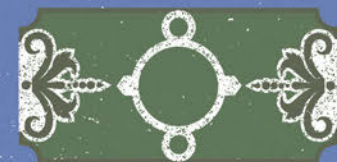


CARNAC STANDING STONES

In fields around Carnac, you'll find 3,000 standing stones that were carefully arranged thousands of years ago!

AZAY-LE-RIDEAU

This is an island castle in the middle of the Indre River—it almost looks like a ship!



CHÂTEAU DE CHENONCEAU

This pretty little castle sits over the Cher River and looks a lot like a bridge!



CHARLES DE GAULLE
1890–1970

Army officer de Gaulle led the French resistance in World War II and became the first president in a new period of French history.



SARAH BERNHARDT
1844–1923

An actor who appeared in some of the earliest films ever made. She lost her leg in an accident in 1915 and performed in roles where she could sit down or wear a prosthetic limb.

SPAIN



THE LOUVRE

It's the world's most-visited art museum and has artifacts from across human history.

ARC DE TRIOMPHE

It's a war memorial built in the 19th century, but it also feels like the gateway to Paris.

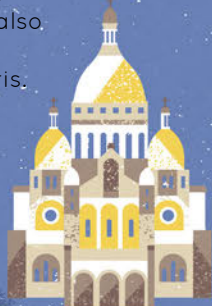
EIFFEL TOWER

The universal symbol of Paris! Climb to the top and gaze out over this magnificent city.



SACRÉ-CŒUR

Stroll around Montmartre and head to the highest point of the city to this basilica and monument to feel the love.



PARIS

PALACE OF VERSAILLES

You can't miss Versailles the grandest of palaces with gold, gardens, statues, and 2,300 rooms!

CHEFS IN LYON

Cooking is synonymous with France, and Lyon has been home to many of France's finest chefs, including the revered Paul Bocuse.



LASCAUX CAVES

These prehistoric cave paintings will really make you feel like you've stepped back in time, 17,000 years ago.



PONT DU GARD

This amazing 2,000-year-old, three-level bridge and aqueduct was built by the Romans.



TOULOUSE

CANAL DU MIDI

Jump on a barge and explore the 300-year-old canal from the Atlantic coast to the Mediterranean.



THE CAMARGUE

Explore this wetland national park and look out for the famous flamingos dipping their toes in the water.



OLD PORT OF MARSEILLE

Sit for a cool drink in one of the Old Port's cafés, surrounded by 2,500 years of trading history.



JOAN OF ARC
c.1412–1431

This farmgirl turned warrior inspired the French to fight the English invasion during the Hundred Years' War.



VICTOR HUGO
1802–1885

One of France's most famous authors, Hugo wrote *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Les Misérables*.

BELGIUM

LUXEMBOURG

GERMANY

SWITZERLAND

ITALY

NICE



FRENCH RIVIERA

Wear your sunglasses and look fabulous on the French Riviera—it's where the rich and famous come to relax.

VERDON GORGE

Take a kayak along the Verdon River and marvel at the beautiful limestone canyon walls.





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 2500 BC:** The stones are arranged at Stonehenge.
- 55–54 BC:** Roman Emperor Julius Caesar sets out to conquer Britain.
- AD 43:** Londinium (you guessed it, London!) is established by the Romans.
- 866:** The Vikings invade Britain.
- 1066:** William the Conqueror defeats King Harold at the Battle of Hastings.
- 1348:** The Black Death, a bubonic plague, reaches England and kills between a third and half of the population.
- 1455–1485:** A fight for the right to rule England called the War of the Roses takes place between two branches of the Plantagenets, the houses of York and Lancaster.
- 1666:** Most of London is destroyed in the Great Fire.
- 1845–1852:** The Potato Famine in Ireland kills 1 million people.
- 1914–1918:** The United Kingdom fights with the Allies in World War I.
- 1922:** Most of Ireland gains independence from the UK. Six counties in the North remain within the UK.
- 1928:** Women in the UK gain the same voting rights as men.
- 1990:** Mary Robinson, the first female president of Ireland, is elected.
- 1997:** *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (called *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the United States), the first novel in J. K. Rowling's series, is released.
- 2015:** Ireland votes for same-sex marriage.

UNITED KINGDOM and IRELAND



CHARLES DARWIN
1809–1882

Naturalist Charles Darwin wrote *On the Origin of Species*, which proposed that all life is descended from common ancestors.



QUEEN ELIZABETH I
1533–1603

Elizabeth I's reign became known as the "Golden Era" because of the unprecedented peace and prosperity that blossomed under her rule.

CARRICK-A-REDE ROPE BRIDGE

Constructed by salmon fishermen over 250 years ago, the rickety rope bridge in Antrim spans a 65-foot gap and swings 98 feet above the chilly Atlantic ocean.

GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

Legend has it that the 40,000 pillars rising out of the sea on the Antrim coastline were built by a giant!

THE CLIFFS OF MOHER

Experience the wild Atlantic seas from the Cliffs of Moher in Clare. Watch out for Atlantic puffins!

BELFAST

DUBLIN

THE SPIRE
This stainless steel, needle-like monument stands in the heart of Dublin, casting a long, thin shadow from its 400-foot height.

GLASTONBURY TOR, SOMERSET

A centuries-old site for both pagan and Christian monuments and structures.

THE EDEN PROJECT, CORNWALL

Two giant geodesic biomes containing more than two million plants of 5,000 species. The first biome re-creates a tropical rain forest and the second a Mediterranean climate.

KEY FACTS

CAPITALS

England: London
Scotland: Edinburgh
Northern Ireland: Belfast
Wales: Cardiff
Ireland: Dublin

LARGEST CITIES

UK: London
Birmingham
Manchester
Glasgow

Ireland: Dublin

ENGLAND, WALES, NI: DIEU ET MON DROIT (GOD AND MY RIGHT)

MONEY

UK: British Pound
Ireland: Euro

NATION CODE

GBR
IE

POPULATION

UK 66,400,000
Ireland 4,800,000

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

English, Welsh, Gaelic, Scots, Irish

FLOWER

England: Rose
Wales: Daffodil
Northern Ireland & Ireland: Shamrock
Scotland: Thistle



BIRD

UK: Robin
Ireland: Northern lapwing



ATLANTIC OCEAN

LOCH NESS

Can you spot Nessie poking her head through the surface of this 23-mile-long freshwater loch in the Scottish Highlands?



HOLYROOD PALACE

The official residence of the queen in Scotland, the palace has been used by nine British monarchs since the 15th century.

FORTH BRIDGE

Opened in 1890, this 8,094-foot-long bridge contains 60,000 tons of steel, and 6.5 million rivets.

BEN NEVIS

Towering above glacial valleys, the mist-shrouded mountain of this ancient volcano is the tallest peak in the United Kingdom.



ARTHUR'S SEAT

This extinct volcano gives hikers spectacular views of the city of Edinburgh.

EDINBURGH CASTLE

Sitting atop an extinct volcano, the current castle dates from the 12th century but people have lived on "Castle Rock" since the Bronze Age (850 BC).



GLASGOW

EDINBURGH

HADRIAN'S WALL

This mighty 73-mile-long defensive wall was built by the Romans nearly 2,000 years ago to prevent raids from Scottish tribe.



UNITED KINGDOM

CONWY CASTLE

This 700-year-old castle was built by the English king Edward I as part of his "iron ring" of castle fortifications designed to assist his takeover of Wales.



MANCHESTER

BIRMINGHAM

SNOWDONIA

The oldest national park in Wales, Snowdonia, is home to Wales' highest mountain, Snowdon (3,560 ft) and its largest lake, Bala Lake (1.8 sq mi).

THE COTSWOLDS

The rolling hills and pretty woodlands of the Cotswolds are famous! Look out for a "Cotswold Lion" on your travels. (Hint: it's actually a sheep!)

CARDIFF

LONDON

THE JURASSIC COAST

This World Heritage Site is a 95-mile stretch of coastline that reveals 185 million years of the Earth's history. The Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods are all on display.

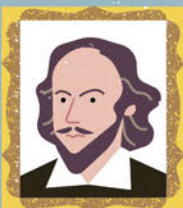
STONEHENGE

This Neolithic stone circle is one of the most spectacular prehistoric monuments in Europe.

WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER

These striking chalky white cliffs are over 300 feet tall and stretch for several miles on either side of the town of Dover.

FRANCE



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE 1564-1616

One of the greatest writers in the world, Shakespeare wrote 37 plays and 154 sonnets that are still regularly performed all over the world today.

ROMAN BATHS

Walk in the footsteps of the Romans when you explore the ancient complex of heated rooms and plunge pools, built over a natural hot spring, which were once used for bathing and socializing.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

This palace became the primary residence of the British monarch when Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837.

THE TOWER OF LONDON

This 11th-century fortress has been a prison, an execution chamber, a royal palace, a zoo, an armory, an army barracks, and a jewel house!



HAMPTON COURT PALACE, SURREY

This palace became a favorite of King Henry VIII, who liked to bring guests here so they would be impressed by his wealth and power.

WEMBLEY STADIUM

Known as the "Home of Football," the stadium can hold up to 90,000 passionate soccer fans.



BONO B.1960

Rock star Bono, from the band U2, is well known throughout the world for his music and his work on global poverty.



EMMELINE PANKHURST 1858-1928

Pankhurst was the leader of the British suffragette movement and was instrumental in achieving women's right to vote in 1928.

WELCOME TO A LAND OF KINGS, QUEENS, AND CONQUESTS

Ireland and the United Kingdom have long, colorful histories. The United Kingdom is made up of four different countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state in the UK and is the longest-serving monarch in the world! You can visit her home, Buckingham Palace, in London, England's capital city.

As you journey around the UK, you'll see a prehistoric standing-stone circle, a Scottish loch (lake) that is said to be home to a legendary monster, stunning national parks with snow-capped mountains, and busy modern cities full of museums and galleries.

Ireland is divided between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in the south. Here you'll discover wild coastlines, lush countryside, and of course the famous Irish hospitality and love of a good time.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

c. 2nd–1st century BC: Early Germanic peoples occupy what will later become Northern Germany.

AD 800: Emperor Charlemagne, Frankish ruler of France and Germany, crowned Roman emperor by Pope Leo III.

911: The Frankish kingdom disintegrates into separate feudal states—Bavaria, Franconia, Swabia, Lorraine, and Saxony.

1450: Johannes Gutenberg introduces moveable-type printing, contributing to the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution.

1618–1648: The Thirty Years' War devastates Germany and affects most of central and western Europe.

1871: The German Empire is founded.

1939: Hitler invades Poland, starting World War II.

1945: Germany is defeated and is eventually split into two countries, West Germany and communist East Germany.

1961: The Berlin Wall is built, dividing Berlin into East and West.

1989: The Berlin Wall comes down.

1990: East and West Germany are reunited and become one country again.

2014: Germany wins the FIFA World Cup for the fourth time.



ENGLISH CHANNEL

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF POETS AND THINKERS

Composers, philosophers, scientists, inventors... Germany has had more than its share of great minds, and they've had a huge impact on the world.

Evidence of this wonderful country's history can be seen almost everywhere you look: ancient Roman ruins, medieval castles, and prehistoric sites are scattered across the country. Throughout Germany's colorful history, there have been times where it's been one empire, then broken apart into feudal states, become an empire again and once more broken apart. In fact, in its current shape, it's only been one country since 1990!

It's a rich land, with beautiful rivers, mountains, and lakes, so there's plenty of opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. And the modern cities and beautiful old towns will keep you entertained for days. The capital, Berlin, is one of the world's great art cities, famous for being at the cutting edge of culture, art, and entertainment.

So what are you waiting for? Let's get ready to explore!



HEIDI KLUM
B.1973

Klum has gone from being a supermodel to the host and producer of globally successful TV shows.

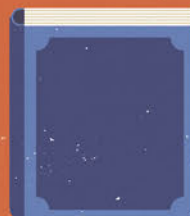


STEFFI GRAF
B.1969

One of the greatest tennis players in the world, Graf won 22 Grand Slam singles titles.



ELTZ CASTLE
This medieval castle overlooks the Moselle River. It has belonged to the same family for 850 years!



GUTENBERG MUSEUM

Johannes Gutenberg pioneered printing in Western Europe. This museum celebrates his printing press and the effect printing had on the modern world.



WATERING CAN MUSEUM


Looking for a strange museum? How about one that celebrates the humble watering can?




FRANCE

GERMANY


KEY FACTS			UNITY AND JUSTICE AND FREEDOM	
CAPTIAL Berlin	MONEY Euro	NATION CODE DE		
LARGEST CITIES Berlin Hamburg Munich Cologne Frankfurt	NAMED FOR An Old German word which means "of the people"	OFFICIAL LANGUAGES German		
POPULATION 83,755,000	FLOWER Cornflower	BIRD Golden eagle		




CHECKPOINT CHARLIE
This was the best-known crossing point between East and West Berlin during the Cold War.




EAST SIDE GALLERY
In 1989, after the Berlin Wall was dismantled, a section was left standing. Today it is the world's largest outdoors mural and artists from around the world contributed to this colorful "gallery."




MUSEUM ISLAND
There are five world-class museums on Museum Island where you can explore thousands of years of human history.




HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL
This haunting memorial to the Jewish victims of World War II consists of 2,711 concrete blocks of varying heights.



BRANDENBURG GATE
This monument was completed in 1791 and later became a symbol of peace following the reunification of East and West Germany.



DESIGN PANOPTIKUM
Weird and wonderful objects are all around you at this surreal museum of industrial objects.



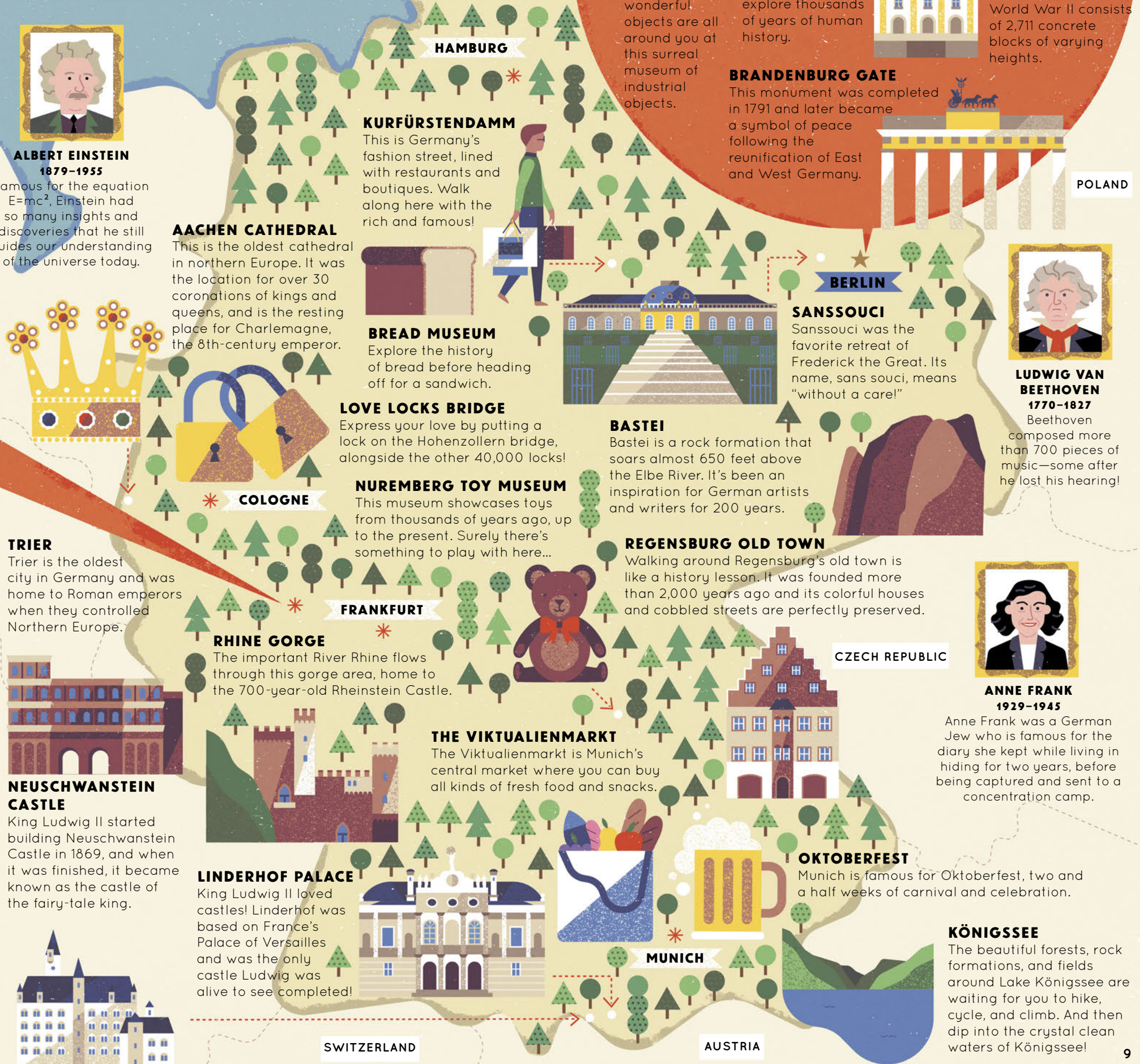
ALBERT EINSTEIN
1879-1955
Famous for the equation $E=mc^2$, Einstein had so many insights and discoveries that he still guides our understanding of the universe today.



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
1770-1827
Beethoven composed more than 700 pieces of music—some after he lost his hearing!



ANNE FRANK
1929-1945
Anne Frank was a German Jew who is famous for the diary she kept while living in hiding for two years, before being captured and sent to a concentration camp.



HAMBURG
*
KURFÜRSTENDAMM
This is Germany's fashion street, lined with restaurants and boutiques. Walk along here with the rich and famous!

AACHEN CATHEDRAL
This is the oldest cathedral in northern Europe. It was the location for over 30 coronations of kings and queens, and is the resting place for Charlemagne, the 8th-century emperor.

BREAD MUSEUM
Explore the history of bread before heading off for a sandwich.

LOVE LOCKS BRIDGE
Express your love by putting a lock on the Hohenzollern bridge, alongside the other 40,000 locks!

NUREMBERG TOY MUSEUM
This museum showcases toys from thousands of years ago, up to the present. Surely there's something to play with here...

REGENSBURG OLD TOWN
Walking around Regensburg's old town is like a history lesson. It was founded more than 2,000 years ago and its colorful houses and cobbled streets are perfectly preserved.

THE VIKTUALIENMARKT
The Viktualienmarkt is Munich's central market where you can buy all kinds of fresh food and snacks.

OKTOBERFEST
Munich is famous for Oktoberfest, two and a half weeks of carnival and celebration.

KÖNIGSSEE
The beautiful forests, rock formations, and fields around Lake Königssee are waiting for you to hike, cycle, and climb. And then dip into the crystal clean waters of Königssee!

COLOGNE
*
FRANKFURT
*
MUNICH
*
TRIER
Trier is the oldest city in Germany and was home to Roman emperors when they controlled Northern Europe.

NEUSCHWANSTEIN CASTLE
King Ludwig II started building Neuschwanstein Castle in 1869, and when it was finished, it became known as the castle of the fairy-tale king.

LINDERHOF PALACE
King Ludwig II loved castles! Linderhof was based on France's Palace of Versailles and was the only castle Ludwig was alive to see completed!

CZECH REPUBLIC
AUSTRIA
SWITZERLAND
POLAND



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

c.2000 BC: Indo-Europeans migrate into Italy, become known as Italic tribes, and establish the ancient Roman civilization.

280–275 BC: Following the Pyrrhic War, Rome becomes the undisputed master of Italy.

27 BC: The Roman Empire is established by Augustus and two centuries of peace and prosperity follow.

AD 200–300: The Roman Empire suffers under Barbarian invasions and its rule is weakened by conflict.

500–1000: After a series of wars and conquests on the Italian Peninsula, Rome re-emerges as one of the most powerful cities.

1100–1300: Increasing trade in Europe makes city states like Venice and Sicily more powerful. Banks and universities are established.

c.1300–1600: The Renaissance occurs—art, invention, exploration, and science flourishes.

1600s–1800: Succession wars in Europe divide Italy between Austria and Spain. Italy is invaded by France during the age of Napoleon.

1815–1870: ‘Risorgimento’, or Italian unification begins, and the whole of Italy becomes one kingdom.

1915: Italy joins World War I on the side of Britain and France despite being in an alliance with Germany.

1940: Italy fights World War II on the side of Germany and Japan and is defeated, which results in a civil war.

1946–1960: The monarchy is abolished, democracy is reinstated, and Italy experiences an economic boom.

2016: An earthquake in central Italy kills more than 200 people.



ITALY

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF PIZZA, EMPERORS AND GENIUS INVENTORS

It's hard to imagine what the world we know today would be like without Italy. What if there was no pizza? No pasta? No gelato? And what would life have been like without the influence of the Romans?

At the height of its power, the Roman Empire was one of the biggest empires the world has ever known. Romans used their engineering skills to build huge aqueducts to transport water and created their own concrete to build structures like the Pantheon and the Colosseum, which still stand today, almost 2,000 years later. In Italy's modern-day cities, ancient Roman ruins sit side by side with medieval piazzas and often skyscrapers and shopping strips. Italy also gave us some of the world's greatest artists, explorers, scientists, and inventors.

The countryside in Italy is a highlight—travel from top to bottom through rolling hills, soaring alpine peaks, crystal-clear lakes, lush woodlands, and vast vineyards, as well as rocky coastlines dotted with cliffside villages.



SANTA MARIA DEL FIORE BASILICA

For decades there was a hole in this cathedral as no one knew how to build the grand domed roof that the designer, Arnolfo di Cambio, imagined for it!

UFFIZI GALLERY

The masterpieces in this gallery are so famous that visitors stand in line for up to five hours to get in.



PONTE VECCHIO

This medieval stone bridge over the River Arno was once lined with butcher shops, but today you'll see jewelry shops.

KEY FACTS

L'ITALIA E' UNA REPUBBLICA DEMOCRATICA, FONDATA SUL LAVORO (ITALY IS A DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, FOUNDED ON LABOUR)

CAPITAL
Rome

MONEY
Euro

NATION CODE
ITA

LARGEST CITIES
Rome
Milan
Naples
Turin

NAMED FOR
An ancient name for the people of southern Italy, Vitalia

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Italian

POPULATION
60,600,000

FLOWER
Lily



BIRD
Italian sparrow



LAKE COMO

At the foothills of the Alps, this glacial lake is one of the deepest in Europe and is popular with the rich and famous.

MONTE BIANCO

On the border with France, where it's known as Mont Blanc, this is the highest mountain peak in Europe.

JULIET'S BALCONY

It's believed that Shakespeare's Juliet once stood at this stone balcony in Verona professing her love for Romeo.

MILAN

TURIN

EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

This is the oldest Egyptian museum in the world, with over 40,000 ancient artifacts on display.

LEANING TOWER OF PISA

This 185-foot-tall tower sank into soft ground on one side when it was built in the 12th century.

FLORENCE

PIAZZA DEL CAMPO, SIENA

This medieval town square is a bustling marketplace and in the summer becomes a racetrack for horses in the traditional Palio di Siena.

ROME

NURAGHI ON SARDINIA

Sardinia is home to Bronze Age ruins known as Nuraghi. One stone tower has been dated to 1500 BC.

BLUE GROTTTO, CAPRI

When sunlight passes through a hole in the rock wall, this underwater cave shines bright blue.

NAPLES

PIZZA IN NAPLES

Antica Pizzeria Port'Alba could be one of the most important places in the world. Why? Because it's the first-ever pizza restaurant!

MATERA

In the ancient town of Matera, you'll find prehistoric caves that were the first human settlements in Italy.

POMPEII

When Mount Vesuvius erupted in AD 79 it covered Pompeii in volcanic ash, preserving the citizens of the city forever as they were on that tragic day.

PALERMO

MOUNT ETNA, SICILY

The tallest and most active volcano in Europe, Mount Etna towers over the island of Sicily.

THE DOLOMITES

Glacial lakes, limestone peaks, and picturesque towns make this part of the Alps a top travel destination!

AUSTRIA

SFORZA CASTLE

Built on 14th-century fortifications this castle in Milan has several rooms with frescoes painted by Leonardo da Vinci.

VENICE

A floating city with boats and canals instead of roads and cars. More than 400 bridges help pedestrians get around.

BOLOGNA

Love spaghetti bolognese? You have Bologna to thank. The dish we know today is inspired by the city's meat sauce with fresh tagliatelle.

MOSAICS IN RAVENNA

Once the capital of the Roman Empire, Ravenna is now famous for the centuries-old mosaics decorating many religious buildings and monuments.



ELENA CORNARO
1646-1684

One of the first women in the world to receive a university degree, she didn't stop at just one and went on to complete a PhD.



LEONARDO DA VINCI
1452-1519

Inventor, sculptor, painter, scientist, architect, musician, writer, astronomer, historian, engineer, botanist, and cartographer—there wasn't much da Vinci couldn't do!



MIUCCIA PRADA
B.1949

Miuccia took over the family fashion business in 1978 and turned Prada into one of the world's most respected labels.



VALENTINO ROSSI
B.1979

Superstar motorcycle racer Valentino Rossi has won nine Grand Prix World Championships.

COLOSSEUM

It was once possible to flood this ancient amphitheater so that the 50,000-strong crowd could watch pretend naval battles!

PANTHEON

This temple dedicated to the gods is the best-preserved ancient Roman monument. Just one of its enormous columns weighs 60 tons.

TREVI FOUNTAIN

Legend says that if you throw a coin into the fountain you will make a return trip to Rome.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 482: Slavic peoples begin to move south into what is now Russia. They found the Ukrainian city of Kiev.

862: King Rurik rules over the region from Novgorod. People from this area become known as the “Rus.”

1200–1300: Mongol invasions from the southeast drive waves of early European Russians south to Moscow and the city grows.

1480: Moscow’s ruler, Ivan III, drives the Mongols out of Russia.

1547: Ivan IV becomes the first tsar (Russian emperor) and sets about extending the kingdom.

1682: Peter the Great becomes co-tsar at only ten years old. He eventually establishes Russia as a world power.

1812: Napoleon invades Russia but is defeated within six months.

1867: Russia sells Alaska to the United States for \$7.2 million.

1917: The tsarist government is overthrown in the Russian Revolution. Months later, Vladimir Lenin’s communist Bolsheviks take over and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) is created.

1924–1934: Lenin dies and Joseph Stalin comes to power. To eliminate all opposition Stalin begins the “Great Purge” and millions of people are killed.

1942: Russia, fighting on the side of the Allies during World War II, defeats Germany in the Battle of Stalingrad.

1945–1950: World War II ends, and the USSR controls much of eastern Europe. Relations with the West deteriorate, and the Cold War begins.

1991: The Soviet Union is dissolved and the country of Russia is established.

2000: Vladimir Putin is elected president.



WASSILY KANDINSKY
1866–1944

Kandinsky was a painter who pioneered the style known as abstract art.



YURI GAGARIN
1934–1968

American Neil Armstrong was the first to set foot on the moon, but Gagarin was the first human to blast into outer space.



MAYA PLISETSKAYA
1925–2015

A world-famous prima ballerina, Plisetskaya danced *Swan Lake* over 800 times!

KIZHI ISLAND

On this island in Lake Onega, you’ll find an open-air museum featuring re-created medieval Russian architecture made entirely of wood.

MURMANSK

Catch the Kirovskaya railway to the northernmost city in the Arctic Circle, which is covered in snow most of the year.

THE KOLA PENINSULA

Up beyond the Arctic Circle, the Sun doesn’t set on the Kola Peninsula for 100 days. In winter, there’s a spectacular display of the northern lights.

RUSKEALA MOUNTAIN PARK

This park contains a 300-foot-deep marble ravine filled with crystal-clear water.

MANPUPUNER ROCK FORMATIONS

These seven stone pillars tower up to 130 feet above the hilly landscape, formed by 200 million years of wind and ice.

ST. PETERSBURG

MOSCOW

NIZHNY NOVGOROD

KAPOVA CAVE

Ancient paleolithic rock drawings decorate this limestone cave. What ancient creatures will you spot?

STALINGRAD BATTLEFIELD

When German troops invaded Stalingrad during World War II, Russian troops and residents fought back.

SUZDAL

This city has hundreds of whitewashed buildings with beautiful gold- and blue domes.

MOUNT ELBRUS

This inactive volcano is the highest peak in Europe!

SOCHI

A summer resort destination, this city was the site of the 2014 Winter Olympics.



CATHERINE THE GREAT
1729–1796

One of Russia’s longest-reigning rulers, Catherine was a champion of the arts and a fiercely smart leader who strengthened Russia’s position in the world.

RUSSIA



CHURCH OF THE SAVIOR ON SPILLED BLOOD
The strange name of this church comes from the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881.

KEY FACTS		FORWARD RUSSIA! GOD IS WITH US!	
CAPITAL Moscow	LARGEST CITIES Moscow St. Petersburg Novosibirsk Yekaterinburg	MONEY Ruble	NATION CODE RU
POPULATION 144,500,000	FLOWER Camomile	NAMED FOR The Land of Rus—referring to the people who lived in the medieval state of that name	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Russian
		BIRD Eagle	

ORDA CAVE, PERM REGION
The longest underwater cave in Russia, it can be found underneath the Ural Mountains and is almost 3 miles long.



THE KREMLIN
This is the biggest active fortress in Europe. It contains five palaces, four cathedrals, and is home to the Russian president.

RED SQUARE
This cobblestoned square is Russia's ceremonial center and a major meeting point. Don't miss the fairy-tale building that is St. Basil's cathedral!

LENIN'S MAUSOLEUM
The embalmed body of Russia's revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin can be found here.



VALLEY OF DEATH, KAMCHATKA
The gases coming out of the rocks here are poisonous to animals and humans.

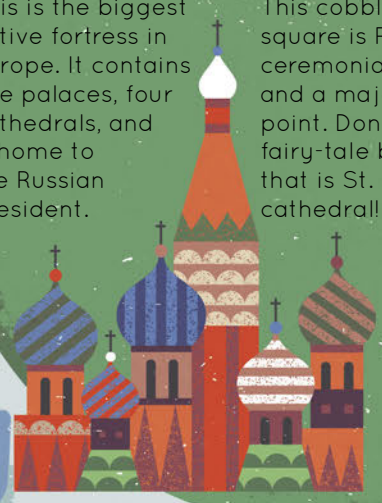
TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY
Traveling through more than 85 cities and across eight time zones, this is one of the greatest train journeys on Earth.

VALLEY OF GEYSERS
Around 200 jets of thermal water explode through the Earth's crust in the Valley of the Geysers.



NOVOSIBIRSK

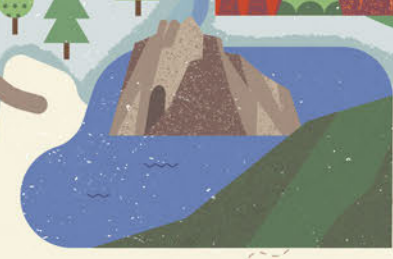
MOUNT BELUKHA
The 14,800-foot-high mountain of Belukha is home to one of the world's most endangered creatures—the snow leopard.



VLADIVOSTOK
Closer to Japan and North Korea than it is to most of Russia, this port town is home to Russia's Pacific Navy Fleet.



USSURI BAY
What was once a dumping ground for broken bottles and jars has become a stretch of sand bejeweled with eroded colored glass.



LAKE BAIKAL
It's the world's largest freshwater lake and holds an extraordinary 20% of the Earth's unfrozen freshwater.



WELCOME TO A LAND OF GRANDEUR AND MAJESTY

Welcome to the biggest country on Earth! Russia stretches on for more than 6,000 miles from St. Petersburg in the west to Vladivostok in the east. It would take over two weeks of driving nonstop to get all the way from one side to the other! Along the way, you would cross huge deserts, powerful rivers, deep lakes, vast mountain ranges, barren plains, enormous pine forests, and giant marshlands. And if at any point on the journey you turn left and head north, you'll reach the Arctic Circle, where the winter months are cloaked in total darkness.

This is a place of mystery and intrigue, cold and wild. It's also a country rich in history and art, architecture and innovation. You can scale the heights of one of the world's tallest mountains and walk in the footsteps of revolutionaries; watch prima ballerinas perform onstage and explore the expanse of the world's largest freshwater lake. The list of things to do and places to see is as huge as the country itself.



ALEXANDRA KOSTENIUK
B.1984
Kosteniuk started playing chess at age 5. By 14 she was a grandmaster and in 2008 became the women's world champion.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

900–600 BC: The Celts arrive in the area.

206 BC: The Romans take over the land.

AD 409–470: Germanic tribes rule Spain.

711: Muslims from North Africa begin their successful conquest of Spain.

1492: The Christians defeat the Muslims in Granada, ending Muslim rule.

1493: Spain begins to colonize the Americas.

1605–1615: Spain's most famous novel, *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, is published.

1936: The Spanish Civil War begins between Republicans and Nazi-supported Nationalists.

1939: The Nationalists win the civil war, with Francisco Franco leading the country as dictator for the next 36 years.

1975: Franco dies, setting Spain on a course to democracy.

1978: Spain becomes a democracy with the adoption of its constitution.

1992: The Olympic Games are held in Barcelona.

2010: Spain wins the FIFA World Cup.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF TAPAS

Everything about Spain makes you hungry for more—the food, the beaches, the art, the architecture, the festivals...you won't be able to get enough of the place!

Spain has been inhabited for more than 30,000 years. The last 2,500 years of its history has been a story of invaders from all parts of Europe and Africa, which has contributed to its diverse culture.

Pick any one of its wonderful cities and wander through the history-soaked streets. Dig in to the national dish, paella, stare at the magnificent architecture, see some art, have an afternoon siesta, then head out for some tapas and dancing. Or maybe one of Spain's beautiful beaches is calling your name! What are you waiting for? This beautiful country is welcoming you with open arms!



ANTONI GAUDÍ
1852–1926

This architect left his vision on the streets of Barcelona for all to see. His incredible Sagrada Família cathedral is an icon of the city.



SAN MIGUEL MARKET

If you're hungry, then this is the market for you! It's almost entirely devoted to delicious Spanish tapas.

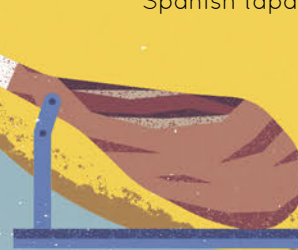
ROYAL PALACE OF MADRID

There's more than 3,400 rooms in the home of King Felipe VI, the current monarch of Spain.



CALLE CAVA BAJA

This street is the capital of tapas—Spain's most famous food.



PENÉLOPE CRUZ
B.1974

This actor is known the world over, appearing in both art-house films and international blockbusters.



EDURNE PASABAN
B.1973

This mountaineer was the first woman to climb all 14 of the world's 26,000-foot peaks.



PABLO PICASSO
1881–1973

When you think of modern art, Picasso is sure to come to mind. He painted colorful, block-like pictures.

SPAIN



KEY FACTS		PLUS ULTRA (FURTHER BEYOND)
CAPITAL Madrid	MONEY Euro	NATION CODE ES
LARGEST CITIES Madrid Barcelona Valencia Sevilla Zaragoza	NAMED FOR Spania, an ancient name for the Iberian Peninsula	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Spanish
POPULATION 46,600,000	FLOWER Red carnation	BIRD Iberian imperial eagle

FRANCE



GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

With its curled metal layers, this museum of modern art is a piece of art itself.

LA CONCHA BEACH

San Sebastián is right at the edge of the water, so there's always lots of people having fun in the waves.

DALÍ THEATER-MUSEUM

Salvador Dalí was a 20th-century Spanish artist who changed art forever with his surrealist paintings.



ALJAFERÍA PALACE

The Aljafería is a Muslim palace-fort that was built almost 1,000 years ago.



IBIZA

The Spanish island of Ibiza is famous for its beautiful beaches, but also for its dance parties.

BARCELONA

ZARAGOZA

PICOS DE EUROPA NATIONAL PARK

Spain's first national park is a rocky wonderland—which is probably why chamois and ibex call it home!

L'OCEANOGRÀFIC

Dolphins, sharks, whales, and more can be found in the largest oceanarium in Europe!

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

Hike this 500-mile pilgrimage to the Santiago de Compostela along the Pyrenees mountain range.

MOSQUE-CATHEDRAL OF CÓRDOBA

This grand mosque began life as a small church in the 8th century, which was then rebuilt as a mosque, before being made into a cathedral.

SEVILLE FAIR

April is party time in Seville—six days of parades, feasts, and costumes.

LA TOMATINA

Ready to get messy? This tomato festival sees crowds of people throwing thousands of tomatoes at each other.

VALENCIA

LA BOQUERIA

Barcelona's public market sells food in all shapes and sizes, and has been doing so for 800 years!

LA RAMBLA

This beautiful tree-lined boulevard is a tourist hot spot in Barcelona.

PICASSO MUSEUM

You can explore many of Picasso's famous paintings here and see what made him such a revolutionary artist.

PARK GÜELL

Gingerbread houses, pineapple columns, and mosaiced reptiles mean a park as only Gaudi could imagine!

LA SAGRADA FAMILIA

Construction of Gaudi's remarkable church was started in 1882—but it's still not complete!

CASA BATLLÓ

Is it a dragon? Is it made from bones? Casa Batlló is an amazing building of waves and curls.

ALHAMBRA

A dominating fortress with a history stretching back to the 9th century. Its name means the "red one"—can you guess why?

CAMINITO DEL REY DE ARDALES

Imagine walking along this narrow path on a rocky cliff face, looking far down to the floor of the gorge...

PLAYA DE BOLONIA

This is the perfect beach—in a national park, near the ruins of an ancient Roman city, and it's not crowded!



RAFAEL NADAL
B.1986

Rafa, as he's commonly known, is one of Spain's greatest tennis players and is famous for his determined, powerful game.

GREECE



BULGARIA

MACEDONIA

MOUNT OLYMPUS

The highest mountain in Greece and, as legend would have it, home to the ancient Greek gods! You can hike to the top most of the year.

ALBANIA

METEORA

The Holy Monastery of Great Meteoron sits on the top of this massive rock.

FOKI BEACH

Snorkel and enjoy the view in the beautiful water or do some spear fishing and catch your dinner!

THESSALONIKI

THESSALONIKI OLYMPIC MUSEUM

The Olympics have been running in some form for almost 3,000 years. Learn about the history of this global sporting event here.

PANATHENAIC STADIUM

The modern Olympics began in 1896, and this stadium was the first to host it.

ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

This is an ancient city complex of temples, statues, and other buildings in the heart of Athens.

MONASTIRAKI FLEA MARKET

You'll find souvenirs, antiques, and jewelry in this busy market. Go on a Sunday to experience the hectic buzz.

LARISSA

THE ORACLE OF DELPHI

Visit Delphi for a glimpse of the future! In ancient times, people would visit to hear predictions or wisdom.

TOURING BY TRAIN IN PELION

Chug along on a steam train through the hilly terrain looking out over the bay.

THE PARTHENON

This 2,500 year-old temple is considered the pinnacle of ancient Greek civilization.

EAT A GYROS IN ATHENS

Gyros is the ultimate Greek street food, made of soft roasted pork or chicken and salad, wrapped in a pita bread.

MYCENAE

4,000 years ago Mycenae was one of Greece's most important cities. Walk through the Lion Gate to enter this magnificent place.

PATRAS

ATHENS

MELISSANI LAKE

Take an underground tunnel into the cave, then explore this underground lake in a boat.

NAVAGIO BEACH

A hidden beach with a shipwreck would be amazing in itself, but Navagio also has crystal-clear water to swim and snorkel in.

PYTHAGORAS CAVE

Your favorite mathematician hung out in these caves, teaching, thinking, and looking for right angles.

ANCIENT THEATER OF EPIDAUROS

This amphitheater could hold up to 14,000 people when it was built more than 2,000 years ago. You can still see performances today.

THE CYCLADES

Greece is famous for its islands, beaches, and clear blue water—sailing from one to the next is the perfect way to explore.

AKROTIRI RUINS

This town was destroyed by a volcano in the 16th century, but the ruins were preserved by ash.

MUSEUM OF THE OLIVE AND GREEK OLIVE OIL

Olives and olive oil are Greek institutions! Learn all about the productive little fruit and how oil has been made for thousands of years.



PLATO
(C.428–C.348BC)

Plato was a scholar and philosopher who believed that the perfect human state is made up of four qualities: courage, wisdom, justice, and self-discipline.

OLIVE TREE OF VOUVES

This olive tree village is one of the oldest in the world. It still produces olives today and its branches have been used for Olympic victors' wreaths.

HERAKLION

MOUNT IDA

This is the highest mountain on the Greek island of Crete—hike to the top if you can!

KNOSSOS

Ancient ruins or labyrinth? This Bronze Age site may well be the oldest city in Europe.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE GODS

When you think about philosophy, it doesn't take long to realize that Greece has had a major influence on the world. Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates are some of the most famous thinkers in human history, and there are many more Greek philosophers too. Of their many achievements, the introduction of democracy is one of Greece's most important gifts to the world.

Greek history is rich with myth and legend. The 12 gods and goddesses of Mount Olympus appear in stories throughout history. Many of the temples and great buildings of Greece, such as the Parthenon, were dedicated to these gods. You've probably heard of many of these legendary characters—like Zeus, Apollo, and Poseidon.

But it's not all history and ruins! There are about 6,000 islands in Greece, dotted around the Mediterranean Sea. That means beautiful water for swimming, sailing, and beach vacations, and it also means delicious seafood wherever you go!



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

1600–1100 BC: Mycenaean Greece, the first advanced civilization in the region.

1194–1184 BC: According to legend, the Trojan War takes place, which ends after the Greeks hide in a giant wooden horse and attack the Trojans.

c.800 BC: Homer composes the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* based on events in and after the legendary Trojan War.

776 BC: The first-ever Olympic Games take place.

508 BC: Cleisthenes establishes democracy in Greece, the first of its kind.

490 BC: The Greeks defeat the Persians at the Battle of Marathon—which is also believed to give rise to the marathon as a sport.

336 BC: Grand conqueror Alexander the Great becomes king.

AD 1822: Greece declares independence from the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

1981: Greece joins the European Union.

1999: An earthquake kills 145 people in Athens, the worst earthquake in the country for 20 years.

2004: The Olympic Games are held in Athens.

2018: After 10 years of economic crisis, Greece begins to grow again.

2018: A 2,400-year-old Greek shipwreck is discovered intact in the Black Sea.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Athens

LARGEST CITIES

Athens
Thessaloniki
Patras
Larissa
Heraklion

POPULATION

10,770,000

FREEDOM OR DEATH

MONEY

Euro

NATION CODE

GR

NAMED FOR

An ancient tribe in the region

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Greek

FLOWER

Bear's breeches



ANIMAL

Dolphin



KALYMNOS

A beautiful Greek island with more rock-climbing routes than you could imagine. Get your shoes on and start your ascent.



HYDNA OF SCIONE c.500 BC–UNKNOWN

Hydna was a super-strong swimmer who helped the Greeks defeat Persia in 480 BC by diving under their ships and cutting the ropes tying them to shore.



NIKOS KAVVADIAS 1910–1975

Nikos was a poet, writer, and sailor who traveled around the world and used powerful metaphors in his writing. Today there is a statue of him in Argostoli.



NANA MOUSKOURI b.1934

Nana is arguably Greece's most popular singer. She has recorded more than 200 albums and achieved international fame.



GIORGOS KARAGOUNIS b.1977

Georgios is one of Greece's greatest soccer players. He has played more international games for Greece than any other player.



RIJKSMUSEUM

This enormous museum has over 1 million objects with 8,000 of them permanently displayed, the most famous being paintings by Rembrandt and Vermeer.



VAN GOGH MUSEUM

There are many contenders for the greatest Dutch artist, but Van Gogh must be one of them. This museum has the largest collection of his work in the world.

ANNE FRANK HOUSE

Now a museum that tells the story of Anne and her family's attempt to hide from the Nazis in their secret annex.

ZAANSE SCHANS

The windmills, houses, cheese and tin factories of this open-air museum takes visitors back in time to the 17th and 18th centuries.

ALKMAAR CHEESE MARKET

Dutch cheeses have been traded on the market square in Alkmaar for over 400 years.

IJSSELMEER TOWNS

The old fishing villages and towns surrounding this human-made lake are made up of pretty colored houses.

MARKEN

To avoid being flooded, the wooden houses unique to Marken were built on stilts.

HOGE VELUWE NATIONAL PARK

What was once the country's biggest hunting reserve is now the biggest nature reserve.

BINNENHOF

Today it houses the Dutch parliament, but its origins date back to the 13th century. For many years, it was the home of the ruling aristocracy.



INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Sometimes called the World Court, the ICJ was set up after World War II to help countries settle their disputes without resorting to violence.



MADURODAM

Want to see all of the Netherlands but don't have enough time? Problem solved—Madurodam is a miniature model of the entire country.



DELFT

Best known for its distinctive blue-and-white pottery and for being the birthplace of *Girl with a Pearl Earring* painter, Jan Vermeer.

OUDE HAVEN

There has been a jetty here in Rotterdam's old harbor since 1350; these days you'll find restored historical boats.



KEUKENHOF GARDENS

Brightly colored tulips stretch in every direction as far as the eye can see.



OOSTVAARDERSPLASSEN

Water was drained from the area to create this fantastic nature reserve, home to the Eurasian spoonbill, sea eagle, black stork, and many more.



THE HAGUE

UTRECHT

ROTTERDAM

KINDERDIJK WINDMILLS

There are a total of 19 of these enormous windmills at Kinderdijk, originally built to prevent flooding.



KASTEEL DE HAAR

The largest castle in the Netherlands could be from a fairy tale with its tall turrets, suspension bridge, and surrounding moat.



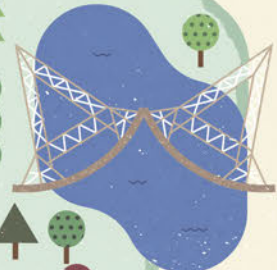
KRÖLLER-MÜLLER MUSEUM

Containing the second-largest collection of Van Gogh's work, there are also pieces by Monet, Picasso, and Mondrian and a huge sculpture garden.

EINDHOVEN

DELTA WORKS

This is the world's biggest flood protection system made of dykes, dams, sluice gates, and storm-surge barriers.



EFTELING

This fantasy-themed adventure park has rides and attractions based on myths, legends, and fairy tales.

DWINGELROTS

The ruins of this 12th-century castle are the remains of the only hilltop fortress in the Netherlands.



THERMAE 2000

Bathe in warm waters from a 40,000-year-old thermal pool with views over the Valkenburg Castle ruins.



KEY FACTS

JE MAINTIENDRAI (I WILL UPHOLD)

CAPITAL
Amsterdam

MONEY
Euro

NATION CODE
NL

LARGEST CITIES
Amsterdam
Rotterdam
The Hague
Utrecht
Eindhoven

NAMED FOR
Netherlands means "low country"; half of the Netherlands lies below sea level

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Dutch, English, Papiamentu, Frisian

POPULATION
17,120,000

FLOWER
Tulip



BIRD
Godwit





WADDEN SEA

The tidal mudflats of the Wadden Sea are a migration site for more than 30 bird species.



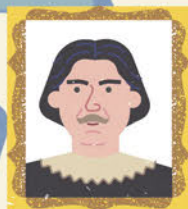
ANNA MARIA VAN SCHURMAN
1607–1678

Van Schurman was the first woman to study at a Dutch University. She was a painter, poet, and scholar who could speak 14 languages fluently.



VINCENT VAN GOGH
1853–1890

Van Gogh created over 2,000 strikingly beautiful pictures, but also cut off his own ear during a psychotic episode.



ABEL TASMAN
1603–1659

The first European to reach New Zealand and the island previously known as Van Diemen's Land, now called Tasmania.



WILLEM-ALEXANDER
B 1967

Willem-Alexander is the current king of the Netherlands and is known for his love of sports, particularly soccer and speed skating.



FANNY BLANKERS-KOEN
1918–2004

At the 1948 Olympic Games in London, Blankers-Koen won four gold medals for sprinting; she was 30 years old and a mother of two.



HUNEBEDDEN, DRENTHÉ

Thought to be tombstones from the prehistoric age, each massive stone weighs more than 40 tons.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF WINDMILLS!

Is it the Netherlands? Or is it Holland? You may have heard people use either. The official name of the country is the Kingdom of the Netherlands; Holland refers to two of its provinces Noord Holland and Zuid Holland, but many people use the name when talking about the whole country. You'll also hear people from the Netherlands referred to as "Dutch"—which comes from an Old English word meaning "of the people." The name is certainly a mouthful for a small country! But don't be fooled by its small size—the Netherlands' contribution to world history is huge. Famous Dutch kings, queens, explorers, artists, and sportspeople have all shaped the world we know today.

Across the Netherlands you'll find pretty towns with painted wooden houses, giant windmills, Renaissance palaces and medieval castles, tulip gardens, national parks, open-air museums, and galleries with the world's greatest works of art. The Netherlands is a place where history can be traced in the streets, from the moving Anne Frank House museum to prehistoric burial sites and the International Court of Justice. The Netherlands is a perfect example of the saying "good things come in small packages."



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

3400 BC: Farming tribes settle in the region and build stone structures known as "hunebedden," which are thought to be burial sites.

57 BC: Roman Emperor Julius Caesar invades the Netherlands and takes control.

1st century AD: A tribe of people known as the Frisians move into the region.

AD 476: The Romans are overthrown by Germanic tribes.

800–1000: The Vikings begin raiding coastal towns and villages and settle in some areas.

1482–1567: The country comes under the rule of the Habsburg Empire, which is under the control of the king of Spain.

1581: The Dutch declare independence from Spain and become known as the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands.

1814: The Kingdom of the Netherlands is declared. It includes Belgium and has two capital cities, Amsterdam and Brussels.

1830: Belgium breaks away from the Netherlands to form its own country.

1945: After World War II and the horrendous crimes committed against Jewish people by Nazi Germany, an International Court of Justice is established at The Hague.

1980: Queen Juliana abdicates her throne, making Beatrix the queen of the Netherlands.

2002: The Netherlands adopts the Euro as its currency, replacing the Dutch guilder.

2010: The last surviving protector of Anne Frank, Miep Gies, dies aged 100.

2010: The Netherlands makes the final of the FIFA World Cup for the first time in over 30 years; they are defeated by Spain.

NETHERLANDS





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- AD 1200s:** Two orders of warrior monks, the Teutonic Knights and the Brothers of the Sword, move into the Baltics and establish Riga, in Latvia.
- 1386:** The Lithuanian Grand Duke marries a Polish noblewoman.
- 1569:** The Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania is formed; it is the biggest state in Europe.
- 1772:** Russia absorbs Lithuania when it moves in and breaks up Poland in a show of force.
- 1917:** The fall of the Russian Empire and the Russian Revolution ignites Baltic independence, and by 1918 Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania proclaim themselves nation states.
- 1939–1953:** During World War II, the Baltic States come under the influence of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). Lithuania maintains strong resistance.
- 1970s:** Protests, demonstrations, and even riots against Soviet control occur in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
- 1990:** The Baltic states declare independence from the USSR.
- 2004:** Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania become part of the European Union.
- 2011:** Lithuania ranks number one for Internet upload and download speed in the world.
- 2014:** Latvia's capital city, Riga, is declared European Capital of Culture.
- 2015:** An oak tree on a soccer field in Estonia wins European Tree of the Year.



KERLI KÕIV
B.1987

One of the biggest pop stars to ever come out of Estonia, Kõiv created a signature style known as “Bubble Goth.”



JONAS BASANAVIČIUS
1851-1927

A doctor by trade, Basanavičius championed Lithuania's independence and was responsible for starting the first Lithuanian newspaper.

TOWN HALL SQUARE

It's believed that a towering spruce tree erected here in 1441 was the world's first Christmas tree.



TOOMPEA HILL

Tallinn was born when the Knights of the Sword built their fortress on Toompea Hill in 1229.



KADRIORG PARK

This park and palace were originally built for Catherine I by Russian Tsar, Peter the Great. The name in Estonian means “Catherine's Valley.”



SAAREMAA

This is the largest of the islands off Estonia's coast and it boasts the only intact medieval fortress in the Baltics.



CAPE KOLKA

The waters of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga meet here, and thousands of birds can be seen on their annual migration north.

VENTSPILS COWS

In 2002, Ventspils hosted a Cow Parade. It was so popular that some of the life-size cow statues were left in place and you can spot them dotted through town.



ESTONIA



LATVIA



LITHUANIA



POLAND

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Estonia: Tallinn
Latvia: Riga
Lithuania: Vilnius

LARGEST CITIES

Estonia:	Latvia:	Lithuania:
Tallinn	Riga	Vilnius
Tartu	Liepāja	Kaunas
Narva		Klaipėda

POPULATION

Estonia: 1,330,000
Latvia: 1,900,000
Lithuania: 2,750,000



ESTONIA: NO OFFICIAL MOTTO
LATVIA: FOR FATHERLAND AND FREEDOM
LITHUANIA: FREEDOM, UNITY, PROSPERITY

NATION CODE

Estonia: EE, Latvia: LV
Lithuania: LT

BECAME A COUNTRY

When the Russian Empire relinquished control after the Russian Revolution in 1917.

FLOWER

Estonia: Cornflower
Latvia: Daisy
Lithuania: Rue



MONEY

Euro

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Estonia: Estonian
Latvia: Latvian
Lithuania: Lithuanian

BIRD

Estonia: Barn swallow
Latvia: White wagtail
Lithuania: White stork



LAHEMAA NATIONAL PARK

This is the largest and oldest national park in Estonia. It's packed with forests, beaches, fishing villages, and grand manor houses.

TALLINN

HAAPSALU

What was once a popular playground and spa town for Russian aristocracy is now a pretty seaside resort town.

PÄRNU

The wooden houses in this picture-perfect seaside resort town are painted in a rainbow of bright colors.

RIGA

A third of Latvia's population live in the capital. The medieval old town is just for pedestrians and the central market is housed in old aircraft hangers.

RIGA

VILJANDI

The remains of the nearly 1,000-year-old castle in Viljandi are the best place to view the pretty lake and surrounding woodlands.

TARTU

ESTONIA

LATVIA

CESIS CASTLE

Built by the Brothers of the Sword in 1214, the castle fell to Russia after Ivan the Terrible laid siege in 1577.

DAUGAVPILS FORTRESS

This fortress is as big as a city, containing 80 buildings and 10 streets. It was constructed by Russian Tsar Alexander I to fend off Napoleon's army.

RUNDĀLE PALACE

A grand and extravagant palace built as a summer home for nobility in the 16th century.

LITHUANIA

DAUVAGPILS

AUKŠTAITIJA NATIONAL PARK

There are over 100 lakes and 30 rivers throughout Lithuania's oldest national park, which also boasts settlements with wooden houses nearly 300 years old.

KERNAVĖ ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

The hill forts, settlements, and burial sites here are evidence of human habitation stretching back to the 8th and 9th centuries BC.

VILNIUS

VILNIUS

Between 1503 and 1522, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania built an enormous defensive wall around the entire city. Entry was through nine huge gates, of which only the Gate of Dawn remains.

TRAKAI HISTORICAL NATIONAL PARK

Lithuania's smallest national park includes a medieval castle built on an island in the middle of a lake.

NARVA CASTLE

The Danes built this heavily fortified castle in the 1370s to guard the trade route on the Narva River and to protect the area from Russian invasion.

NARVA

RAKVERE CASTLE

Can you imagine what life was like in medieval times? This 14th-century castle will help give you an idea. It might be a good idea to skip the torture chamber.



UļJANA SEMJONOVA
B.1952

Semjonova is one of the greatest female basketball players of all time. In 1993 she became the only woman from outside the USA to be inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame.

GET TO KNOW THE BRAVE AND BEAUTIFUL BALTICS

With natural beauty to rival anything on the planet, it's no wonder that these three countries have had their fair share of outsiders wanting to make a home here. Vikings took a liking to the Baltic Coast; France's fierce military leader Napoleon Bonaparte brought an enormous army to invade Lithuania; and in 1940 the Soviet Union's leader, Joseph Stalin, forcefully occupied all three countries. Despite a turbulent history of war and invasion, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have stood strong and can now claim to have some of the most stunning sights in Europe.

In the capital cities, Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius, where most people live, you'll find cobblestoned, medieval old towns, fortified castles, and extravagant palaces with expansive gardens. Further afield there are national parks with ancient woodlands and surprising waterfalls; the coastline is dotted with quaint fishing villages and colorful resort towns; and country towns can be found surrounded by ancient fortress walls with their own medieval castles.

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania all devote more than 30% of the countryside to wild forest and national park, and despite being relatively flat (the highest point in Estonia is only 1,040 feet above sea level), there is a culture of outdoor adventure, and you'll see locals and tourists making the most of the beaches, rivers, lakes, mineral springs, and ancient forests. Time to join in the fun!



BARBORA RADVILAITĖ
C.1522-1551

She was the grand duchess of Lithuania who went on to become the queen of Poland, all before she turned 30.

BELARUS



ANATOLY SOLOVYEV
B.1948

Latvian Solovyev is a pilot and cosmonaut who holds the world record for the number of spacewalks: a total of 16!

WELCOME TO EUROPE'S STEADFAST NATION

What have you heard about Poland? That it was the first country to be invaded by Germany in World War II? Or perhaps you've heard that it was a Polish man who suggested our Earth revolved around the Sun and not the other way around. You may know something about the dark days of the Holocaust or even that Poland was once controlled by the Soviet Union. You'll be surprised to find out that Poland is home to Europe's biggest land mammal, the European bison; the world's biggest castle, Malbork Castle; and that there have been 17 Polish recipients of a Nobel Prize. Poland may be modest about the part it plays on the world stage, but we're here to tell you that there's plenty to shout about.

Poland has some of the world's most important historical sites, from the reminders of Hitler's atrocities at Auschwitz concentration camp to ancient castle fortifications that withstood Mongol invasions. Despite being seriously damaged during World War II bombing raids, Poland's cities still contain stunning medieval town squares and royal palaces. There are alpine lakes and sand dunes by the ocean, a salt mine that has chambers carved into chapels, and a village where locals have painted the outside of their houses with colorful flowers. Poland has weathered adversity and resisted domination and is now ready to take a bow.



NICOLAUS COPERNICUS
1473-1543

Astronomer and mathematician Copernicus was the bright spark that proposed that the Earth orbits the Sun, not the other way around.



IRENA SZEWIŃSKA
1946-2018

Szewińska was the only athlete ever to hold world records in 100, 200, and 400 meter sprinting.



MARIA SKŁODOWSKA CURIE (MARIE CURIE)
1867-1934

Despite being banned from studying in Poland because she was a woman, Curie went on to discover the X-ray and win two Nobel Prizes, one in physics and one in chemistry.

GERMANY



CHURCHES OF PEACE

These churches were built at the end of the Thirty Years' War, in 1648. Of the three only two remain as one burned down.

KSIĄŻ CASTLE

During World War II, this hilltop castle was seized by the Germans, who built a complex network of tunnels deep under the castle's foundations.

SKULL CHAPEL

This chapel has a macabre interior made up of 3,000 skulls and bones as a shrine to the dead.

SŁOWIŃSKI NATIONAL PARK

You might not think of sand dunes when you think of Poland, but here they are, shifting in the winds on the Baltic Coast.

BISKUPIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

During the Bronze Age, people lived in fortified settlements made from wood, just like this life-size reconstruction.

UPSIDE-DOWN HOUSE IN SZYMBARK

Climb in through the attic window and wander around on the ceiling. This house was built to symbolize how communism turned Poland upside down.

GDĄŃSK

MALBORK CASTLE

The castle and grounds of this 13th-century fortress are the largest of any castle in the world.

TORUŃ

Toruń's medieval old town miraculously survived the bombings in World War II.

POZNAN

STREET MURALS IN ŁÓDŹ

Street artists from all over the world have been invited to add their works to the walls of Łódź.

ŁÓDŹ

WROCLAW

WROCLAW

Keep a lookout for the "krasnale," little statues, shaped like gnomes, hiding in doorways, at store fronts and in the city squares.

AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP

During World War II, Hitler had an abhorrent plan to exterminate Jewish people; as part of that plan, he forced them into concentration camps such as this one.

ZAKOPANE

Known as the gateway to the Tatra Mountains, Zakopane is full of uniquely decorated wooden buildings.

MORSKIE OKO LAKE

On the shores of this emerald-green alpine lake sits the oldest wooden hostel in the Polish Tatra Mountains.

POLAND



LECH WAŁĘSA
B.1943

A believer in workers' rights, he formed Poland's first trade union, won a Nobel Peace Prize, and was Poland's president 1990-1995.

RUSSIA

LITHUANIA



ROYAL ŁAZIENKI PARK
Designed over 300 years ago, this huge central park contains palaces, amphitheatres, and orangeries.

FOTOPLASTIKON
This 115-year-old theater seats people around the circumference of a rotating cylinder. Viewing holes spaced around it give each person a view of the moving pictures.



COPERNICUS SCIENCE CENTER
There are more than 450 exhibits at this museum, including a flying carpet, planetarium, and an interactive robot.

BELARUS

BIAŁOWIEŻA FOREST

There are over 800 European bison roaming throughout this enormous old-growth forest.



IRENA SENDLER
1910-2008

When Nazis invaded Poland in 1939 and began persecuting Jewish people, Irena risked her life to save thousands of children by smuggling them out of forced ghettos.

UKRAINE



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

2300 BC: Early Bronze Age people settle in Poland.

AD 500: Slavic peoples begin to arrive in Poland from central Europe.

1025: The Kingdom of Poland is established. Boleslaw I becomes the first king.

1596: The capital of Poland is moved from Kraków to Warsaw.

1793: Russia and Prussia (an old German state) invade Poland and divide the country between them.

1815: Poland comes under the sole control of Russia.

1914: World War I begins, and Poland joins Germany and Austria to fight Russia. At the end of the war, Poland becomes an independent nation.

1939: World War II begins when Germany invades Poland. Millions of Jewish people are killed in Poland as part of Hitler's "Final Solution." At the end of the war, Poland is again under Russian control.

1980: Lech Wałęsa forms the Solidarity trade union and 10 million people join. Russia responds by putting Wałęsa in prison.

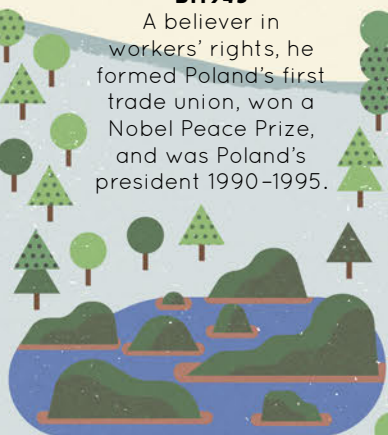
1989-1991: Nation-wide elections are held, and a new government is formed with Lech Wałęsa as president. The Soviet Union begins withdrawing troops from the country.

1997: Poland adopts a new constitution.

2004: Poland is the tenth country to join the European Union (EU).

MASURIAN LAKE DISTRICT

There are over 2,000 lakes surrounded by beautiful forests and dotted with resort towns in the Masuria.



WARSAW

WAWEL ROYAL CASTLE

Once home to Polish kings and queens, the castle has been around for 1,000 years; these days it's a museum.



THE DRAGON'S DEN

Legend has it that a fierce dragon lives in this deep cave at the base of Wawel Hill.



BARBICAN

There were once grand redbrick fortifications surrounding the whole of Kraków, strong enough to stop Mongol hordes. This is the only remaining gatehouse.



ZALIPIE

Known as the Painted Village, the practice of painting colorful flowers on the outside of houses in Zalipie started as a way of covering up smoke and soot marks.



DUNAJEC RIVER GORGE

One of the best ways to experience this steep gorge is to boat down the river, or for the really adventurous there's white-water rafting.



WIELICZKA SALT MINE

Inside this ancient salt mine you'll find a vast network of underground tunnels and chambers, many of which have had altars and monuments carved from the salt.



KEY FACTS

FOR OUR FREEDOM AND YOURS

CAPITAL
Warsaw

MONEY
Złoty

NATION CODE
PL

LARGEST CITIES
Warsaw
Kraków
Łódź
Wrocław
Poznań

NAMED FOR
A Slavic tribe that inhabited the region 1,000 years ago

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Polish

POPULATION
37,800,000

FLOWER
Red poppy



BIRD
White-tailed eagle



GET TO KNOW CENTRAL EUROPE'S SPA COUNTRY

This landlocked country in Europe makes up for its lack of seashore with thousands of thermal pools, springs, and lakes, not to mention the medieval castles, expansive grasslands, grand palaces, Roman ruins, and fascinating museums.

The Hungarian translation of "Hungarian" is "Magyar," and they still refer to themselves as the Magyar people. The Magyar tribes made their way from Western Siberia to settle in the region that is now Hungary in the 9th century, and by AD 1,000, the Kingdom of Hungary was established. This wasn't Hungary's happy ever after, however. From the 14th to the 16th century, the Turkish Ottoman Empire invaded and eventually conquered Hungary. On the heels of the Ottomans came the Austrian Hapsburgs, and then, after fighting on the losing side in World War I, the country became communist and was occupied by the Soviet Union. Today, it's a democracy with an elected prime minister.

Hungary's past has resulted in a countryside packed with fascinating historic buildings, from intact castles with immense fortifications to abandoned palaces. Its countryside is relatively flat and there are many beautiful lakes and rivers, including the River Danube and Lake Balaton, the largest freshwater lake in Central Europe—all of which makes it a popular tourist destination.



HARRY HOUDINI
1874–1926

Houdini was such an amazing escape artist that he used to challenge the police to keep him locked up.



ERNŐ RUBIK
B.1944

Inventor, architect, and professor, Rubik is famous for the well-known puzzle in the shape of a cube with colored squares.



SNACK ON A LÁNGOS

Hungary's favorite street food is this addictive fried bread, often eaten for breakfast topped with sour cream and grated cheese. Yum!

CASTLE OF SÜMEG

The fortified walls of this mountaintop castle are dramatically lit at night.



LAKE HÉVÍZ

The world's largest thermal lake, it has indoor and outdoor baths for visitors to bathe in.



GORSIUM ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

Before the Magyars arrived centuries ago, this was a thriving Roman city with shops and homes.



BUDA CASTLE

Underneath the enormous Buda Castle, there is a network of underground caves formed by thermal hot springs.

FISHERMAN'S BASTION

This fairy-tale-like lookout was built on top of the old defensive walls of Buda Castle and gives the best views of Hungary's capital city.



SHOES ON THE DANUBE

Sixty pairs of shoes cast from iron are lined up along the banks of the Danube in Budapest as a memorial to the Jewish people killed in World War II.



SEMMELWEIS MEDICAL MUSEUM

This museum of medical oddities contains a shrunken human head and bizarre old surgical instruments.



CITADELLA

This historic fortress was once used by the Nazis to observe enemy aircraft and by the communists to quell any civilian uprisings.



GYERMEKVASÚT

The staff of this scenic railway line in a forested area near Budapest is entirely made up of children ages 10–14!



MICRO WONDER MUSEUM

This collection of art is so tiny it can only be seen with serious magnification. Exhibits include a chess set on the head of a nail and a tea set on a grain of rice.



GYŐR

VISEGRÁD ROYAL PALACE

In the 15th century, King Matthias Corvinus called this 350-room palace home. Today it's a museum showcasing ancient weapons and household items.



SKANZEN OF SZENTENDRE

This open-air museum shows how people from different regions in Hungary have lived over the centuries, with recreations of homes and shops.



JUDIT POLGÁR
B.1976

Chess grandmaster Polgar is regarded as the greatest female player of all time.

SLOVAKIA

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL
Budapest

LARGEST CITIES
Budapest
Debrecen
Miskolc
Szeged
Pécs

POPULATION
9,680,000

WITH THE HELP OF GOD FOR HOMELAND AND FREEDOM

MONEY
Hungarian forint

NAMED FOR
The Latin word "Hungaria," which comes from the name of a local 6th century empire, the Onogur

FLOWER
Tulip



NATION CODE
HU

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Hungarian

BIRD
Turul
(mythical)





BÉLA LUGOSI
1882–1956

Don't believe in vampires? Lugosi's portrayal of Count Dracula in the 1931 film might change your mind.



MÁRIA TELKES
1900–1995

Telkes' nickname is "the Sun Queen," which comes from her groundbreaking work on solar energy technology.

BÜKK NATIONAL PARK

Natural springs, forested mountain ranges, and even a derelict castle make this national park a favorite for hiking.

KÉKES

The highest mountain in Hungary, at over 3,300 feet, is popular for snow sports and road bike racing.

LILLAFÜRED CAVES

Ancient peoples once used these caves for shelter. They weren't uncovered until a dog fell into the Saint István Cave in 1910.

MISKOLC

CASTLE OF EGER

In 1552, the Ottoman Empire attempted to invade the town of Eger, but was unsuccessful because of the impenetrable walls of this castle.

HORTOBÁGY NATIONAL PARK

Hungary's oldest national park and largest protected area is made up of expansive grasslands, making it an excellent place for stargazing.

DEBRECEN

TIMEWHEEL

It takes a whole year for the sand to pass through the center of this huge "hourglass" in the center of Budapest.

THE HOLY RIGHT HAND OF ST. STEPHEN

The mummified hand of thousand-year-old Saint Stephen is displayed in an ornate gold-and-glass cabinet. It's used to lead a parade in his name yearly.

SZÉCHENYI THERMAL BATH

Come and soak in one of the grandest spa baths in Europe, backed by their very own, purpose-built palace.

KIRÁLY THERMAL BATH

The oldest thermal bath in Budapest, built by the Ottoman Turks in the 16th century.

LUKÁCS THERMAL BATH

Built in the 12th century for monks to bathe in, a spa hotel was constructed on the site in the 1880s.

VAJDAHUNYAD CASTLE

Built in 1896 as part of the "1,000 years of Hungary" celebrations marking the anniversary of the Magyar conquest of the Carpathian Basin in AD 895.

SERBIA



HUNGARY



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 896: Hungarian tribes known as the Magyars conquer the Carpathian Basin (southern Hungary) and force the Romans out.

1241: The Tartars from Mongolia invade and devastate the region.

1361: Buda becomes the capital of the Kingdom of Hungary.

1526: The Turks invade Hungary and divide the country into three parts: the north goes to the Austrian Habsburgs; the south stays with Hungary; Turkey rules the center.

1867: The Habsburgs create a dual monarchy to be divided between Vienna and Pest-Buda.

1873: The cities of Pest, Buda, and Óbuda are joined to become one major city in Europe.

1914: Hungary fights in World War I on the losing side, and as a result, the Hungarian monarchy collapses.

1939–1945 World War II begins, and the Nazis invade Hungary; when the war ends, the Soviet Union makes Hungary part of the Soviet bloc.

1990: The Soviet Union leaves Hungary, and democracy is established. József Antall becomes the first democratically elected prime minister of Hungary.

2004: Hungary becomes part of the European Union (EU).

2015: Hungary faces a migrant crisis as those fleeing war in Afghanistan, Syria, and Northern Africa arrive into Europe.

ICELAND



JÓHANNA SIGURÐARDÓTTIR
B.1942

Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir was a politician and the world's first openly LGBT head of government.



LÁTRABJARG

These spectacular cliffs are home to millions of seabirds. You're sure to see everyone's favorite, the puffin.

DRANGSNES HOT POTS

A natural geothermal spring means deliciously hot water—perfect for bathing outside on a chilly Icelandic day.



THE ICELANDIC ELF SCHOOL

Do you believe in elves? Trolls? Gnomes? Fairies? This school does and will teach you all about these elusive creatures.

THE SETTLEMENT EXHIBITION

This open excavation, the remains of Viking Age structures, is the earliest evidence of human settlement here.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

Iceland's history is quite contained—the island was uninhabited before Ingólfur Arnarson settled there in AD 874. This museum tells the country's history with artifacts and exhibitions.

HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA

This striking building is a Lutheran church, and looks old and futuristic at the same time. It features a pipe organ with 5,275 pipes!

AURORA REYKJAVÍK

The aurora borealis lights up the sky in swirls of green, yellow, and blue. Discover what causes them and more at this Northern Lights Center.

WHALES OF ICELAND

Before you head out on a whale-watching expedition, learn all about these massive, majestic mammals in the largest whale museum in the world.

MUSEUM OF ICELANDIC SORCERY & WITCHCRAFT

Iceland is a magical place, with a long history of magic and mythology—explore it all in this spooky destination.

MOUNT ESJA

The hike up Reykjavík's neighboring mountain takes you to 3,000 feet, perfect for admiring the colorful rooftops of the city below.

INTO THE GLACIER

Wrap up in your thermal outdoor clothes, jump in the all-terrain vehicle, and head out into a glacier! It's the largest ice tunnel in the world.

HVÍTSEKUR

Hvítsekur means "white shirt." This rock is covered in seabird poo! It's the remains of a volcanic plug, but legend says it is the remains of a troll.



REYKJAVÍC

KÓPAVOGUR

REYKJANESBÆR

HAFNARFJÖRÐUR

STROKKUR

Look out! Strokkur is a geyser that erupts every few minutes, shooting a blast of water up to 130 feet into the air.

LEIDARENDI LAVA CAVES

When lava cools a certain way, you get caves like these: colorful, rippling rocks bejeweled by stalactites.

VIKING WORLD MUSEUM

Iceland's epic Viking history is on full display here. A seafaring, exploring culture, don't miss the replica Viking ship.



KEY FACTS		IT WILL ALL WORK OUT OKAY	
CAPITAL Reykjavic	MONEY Icelandic króna	NATION CODE IS	
LARGEST CITIES Reykjavic Kópavogur Hafnarfjörður Akureyri Garðabær	NAMED FOR Um...Icel!	OFFICIAL LANGUAGES Icelandic	
POPULATION 360,000	FLOWER Mountain avens	BIRD Gyrfalcon	





BJÖRK
B.1965

Probably the most well-known Icelandic in the world, Björk is an avant-garde pop singer who is also known for the unique fashion she wears.



LEIF ERIKSON
C. 970–1020

Leif Erikson was the first known European to have landed in North America—a few hundred years before Columbus.



ERIK THORVALDSSON
C. 950–1003

Erik the Red founded the first settlement in Greenland. As you might guess, he was named after his hair color! He was also Leif Erikson's father.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 874: Ingólfur Arnarson settles in Iceland and founds Reykjavík.

930: An annual parliament—the Althing—is established, to make laws and solve disputes.

986: Erik the Red sets out to sea and colonizes Greenland.

1000: Iceland adopts Christianity.

1104: The Hekla volcano erupts for the first time since the island was settled.

1262: Iceland comes under Norwegian rule.

1402: The Black Death hits Iceland, killing huge numbers of people.

1783: The volcanic fissure Laki erupts, poisoning air and land, and destroying livestock. A quarter of the population dies.

1662: Denmark controls Iceland.

1874 Iceland is awarded a constitution.

1918 The independent nation of Iceland is formed, though the Danish king remains head of state.

1926 The population reaches 100,000.

1944: Iceland become a fully independent nation.

2006: Iceland recommences commercial whaling, to protests from around the world.



CHRISTMAS HOUSE

It's close to the North Pole, there's ice and snow... seems like Christmas! Christmas House is jam-packed full of Christmas stuff!

GODAFOSS WATERFALL

This is the waterfall of the gods, a place steeped in Icelandic lore and one of the most beautiful in the country.

BREIÐAMERKJÖKULL

Breiðamerkjökull is a smaller glacier that ends in a lagoon known as Jökulsárlón, forming icebergs as it breaks apart at the water's edge.

THE BLUE LAGOON

Blue by name, definitely blue by nature! This geothermal seawater spa with its milky blue water is said to be good for your skin.

LAKI

Take a flight over these volcano craters, formed by a catastrophic volcanic eruption in 1783. Lava poured out for eight months forming this remarkable landscape.

SVARTIFOSS

Marvel over the hexagons formed by this waterfall's black lava columns, formed from lava flows over the millennia.



INGÓLFUR ARNARSON
AD 849–910

Iceland's original settler—Arnarson arrived on the island in AD 874, lived there till death and gave Reykjavík its name.

PREPARE FOR THE LAND OF FIRE AND ICE!

Sandwiched between the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates, Iceland is a geological firecracker. It has one of the world's most active volcanoes, and its landscape tells the story of lava flows. There are 130 volcanoes on the island; combine that with glaciers crisscrossing the country, snow, and, of course, the Northern Lights, and you have one of the most incredible-looking places on the planet. Iceland was settled by Vikings about 1,200 years ago, and Reykjavík was founded in AD 874 by Ingólfur Arnarson.

With dramatic landscapes, there's a lot of opportunity to be adventurous here—snowmobiling, skiing, hiking, caving...if you're feeling particularly brave, you could even scuba dive the chilly waters. You can always warm up after in one of the many geothermal spas. But alongside nature, there's also the buzzing capital Reykjavík—a small city with strange and wonderful museums you can explore.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

500 BC: A Celtic tribe, the Helvetians, settle in Switzerland.

58 BC: The Roman Empire occupies the land of Switzerland.

AD 600: The Franks invade and bring Christianity to the Indigenous people.

1291: The Old Swiss Confederacy is established, beginning the formation of the nation.

1499: Switzerland gains independence from the German Swabian League.

1798: The French under Napoleon invade Switzerland.

1802: The Swiss revolt against the French and take back the land.

1815: Switzerland becomes a neutral country after the Congress of Vienna.

1848: Switzerland becomes a unified state with a constitution.

1863: The International Committee for Relief to the Wounded is formed, later becoming the Red Cross.

1914: Switzerland stays neutral in World War I.

1939: The Swiss once again remain neutral during a world war.

1971: Swiss women are allowed to vote.

2010: The Gotthard Base Tunnel, the longest in the world, running through the Swiss Alps, is completed.

CERN

The Large Hadron Collider at CERN is the biggest particle accelerator in the world, built to smash together particles and grow our understanding of physics.



CARL GUSTAV JUNG
1875–1961

Carl Jung was a psychologist and thinker who worked with Sigmund Freud. He had a deep impact on modern psychology.



GOTTFRIED KELLER
1819–1890

One of Switzerland's most treasured writers, Keller's most famous book is *Green Henry*.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Bern

LARGEST CITIES

Zurich
Geneva
Basel
Lausanne
Bern

POPULATION

8,650,000



ONE FOR ALL, ALL FOR ONE

MONEY

Swiss franc

NATION CODE

CH

NAMED FOR

One of the country's original provinces, Schwyz

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

French, German, Italian, and Romansh

FLOWER

Edelweiss



BIRD

No official bird



LE CORBUSIER
1887–1965

One of the world's most famous architects, he revolutionized urban planning, with simple, large apartment buildings.



ROGER FEDERER
B.1981

One of the greatest men's tennis players of all time. He has 20 Grand Slam titles and has won more than \$120 million in prizes.

OLYMPIC MUSEUM

Lausanne is the Olympic headquarters and this museum contains historical memorabilia. You can test your sporting prowess with a series of physical challenges.

LAUSANNE CATHEDRAL

For more than 600 years, the town has maintained a tradition of having a lookout call out the time each hour during the night from the 800-year-old bell tower.



GRUYÈRES CHEESE FACTORY & MUSEUM

There's a museum devoted to Gruyère cheese in the town where it originates. Take an audio tour as you taste your way around—a cow does the talking!



HAMMETSCHWAND ELEVATOR

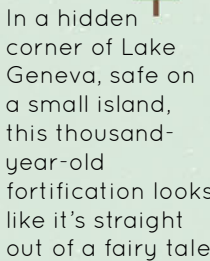
You could climb Mount Bürgenstock... or you could ride 500 feet to the top on Europe's tallest outdoor elevator.



BERN

CHILLON CASTLE

In a hidden corner of Lake Geneva, safe on a small island, this thousand-year-old fortification looks like it's straight out of a fairy tale.



LAUSANNE

GENEVA



MARMITE ESCALADE

Feast on a chocolate cauldron during the Fete de l'Escalade to celebrate the defeat of Savoy troops attempting to take Geneva.



THE FLOWER CLOCK

Switzerland is the home of watch-making. If you have time, you must visit this timepiece made of flowers in bloom.

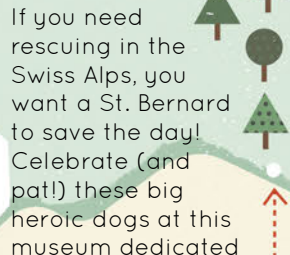
MATTERHORN GLACIER PARADISE

Europe's highest mountain station gives you views of 38 mountain peaks over 13,000 feet! Take the elevator down to the Glacier Palace, an ice cave full of icy sculptures.



BARRYLAND

If you need rescuing in the Swiss Alps, you want a St. Bernard to save the day! Celebrate (and pat!) these big heroic dogs at this museum dedicated to them.



SWITZERLAND



LAKE LUCERNE

This beautiful lake gives you a view of the surrounding mountains, all while you cruise around on a paddlewheel steamer.

ZURICH

KYBURG CASTLE

One of the oldest surviving castles in Switzerland, first built in the 11th century. You can even touch many of the artifacts on display here—weapons, shields, and other medieval items.

GERMANY

LINDT & SPRÜNGLI CHOCOLATE FACTORY

Even if you don't know this chocolate, you'll want to visit. There's tasting of course, and you can learn how to make your very own delicious delight.

FIFA MUSEUM

If you're a soccer fan, this is the place for you. Try a game of soccer pinball in the giant pinball arena.

BOTANIC GARDEN

Meadows dotted with flowers, a beautiful pond and around 9,000 different types of plants make these gardens a breath of fresh mountain air.

AUSTRIA

STOOSBAHN FUNICULAR

How will you get up the mountain? Try this funicular (a kind of cable car), the steepest funicular in the world.

TITLIS CLIFF WALK

As you walk across this 3-foot-wide suspension bridge you can look down to the glacier 1,600 feet below.

REICHENBACH FALLS

These beautiful falls are the dramatic setting for the supposed demise of history's greatest (fictional) detective, Sherlock Holmes.

GOTTHARD BASE TUNNEL

Jump on a train and travel through the world's longest and deepest train tunnel, 37 miles through the mountains of the Alps. It has a maximum depth of 8,000 feet!

VERZASCA RIVER

The Verzasca River makes for blissful swimming. If you're feeling adventurous, you can follow the river to the dam and bungee-jump into it!

CASTLES OF BELLINZONA

The medieval castles of Castelgrande, Castello Montebello, and Castello Sasso Corbaro once protected the city of Bellinzona.

THE EIGER

Get your crampons ready—you'll need those spiky shoe accessories, and a whole lot of rope, to climb this 13,000-foot iconic mountain!



MARTINA HINGIS
B.1980

Hingis spent 209 weeks as world number one women's tennis player, and won five Grand Slam titles.

IT'S THE LAND OF CHOCOLATE, CHEESE AND MOUNTAINS!

One thing is for sure, when you visit Switzerland, you'll see mountains! And with those mountains comes trekking, hiking, skiing of all kinds, climbing, and paragliding. Luckily there's famous Swiss chocolate to give you the energy to keep adventuring.

The country is surrounded by the Swiss Alps and the Jura Alps. The highest peak is Dufourspitze in the Swiss Alps, at 15,203 feet. With Italy, France, and Germany close neighbors, there are several official languages spoken here, Swiss German, French, and Italian. You'll notice the nation code for Switzerland is CH—this comes from the Latin name of the country, *Confoederatio Helvetica*.

Switzerland is one of the richest countries in the world and is perhaps best known for its neutral status—this means that it doesn't get involved in wars. It's been this way since 1815, which has made Switzerland a very peaceful place! Switzerland is also well known for its banks, which are famously secretive and secure.

SCANDINAVIA



WELCOME TO THE LANDS OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

Reindeer and royalty. Vikings and fairy tales. In lands that experience bitter winters with no sunlight to speak of and summers when the Sun never sets, it's not surprising that Scandinavian culture is sprinkled with mystery and majesty. Experience the wonder of the aurora borealis from the Arctic Circle, striking ancient glacial fjords, elaborate palaces with manicured gardens, and one of the world's oldest amusement parks.

Norway, Sweden, and Denmark make up what we know today as Scandinavia. The history of these countries has been intertwined for centuries. It wasn't until the 20th century that each country became independent. The Kingdom of Denmark still encompasses the countries of Greenland and the remote Faroe Islands.

In the cities and towns, you'll see evidence of a proud and strong maritime history and a reverence for royalty. Striking palaces and castles, fascinating open-air museums, reconstructed shipwrecks, and modern hotels made entirely of ice. Time to put your thermals on and get involved.



GEIRANGERFIORD

Ice-age glaciers cut their way through rock and left us with this stunning fjord, complete with towering cliffs, snow-capped peaks, and plunging waterfalls.



NIDAROS CATHEDRAL, TRONDHEIM

Deep below this Gothic cathedral lies the tomb of Norway's patron saint, the Viking King Olav II.



TRONDHEIM

VIKING SHIP MUSEUM, OSLO

The real-life Viking ships on display are believed to be the best-preserved in the world; there are also sledges, tools, and textiles.

NORWAY

OSLO

SWEDEN

SKAGEN

There's a beach in Denmark's northernmost town, where the waters of the Baltic and North Sea meet and swirl.

GOTHENBURG

AARHUS

MALMÖ

COPENHAGEN

ODENSE

DENMARK

BERGEN

TROLLTUNGA

One look at this extraordinary rock formation shows you why it became known as the Troll's Tongue.



HANSEATIC WHARF, BRYGGEN

Lined with colorful wooden buildings, fishing boats have been docking at this wharf for more than 600 years.

LINDHOLM HØJE MUSEUM

It may look like a green field covered in rocks, but it's actually the burial ground of nearly 700 Vikings. Each grave is marked with a stone.

PUFFINS ON MYKINES ISLAND

The best place to see the world's cutest bird; over a million puffins come to this island each year to find a mate.

LAKE SÖRVÁGSVATN

The largest lake in the Faroe Islands looks like it is balanced precariously on the edge of a cliff.

MÚLAFOSSUR WATERFALL

On the island of Vágar, the Múlafossur waterfall plunges over 500 feet into the sea.



KEY FACTS

NORWAY: ALL FOR NORWAY
SWEDEN: FOR SWEDEN—WITH THE TIMES
DENMARK: GOD'S HELP, THE LOVE OF THE PEOPLE, DENMARK'S STRENGTH

CAPITAL

Norway: Oslo
Sweden: Stockholm
Denmark: Copenhagen

LARGEST CITIES

Norway: Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger
Sweden: Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö
Denmark: Copenhagen, Aarhus, Odense

POPULATION

Norway: 5,447,000
Sweden: 10,100,000
Denmark: 5,790,000

MONEY

Norway: Norwegian krone
Sweden: Swedish krona
Denmark: Danish krone

NATION CODE

N: NO, S: SE, D: DK

FLOWER

Norway: Purple heather
Sweden: Twinflower
Denmark: Marguerite daisy



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Norway: Norwegian, Sámi
Sweden: Swedish, Finnish, Sámi, Denmark: Danish

BIRD

Norway: White-throated dipper
Sweden: Eurasian blackbird
Denmark: Mute swan



SINGING TREES IN AALBORG

These trees can really carry a tune! Since 1987, famous musicians visiting the town of Aalborg have planted a tree here and donated a song.

LEGO HOUSE, BILLUND

The exhibits here include a life-size T. rex, a giant waterfall, and examples of the first Lego sets ever made.

EGESKOV CASTLE

Straight out of a fairy tale, this 500-year-old castle comes complete with drawbridge and moat.



AURORA BOREALIS, TROMSØ

Sometimes Mother Nature likes to remind us that anything we can do, she can do better. Take the multicolored, swirling, and spinning northern lights, for example.

ABISKO NATIONAL PARK, LAPLAND

For thousands of years, the Sámi people have hunted and herded reindeer in this national park. Keep an eye out for their ancient huts.

FINLAND

SIGTUNA

This medieval town was founded by Erik the Victorious in AD 970. It's the oldest town in Sweden.

ICE HOTEL, JUKKASJÄRVI

Check out the guest rooms at this Ice Hotel. Your bed is made of ice, but they give you animal pelts to sleep on and keep you cozy. Phew!

VASA MUSEUM, STOCKHOLM

The 230-foot-long Vasa warship sank on its maiden journey in 1628. Over 300 years later, 95% of the original ship was salvaged, carefully restored and put on display here.

SKANSEN

The oldest open-air museum in the world shows how Swedes lived and worked hundreds of years ago.

ALES STENAR

Legend has it that these enormous standing stones, arranged in the shape of a long boat, mark the resting place of an ancient king.

MØNS KLINT

A stretch of almost 4 miles of chalky white cliffs rising nearly 425 feet out of the sea. Fossilized evidence of life from 70 million years ago has been discovered at the base of the cliffs.



GRETA THUNBERG

B.2003

Thunberg took her frustration and disappointment at world leaders' inability to act on the climate crisis and created her own movement for change.



HARALD HARDRADA

1015–1066 AD

The last great Viking ruler, Harald Sigurdsson was given the nickname "Hardrada" meaning "hard ruler."



BJÖRN BORG

B.1956

Swedish tennis legend Borg racked up a total of 62 singles titles in his day, 11 of which were Grand Slam titles.



CHRISTIANSBORG PALACE

Located on its own island, the palace is used by the royal family for special events and also hosts the Danish parliament and the supreme court.

TIVOLI GARDENS

Thought to be the inspiration behind Disneyland, the Tivoli Gardens is one of the oldest amusement parks in the world.



THE ROUND TOWER

Built in the 17th century, this stone tower is the oldest functioning observatory in Europe.



HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

1805–1875

One of the greatest storytellers of all time, Danish Christian Andersen is the man behind classics such as *The Little Mermaid*, *Thumbelina*, and *The Ugly Duckling*.



VITUS BERING

1681–1741

Cartographer Bering was the first person to sail through the Bering Strait, proving that the Asian and American continents are separate.

MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

2500 BC: People from northern Scandinavia begin exploring south on wooden skis. They learn farming techniques and the population grows.

1st century AD: Norwegians trade fur and skins with the expanding Roman Empire.

8th century AD: Vikings announce themselves as fierce warriors by invading Lindisfarne island, off the coast of England.

1397: Sixteen-year-old Eric of Pomerania becomes the king of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden.

1586: Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe establishes an observatory on Ven island. It catalogs over 1,000 stars.

1668: The Bank of Sweden is established and produces Europe's first ever paper currency.

1832: The Göta canal is completed. Now ships can travel across Scandinavia from the Baltic to the North Sea.

1905: Norwegians vote overwhelmingly to be independent of Sweden.

1939: Sweden, Norway, and Denmark decide to remain neutral during World War II.

1957: Danish architect Jørn Utzon wins a competition to design the Sydney Opera House in Australia.

2012: A pastel artwork called *The Scream* by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, sells for \$120 million at auction.

2014: Norwegian Major General Kristin Lund becomes the first woman to be the commander of a UN peacekeeping force.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

350,000 BC: There is evidence of human existence from this time in a cave in Karain, north of Antalya.

6500 BC: The city of Catalhöyük is established; it is one of the earliest human settlements.

1900–1260 BC: The Hittite Empire becomes the dominant power in the region. Wars are fought with Egypt.

130 BC: Anatolia (ancient Turkey) falls to the Roman Empire.

AD 330: Emperor Constantine the Great establishes the new capital city of the Roman Empire at Byzantium; he renames it Constantinople (now Istanbul).

1071: The Seljuk Turks defeat the Byzantine army and gain control of Anatolia (ancient Turkey).

1453: The powerful Ottoman Empire conquers Constantinople, which ends the Byzantine Empire.

1520: As the ruler of the Ottomans Suleiman the Magnificent expands the empire to include all of Turkey and much of the Middle East, Greece, and Hungary.

1914–1919: During World War I, the Ottoman Empire sides with Germany and is defeated by the Allies.

1923: The Republic of Turkey is founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He becomes the first president and the capital is moved to Ankara.

1974: Turkey invades Cyprus after a military coup backed by Greece occurs.

1982: Turkey establishes a new constitution.

2019: Turkey invades northern Syria in an attempt to overthrow the Syrian Democratic Forces.



CONSTANTINE THE GREAT
C. AD 272–337
Roman emperor Constantine built his imperial palace in Byzantium and changed the name of the city to Constantinople (today's Istanbul).



MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATÜRK
1881–1938
Atatürk was the leader of the Turkish National Movement and became the founder of the modern Republic of Turkey.



ORHAN PAMUK
B.1952
Turkey's bestselling author Pamuk won the Nobel Prize for literature in 2006. His work has been translated into 63 languages.

THE GRAND BAZAAR

One of the biggest and oldest markets in the world, there are over 4,000 stalls lined up along more than 60 streets, all under one roof.



TOPKAPI PALACE

The center of the Ottoman court from 1478 to 1856 is now a museum showing off royal jewelry and imperial weaponry.

HAGIA SOPHIA MUSEUM

A church, a mosque, and now a museum, this grand-domed structure was built using the finest marble, rare metals, and the labor of over 10,000 men.

PERGAMON

This ancient city was once a favorite destination of kings and queens because of the nearby thermal springs. It later became a center for health and wellness.

EPHESUS

The site of an ancient Greek and Roman city, the most striking ruin here is the Temple of Artemis.

ISTANBUL

BURSA

ANKARA

In Turkey's capital city, you can visit the hilltop mausoleum of Atatürk, the country's first president.

ASPENDOS

The ancient amphitheater here is the best-preserved Roman amphitheater in the world and could seat up to 20,000 people.

PAMUKKALE

Warm calcium-rich water bubbles out from underground springs and cools, forming bright white ledges on the steep mountainside.

IZMIR

BODRUM CASTLE

Standing for over 600 years, this castle has also been used as a military base, a monastery, and a mosque.

ANTALYA

Pristine Mediterranean beaches, Greco-Roman ruins, and the eternal flame of Chimera, fuelled by natural gas seeping out of the hillside, can all be found here.

DALYAN MUD BATH

This huge mud bath attracts people who believe the mineral-rich mud will cure their skin ailments.

LYCIAN ROCK TOMBS, FETHIYE

These are tombs that the Lycians built high on the cliffs to help angels reach the dead.

ÖLÜDENİZ

Swim in the twinkling turquoise waters of the sandy beach or in the still waters of the protected lagoon.

BUTTERFLY VALLEY

There are around 100 different species of butterfly that flutter by the pretty waterfall and lavender trees in this valley.

TURKEY

KEY FACTS

SOVEREIGNTY UNCONDITIONALLY
BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE!

CAPITAL

Ankara

MONEY

Turkish lira

NATION CODE

TR

LARGEST CITIES

Istanbul
Ankara
Izmir
Bursa
Adana

NAMED FOR

The "land of the Turks"

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Turkish

POPULATION

84,300,000

FLOWER

Tulip



BIRD

No official bird

SAFRANBOLU

The 17th-century hammam (bathhouse) in Safranbolu is one of the best examples of Ottoman architecture.

GOREME OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

Carved into the rockface are dozens of churches from the 10th to 12th centuries. The largest, known as the Nunnery, is seven stories high.



KAYMAKLI UNDERGROUND VILLAGE

In 3000 BC, the Hittites carved out their homes underground. They joined them with tunnels and ventilation shafts.

RED AND ROSE VALLEYS

The pink-colored rock peaks of these valleys are the most beautiful at sunset, when the light makes everything rosy.



ANKARA

CAPPADOCIA

ÇATALHÖYÜK

This Stone Age settlement is one of the first cities on Earth. The houses had no doors or windows, so people went in and out through a hole in the roof.



ADANA

CAVES OF HEAVEN AND HELL

These huge caves or sinkholes were carved out by an underground river which you can still hear running below.



PATARA

This 11-mile stretch of sand is Turkey's longest uninterrupted beach. You can also see Roman ruins on the road to the beach.



SABIHA GÖKÇEN
1913–2001

Gökçen was the first woman in the world to fly as a fighter pilot in combat when she was 23 years old.



ALI QUSHJI
1403–1474

Astronomer, mathematician, and physicist, Qushji was one of the first people to prove that the Earth revolves on an axis.

SUMELA MONASTERY

Built by Greeks in the 4th century, this huge monastery is carved into the side of a sheer cliff-face.



MOUNT NEMRUT

The top of this mountain is believed to be a burial site from the 1st century BC. It was surrounded by giant statues of Greek, Armenian, and Persian gods.



ANI

Once home to over 200,000 people, this medieval city was the center of an Armenian empire but is now a ruined ghost town.



ARMENIA

CONQUERING EMPIRES AND CAVE-DWELLING CULTURES

Turkey occupies an important geographical location between Europe and Asia, and has centuries of cultural connections with powerful empires such as the ancient Greeks, Persians, Romans, Byzantine, and Ottomans. The wave upon wave of conquering armies and power-hungry emperors has left Turkey's countryside with an abundance of ancient ruins, as well as impressive palaces, castles, rock-cut tombs, mosques, churches, monasteries, and even underground cities.

Spanning a large area and lying across two continents means this country has a rich and varied culture, and its markets are some of the busiest and biggest in the world. Its national cuisine has influences from Asia and Mediterranean Europe.

Turkey's main cities are modern metropolises studded with jewels of the past. Istanbul, the country's biggest city, contains the awe-inspiring domed wonder of the Hagia Sophia, and in the capital city, Ankara, the mausoleum of its hero of independence, Kemal Atatürk, is placed on top of a hill overlooking the city. Away from the cities, Turkey's majesty continues in the wild beauty of the beaches, giant sinkholes formed by underground rivers, and valleys filled with butterflies. Turkey's beauty brings out the best of all worlds.

KANGRA VALLEY TEA PLANTATIONS

Beautiful lush hills have made India a world tea capital. See it growing in Kangra.

KEY MONASTERY

Hear the mystical chants of monks in this remote Buddhist monastery atop a hill.

THE GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK

If you want to see a snow leopard, this is the park to explore—but pack your winter coat!

SPITI VALLEY

Travel the valley on a Himalayan mountain road like the Kunzum Pass and look out for colorful prayer flags.

THE VALLEY OF FLOWERS

300 species of flower make this a very colorful place to trek in the Himalayas.

CHINA

GALI PARANTHE WALI

This street is famous for its signature dish, paratha—a flatbread eaten with vegetarian sauces, chutneys, and pickles.

JIM CORBETT NATIONAL PARK

India's oldest national park is home to tigers, elephants, Sambal deer, and around 500 varieties of plant life.

LOTUS TEMPLE

The Lotus Temple really does look like a lotus flower, with its 27 white petals.

AKSHARDHAM

There's 148 elephant statues in this grand Hindu temple!

PAKISTAN

JAISALMER FORT

Like sandcastles on the beach, but much stronger! This 850-year-old fort is still a thriving town.

NEPAL

NEW DELHI

KUMBHALGARH WALL

India has its own great wall! It is 24 miles long and protects the Kumbhalgarh Fort.

AGRA FORT

This 16th-century complex was home to India's Mughal rulers until the end of their empire in the 17th century.

AHMEDABAD

RANTHAMBORE NATIONAL PARK

Travel to Rajasthan's largest national park to see tigers, leopards, and crocodiles, as well as the 1,000-year-old Ranthambore Fort.

ORCHHA

A quiet little medieval town, Orchha is full of ancient temples, palaces, and monuments.

BANGLADESH

LIVING ROOT BRIDGES OF CHERRAPUNJI

At one of the wettest places in the world, who needs to build bridges when you can train the roots of the rubber fig tree!

VARANASI

With 3,000 years of history and the sacred Ganges River running through it, Varanasi is considered India's spiritual capital.

KONARK SUN TEMPLE

This World Heritage Site was built in the 13th century as a tribute to the Hindu Sun god, Surya.

BURMA

TAJ MAHAL

India's most famous building was built in the 17th century by Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his wife, Mumtaz Mahal.

MUMBAI



ELLORA CAVES

These 100 caves were excavated by hand. They've been used for 1,500 years as Buddhist and Hindu monasteries and temples.

HYDERABAD

NAGARJUNSAGAR-SRISAILAM TIGER RESERVE

Alongside India's national animal, the Bengal tiger, the reserve contains many ancient ruins of forts, temples, and caves.

BANGALORE

HAMPI RUINS

Hampi was a great Indian city attacked and destroyed in the 16th century, but even in ruins, it looks incredible.

ELEPHANTA ISLAND

Explore the island's cave temples, cut into the hills and decorated with statues and carvings.

PALOLEM BEACH

This is one of the prettiest beaches in India's beach capital, Goa.

GOMATESHVARA

This is the tallest statue in the world to have been carved from one single stone.

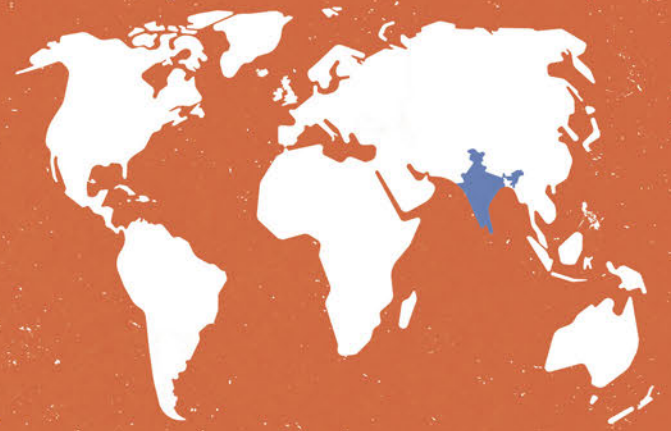


LATA MANGESHKAR B.1929

Lata has one of the most famous singing voices in India. She has appeared on the soundtrack for hundreds of Bollywood films.



INDIA



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 3000 BC:** The Indus Valley civilization begins, which is the foundation of what becomes India.
- 1500–1000 BC:** A period of expansion called the Vedic Age takes place. It is named after the Vedas, scriptures which go on to inform many of India's religious and philosophical traditions.
- 273 BC:** Ashoka the Great becomes emperor of the ancient Indian empire of Maurya.
- AD 1526:** The Muslim Mughul Empire begins under Babur.
- 1858:** The British take direct control of India.
- 1920:** Mahatma Gandhi launches his campaign against British rule.
- 1932:** India's first international cricket match is played against England in Mumbai.
- 1947:** India achieves independence from Britain.
- 1966:** Indira Ghandi becomes India's first female prime minister.
- 1983:** India wins its first Cricket World Cup.
- 2000:** India joins China with a population of 1 billion people.

KEY FACTS

TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS

CAPTIAL
New Delhi

MONEY
Rupee

NATION CODE
IN

LARGEST CITIES
Mumbai
New Delhi
Bangalore

NAMED FOR
The Indus River

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Hindi and English (plus 20 others recognized in the constitution)

POPULATION
1,369,500,000

FLOWER
Sacred lotus

BIRD
Indian peafowl



WELCOME TO THE LAND OF DIVERSITY

Everything about India seems huge and over the top—even the calm, quiet places, such as the Himalayas, are huge. And of course a population of almost 1.4 billion people is huge too.

Thousands of years of history surround you as you journey across this vast country—ancient temples, palaces, forts, and city ruins are scattered here, there, and everywhere. India is one of the most spiritual countries in the world, with religions and major schools of thought having been founded here.

In the many large cities, it's easy to lose yourself to the crowds, sights, sounds, and smells. Follow your nose to the delicious food India is famous for, then find a movie theater and watch a Bollywood film—usually a big musical film with a lot of energetic dancing!



INDIRA GANDHI
1917–1984

Politician Indira Gandhi was the first—and is still the only—woman to become prime minister of India.



SACHIN TENDULKAR
B.1973

Tendulkar is considered one of the greatest batsmen to have played cricket—he's often called the "god of cricket" in India.



MOTHER TERESA
1910–1997

This Catholic nun's name has become synonymous with helping those in need. She was eventually made a saint by the Catholic Church.



MAHATMA GANDHI
1869–1948

Gandhi led India to independence from British rule and his philosophy of nonviolent protest inspired activists all around the world.

SAPA HILL TRIBES

Hike the mountainous lands of the Sapa Hill tribes and learn about the culture of the minority peoples who live here.

HO CHI MINH'S MAUSOLEUM

Uncle Ho, as he is affectionately known, didn't want a mausoleum, but he got one! His embalmed body rests here.

HANOI CYCLO

Why not take a ride on a cyclo? This is a three-wheeled bicycle rickshaw.

TEMPLE OF LITERATURE

The Temple of Literature was a center for learning in the country for almost 1,000 years.

HANOI

HAI PHONG

PERFUME PAGODA

Glide along a stream in a canoe through rice fields to Huang Tich cave and find the mystical Perfume Pagoda.

MY KHE BEACH

Enjoy warm clear water, sunny blue skies, and people selling fresh fruit, seafood, and other snacks as you lie on the sand.

DA NANG

HỘI AN OLD TOWN

Wander through the streets and buildings of old Hội An, find delicious street food snacks, and watch boats sail by on the river.

DA LAT MARKET

Da Lat is cooler than most of Vietnam, so put on a coat and explore the central market—strawberries are a local specialty!

HO CHI MINH CITY

CAN THO

BẾN THÀNH MARKET

Busy and bustling Bến Thành Market is packed with clothes, food, and souvenirs.

CÁI RĂNG FLOATING MARKET

Hundreds of boats crowd the riverbanks selling all manner of produce from all around the Mekong.

HÀ LONG BAY

There are 1,600 limestone karsts poking up from the sea in Hà Long Bay.

CHINA

HANOI'S OLD QUARTER

This part of Hanoi features streets dedicated to particular crafts and goods—shoe street, broom street, silver street.

HOÀN KIẾM LAKE

According to legend, a golden turtle god in the lake asked the 15th century emperor Le Loi to return his magic sword. He did so after he used it to defeat Chinese invaders.

THANG LONG WATER PUPPET THEATER

This 1,000-year-old tradition sees wooden puppets performing on water, retelling ancient tales.

EAT PHO IN HANOI

Pho is the national dish. Dig into a bowl of steaming beef or chicken, broth, and soft wide noodles.

THE MARBLE MOUNTAINS

Five marble and limestone rock-mountains rise from the flat surrounding countryside, each with pagodas, tunnels, and caves.

PO NAGAR TEMPLE

Some of the oldest structures in Vietnam are from the Cham civilization. Po Nagar is one of them and is more than 1,300 years old.

THE DUNES OF Mũi Né

Roll or surf down these mountains of sand, dust yourself off, and head to the beach to rinse.

IMPERIAL CITY HUẾ

In the 18th century, Emperor Gia Long built this royal complex.

ROYAL THEATER OF HUẾ

You can listen to traditional music and song at this restored theater.

THIÊN MỤ PAGODA

Thien Mu Pagoda is a symbol of Huế, a slim tower built in 1601 on the banks of the Perfume River.

CỬ CHI TUNNELS

During the Vietnam War, the Northern Vietnamese soldiers used underground tunnels to move around. Try and squeeze through them at Cu Chi!

PHÚ QUỐC ISLAND

Vietnam's island paradise is also home to the best fish sauce—anchovies are dried in the sun and then left to ferment into the sauce—yum!



NGUYỄN QUANG HẢI
B.1997

A household name in Vietnam, this soccer player is considered one of the best in Asia.

MEKONG DELTA

The waterways of the Mekong Delta are so busy it can look like a city on the water!



TRƯNG TRẮC AND TRƯNG NHỊ
C.AD 12–43

The Trưng sisters are considered national heroes, having rebelled against the Chinese from the backs of their trusty elephants.



HỒ CHÍ MINH
1890–1969

Hồ Chí Minh is the father of modern Vietnam: he led North Vietnam to liberation from the French and against the South Vietnamese and USA to form one country.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

2879 BC: Kinh Dương Vương forms the state that will eventually become the northern part of Vietnam.

AD 1516: Portuguese explorers arrive.

1809: Poet Nguyễn Du writes one of the country's most treasured stories, *The Tale of Kiều*.

1858: The French colonize Vietnam.

1926: The last emperor of Vietnam, Bảo Đại, takes the throne.

1954: Vietnam is split into two countries—North and South Vietnam, after Hồ Chí Minh forces the French out of the north.

1964: The USA officially declares war on North Vietnam.

1969: Hồ Chí Minh dies.

1973: The USA withdraws from Vietnam.

1976: Vietnam is unified after North Vietnam defeats South Vietnam.

1977: Vietnam is admitted to the United Nations.

2016: Vietnam wins its first Olympic gold medal, for pistol shooting.

KEY FACTS

INDEPENDENCE—FREEDOM—HAPPINESS

CAPITAL

Hanoi

MONEY

Đồng

NATION CODE

VN

LARGEST CITIES

Ho Chi Minh City
Hai Phong
Can Tho
Bien Hoa
Da Nang

NAMED FOR

There is some debate about what the name means but think it means “Viet people of the South.”

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Vietnamese

POPULATION

95,000,000



FLOWER

Red lotus



ANIMAL

Water buffalo



WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE ASCENDING DRAGON

Could a country be any brighter, louder, and more colorful than Vietnam? It's difficult to imagine!

It is perhaps one of the most beautiful places in the world. That would explain why, throughout its history, people have been fighting over who gets to call it home. For much of its history, it has been a region ruled by China. And many of the country's most famous people are soldiers or warriors who defied Chinese rule.

Today it's a peaceful place, despite the high energy that surrounds you here. The city streets are like oceans of wheels—bicycles, motorcycles, cyclos (three-wheeled bike taxis), and cars. And learning to walk across a road will be one of your very first challenges as the traffic swirls around you. Before you know it, you'll be on the other side, looking at a street cart selling the most delicious fresh fruit you can imagine—with a tiny bag of salt and chilli to dip each piece into.



NGÔ QUYỀN
AD 897–944

Vietnam has had a long history of conflict with China—Ngô Quyền led Vietnam to victory ending 1,000 years of Chinese rule over the land.



VÕ NGUYÊN GIÁP
1911–2013

After the Chinese, it was the French that colonized Vietnam—Giáp defeated the French in 1954, bringing the country one step closer to independence.

VIETNAM

SOPPONG CAVES

There are over 200 limestone caves near the small town of Soppong, some of which contain prehistoric wooden coffins that are over 1,700 years old!

MAE HONG SON

This remote and mountainous northern town is on the border with Myanmar and is surrounded by forested caves, hot springs, and waterfalls.

MAE SARIANG

Surrounded by rice paddies and forested hills, this small town is a perfect example of traditional Thailand.

SUKHOTHAI HISTORICAL PARK

A former capital founded in 1248, this beautiful ancient city is revered as the birthplace of Thai culture.

ERAWAN NATIONAL PARK

Home to the seven-tiered Erawan waterfall, where it's possible to swim in the crystal-clear pools at the base of the falls.

KANCHANABURI

During World War II, the Japanese army forced prisoners of war to construct a railway line linking Bangkok to Burma. The bridge over the River Kwai was part of this effort.

SIMILAN ISLANDS

It's hard to believe just how blue the waters are around this archipelago. Perfect conditions for scuba diving.

PHUKET

This is Thailand's biggest island, with more than 30 beaches to choose from. After a day of sunbathing, head into Phuket Town to try out the night market.

PHI PHI ISLANDS

Famous for white-sand beaches, turquoise waters, and towering limestone cliffs, the best way to see these islands is by kayak.

CHIANG RAI

This northern town is home to the stunning White Temple. Part temple, part art installation, its whiteness symbolizes Buddha's purity.

THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

This is where the borders of Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos come together.

LAOS

MYANMAR

THAILAND

CHIANG MAI

MONKEY TEMPLES OF LOPBURI

Scurrying over, around and in the ancient temples of Lopburi are hundreds of macaque monkeys. Keep hold of your wallet—they're very bold!

AYUTTHAYA HISTORICAL PARK

Now a World Heritage Site, this historical park contains four stunning temples built in the 14th and 15th centuries—when Ayutthaya was Thailand's capital city.

NONTHABURI

BANGKOK

SAMUT PRAKAN

KAENG KRACHAN NATIONAL PARK

The largest national park in Thailand, this is a great place to spot wildlife like the yellow-throated marten and the dusky-leaf monkey.

ANG THONG MARINE NATIONAL PARK

This archipelago of over 40 islands includes 1,300-foot-high limestone cliffs, inland saltwater lagoons, coral reefs, and rock arches.

RAILAY BEACH

There are hundreds of beautiful tropical beaches in Thailand, but this beach is the best spot in the country to rock climb limestone karsts.

WAT PHRA SINGH

This 14th-century temple houses more than 700 practicing monks and novice monks.

SUNDAY WALKING STREET

From 4 p.m. to midnight each Sunday this street is closed to traffic and becomes one huge shopping experience.

ELEPHANT NATURE PARK

This sanctuary and rescue/rehabilitation center for elephants lets you wash and feed these magnificent creatures.



SAENCHAI B.1980

One of the greatest Muay Thai (Thai boxing) fighters of all time, he once held four separate titles in four different weight divisions.

PHIMAI HISTORICAL PARK

Not quite as large as Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Phimai was nevertheless an incredibly important Khmer site from the 11th and 12th centuries.

THE GRAND PALACE

Since 1782 this has been the official residence of the king. The complex includes the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and royal reception halls.

WAT PHO

Inside this Buddhist temple complex, you'll find a 150-foot-long and 50-foot-high gilded statue of a reclining Buddha.

FLOATING MARKETS

Bangkok's traditional canals host floating markets full of narrow wooden boats selling anything from fresh fruit and flowers to seafood and souvenirs.

KOH TARUTAO

What was once an isolated, island prison is now on the itinerary of intrepid travelers who want to experience pristine Thai beaches without lots of tourists.

KING CHULALONGKORN/RAMA V 1853-1910




His greatest achievement as king was to prevent Thailand from being colonized by Western forces.

WELCOME TO A KINGDOM RICH IN NATURAL WONDERS

What do you know about Thailand? Perhaps you’ve heard about its beautiful white-sand beaches and the delicious, spicy, fragrant food that it is world famous for. But did you know that there are close to 40,000 temples in Thailand or the fact that it’s the only Southeast Asian country that has never been colonized?

Bangkok is the capital of Thailand and the largest city in the country, and it’s also one of the hottest cities in the world. The streets of this lively metropolis are lined with modern skyscrapers and food carts, luxury cars and tuk-tuks, tourists and temples, monks and business people.

To the south of Bangkok, you’ll find Thailand’s famous beaches and to the north you’ll uncover its forests and jungles and the country’s foodie paradise, Chiang Mai. From top to bottom, this is a country with wondrous wilderness, fascinating historical monuments, unique wildlife, and intriguing cities and towns.

KEY FACTS	NATION, RELIGION, KING	
CAPITAL Bangkok	MONEY Baht	NATION CODE TH
LARGEST CITIES Bangkok Samut Prakan Nonthaburi Udon Thani	NAMED FOR The name Thailand translates to “land of the free”	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Thai
POPULATION 69,400,000 	FLOWER Golden shower tree 	BIRD Siamese fireback 



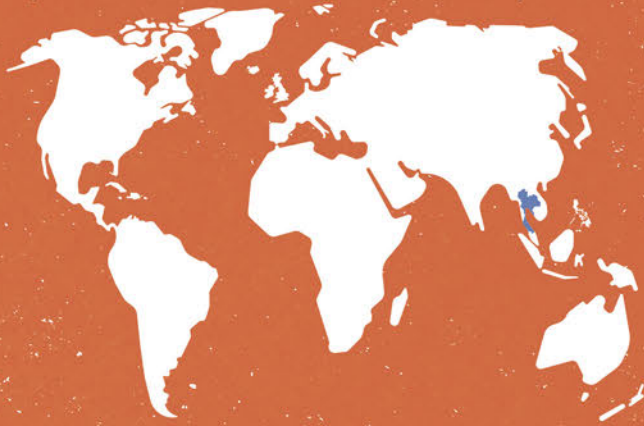
RATCHANOK INTANON
B.1995
Intanon was the first Thai woman to become a world champion in badminton.



YINGLUCK SHINAWATRA
B.1967
Thailand’s first female prime minister was one of the youngest to ever become leader.



KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ
1927–2016
The ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty was, at the time of his death, the longest-reigning head of state in the world and the longest-reigning monarch in Thai history.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- AD 900s:** Tai people begin to migrate from southern China into areas of present-day Thailand.
- 1200s:** Powerful regional empires, such as the Khmer and Dvaravati, decline and Tai city-states unify and identify as Thai.
- 1350s:** The kingdom of Ayutthaya becomes the dominant power and is the first to trade with Europeans.
- 1569–1767:** The Ayutthaya kingdom is overpowered by Burmese forces. The succession line of kings is broken.
- 1767–1782:** A former military general, Taksin, claims the rule and moves the capital to Thonburi. In 1782, he is deposed by the military.
- 1782:** Chao Phraya Chakri assumes the throne as King Yot Fa (Rama I). The capital is moved to Bangkok.
- 1850–1910:** King Mongkut (Rama IV) and King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) modernize the country, building railways to unite the land and protecting it from colonization.
- 1932:** Military officers and bureaucrats, calling themselves the Khana Ratsadon (People’s Party) overthrow the king and introduce a constitutional monarchy.
- 1939:** The country, known as Siam up until now, becomes known as Prathet Thai (the country of the Thai).
- 1957:** Thailand comes under a military dictatorship.
- 1997:** The Asian Economic Crisis occurs, and in its aftermath, Democrats return to power.
- 2000–2011:** Business billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra is elected prime minister. His rule is dogged by corruption claims, and in 2011 his sister, Yingluck, becomes the first female prime minister of Thailand.

THAILAND





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 7500 BC:** People begin cultivating rice in the region.
- 551 BC:** Confucius, the famous philosopher and thinker, is born.
- 221 BC:** Qin Shi Huang becomes the first emperor of a unified China.
- 210 BC:** Qin Shi Huang is buried with an army of terracotta warriors.
- AD 105:** Paper is invented by Cai Lun.
- 142:** Gunpowder, a Chinese invention, is mentioned in texts for the first time.
- 206-220:** The compass is invented in China, revolutionizing travel.
- 1041-1048:** Bi Sheng invents moveable type printing.
- 1421:** Beijing becomes the capital of China.
- 1912:** China becomes a republic.
- 1949:** The communist revolution sees Mao become the leader of Communist China.
- 1966-1976:** China undergoes the Cultural Revolution—a time of great change throughout its society.
- 1989:** Many demonstrators are killed while protesting in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square.
- 2008:** Beijing hosts the Olympic Games.
- 2013:** China lands the Jade Rabbit lunar rover on the moon.

KEY FACTS		WÈI RÉN MÍN FÚ WÙ (SERVE THE PEOPLE)	
CAPITAL Beijing	MONEY Renminbi	NATION CODE CN	
POPULATION 1,400,000,000	NAMED FOR In Chinese it means “middle kingdom”	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Standard Chinese (Mandarin)	
LARGEST CITIES Shanghai Beijing Chongqing Tianjin Guangzhou	FLOWER Plum blossom	ANIMAL Giant panda	



MAO ZEDONG
1893–1976

Chairman Mao was the founder of the People’s Republic of China.



FAYE WONG
B.1969

Wong is a hugely popular and groundbreaking Chinese pop star.



YAO MING
B.1980

Basketballer Yao Ming is China’s most famous sports person. He played in the US NBA as well as in China.



HEAVENLY LAKE OF TIANSHAN

Melted snow from the surrounding mountains makes the water in this lake crystal clear.



MOGAO GROTTOS

Also known as the Cave of a Thousand Buddhas, there are 492 temples to discover here.

XINJIANG INTERNATIONAL GRAND BAZAAR

Explore the bustling Islamic market that grew out of centuries of trading between the Arab world and China.

POTALA PALACE

It looks like a fortress, but this 1,000-room palace was home to Tibet’s Dalai Lamas for 400 years until communist rule in 1959.



TIGER LEAPING GORGE

Time to hike! This gorge is a World Heritage Site, and its rocky cliffs run for 9 miles along the Jinsha River.



WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE DIVINE

China is the most populous country on Earth and has had an amazing influence on the world throughout history. It’s the home of printing, gunpowder, and the compass. Rice—one of the world’s most important food sources—was first cultivated in China around 10,000 years ago.

Throughout its history China has controlled large areas of East Asia, and almost every country in the region has Chinese traditions as part of their own, from religion to food. The Chinese traded with other parts of the world, spreading their technology and culture, but also adopting from the people they interacted with.

Chinese cities are enormous! Shanghai alone has around 22 million people! A visit to China will keep you entertained for weeks, if not years! With thousands of years of history, each part of China is completely unique. As well as speaking Mandarin, each region usually has its own language. The cuisine in each region is also distinct, with noodles in the north, rice in the south, and spicy dishes in the west.

China



CONFUCIUS
551–479 BC

Confucius was a thinker and philosopher whose work has affected the whole world.

MONGOLIA

GREAT WALL OF CHINA

You can't really see it from space, but China's famous collection of defensive walls is more than 13,000 miles long!



EAST TAIHANG GLASS WALK

It's a 4,000-foot-high glass platform wrapped around a cliff, designed to look like it's cracking as you walk on it!

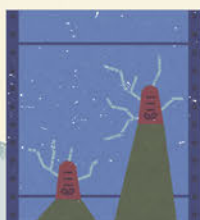
TERRA-COTTA ARMY

Around 8,000 warrior statues make an army built to protect emperor Qin Shi Huang in the afterlife.



DRAGON ESCALATOR

The world's longest outdoor escalator is hidden in a bright yellow dragon running down the hillside.



HARBIN ICE AND SNOW WORLD

Ice sculptors from all over the world compete here annually to build the biggest and best ice castles and statues.



TEMPLE OF HEAVEN

Almost 600 years old, this temple complex was used by leaders to pray for good harvests.



PEKING DUCK

Peking duck in Beijing is a multi-course experience, from crispy-skin pancakes to soup—all of it delicious!

TIANANMEN SQUARE

Tiananmen is one of the largest city squares in the world and is bordered by important public buildings.



THE FORBIDDEN CITY

This is the world's largest imperial palace and there are almost 1,000 buildings within its walls!



LESHAN GIANT BUDDHA

This is a stone statue of Buddha, carved into a cliff and standing 230 feet tall!



CHENGDU PANDA BASE

This center researches and breeds pandas. You can visit the base to learn about these amazing bamboo-loving bears.



BEIJING



WATERMELON MUSEUM

Watermelons are one of China's most popular fruits—so it's no surprise to find a museum dedicated to them!

SHANGHAI

HANGZHOU



CHONGQING

GIANT WILD GOOSE PAGODA

This temple was built in AD 652 to house Buddhist relics taken from India.



GUANGZHOU

STONE FOREST YUNNAN

This is a huge forest of giant limestone stalagmites, dotted with waterfalls and caves, formed around 270 million years ago.



KAYAK THE LI RIVER

The Li River winds through incredible limestone rock formations—paddle a kayak for a peaceful tour of this beautiful area.



THE PEAK TRAM

Hold on! The Peak Tram rolls up the side of Victoria Peak in Hong Kong and it's so steep you'll feel like you're going to fall backward!



WEST LAKE

The West Lake is famed for pagodas, bridges, and gardens. Jump on a bicycle and ride around the whole lake.



YUM CHA

Hong Kong is famed for its yum cha—small plates of single bites, from wontons to chicken feet, pork buns to custard tarts.



JACK MA
B.1964

One of the richest people in the world and the richest in China, Jack Ma is a technology and investment businessman.

KEY FACTS		
BHINNEKA TUNGGAL IKA (UNITY IN DIVERSITY)		
CAPITAL Jakarta	MONEY Indonesian rupiah	NATION CODE ID
LARGEST CITIES Jakarta Surabaya Medan Bandung	NAMED FOR The Latin and Greek words <i>Indus</i> and <i>nesos</i> —meaning “Indian” and “island”	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Indonesian (a standardized variant of Malay)
POPULATION 272,000,000	FLOWER Sambac jasmine	BIRD Javan hawk-eagle



SUKARNO
1901–1970
The first president of Indonesia, Sukarno is credited with being the champion of independence.



JAVA MAN
ONE MILLION YEARS AGO
The fossilized remains of Java Man were discovered in 1891 and 1892; they are one of only a few examples of an early upright standing human being.

WILD ORANGUTANS, KALIMANTAN
These highly intelligent apes face extinction as their jungle habitat is destroyed by humans. You can see them in the wild in Kutai and Tanjung Puting National Parks

KAKABAN ISLAND
Thousands of stingless jellyfish can be found here and divers spend their time swimming below the surface, spotting all the different species.

LABUAN CERMIN LAKE
The water in this jungle lake is so crystal clear that boats look like they're floating in midair.

BOROBUDUR TEMPLE
This 9th-century Buddhist temple is the largest in the world, decorated with thousands of sculpted panels.

GILI ISLANDS
Made up of three small islands ringed by coral reefs, the Gilis are famous for sandy beaches and snorkeling with sea turtles.

TANA TORAJA
The indigenous Torajan people are known for their elaborate funeral rituals. Part of this includes the bodies being placed in local caves and then mummified.

WAE REBO
This mountain village is surrounded by jungles teeming with wildlife. However, it's the large, wooden cone-shaped houses that people come to see!

MOUNT BROMO
If you brave the plumes of smoke from this active volcano and walk to the top, you'll be rewarded with awesome views of the surrounding countryside.

SEMINYAK
Surfing, sunbathing, swimming, and shopping, Seminyak's attractions are what many people think of when they think of Bali.

PINK BEACH, LOMBOK
There is no shortage of beautiful beaches throughout Indonesia, but the island of Lombok can say its pink sand beach is one of the prettiest.

KOMODO NATIONAL PARK
Don't get too close! Komodo dragons, the world's largest lizards, have a venomous bite.

ULUWATU TEMPLE
Sitting atop a steep cliff with a sheer 230-foot drop to the sea below, this Balinese Hindu temple is dedicated to the spirits of the sea.

SACRED MONKEY FOREST SANCTUARY
Hold on to your backpack, the long-tailed monkeys at this Ubud sanctuary like to help themselves to visitors' belongings.

NATIONAL MONUMENT
This 450-foot-high monument topped with a bronze flame covered in 70 pounds of gold leaf is Indonesia's symbol of independence.

TAMAN MINI INDONESIA PARK
Traditionally ornate pavilions showcase Indonesia's vibrant and varied cultures with examples of indigenous art, architecture, and costume.

ISTIQBAL MOSQUE
There are more people of Islamic faith in Indonesia than anywhere else on Earth, so it's not surprising that Jakarta has Southeast Asia's biggest mosque.

LAKE TOBA
This ocean-blue lake in the caldera of an ancient volcano is the largest lake in Southeast Asia.

LAKE KAOLIN, BELITUNG
Looking almost like the surface of the moon, the white banks of this bright blue lake are made up of mineral deposits.

KRAKATOA
When this volcano erupted in 1883, it made the loudest sound ever recorded and could be heard over 2,800 miles away.

UJUNG KULON NATIONAL PARK
It's thought that there are less than 70 Javan rhinos left on the planet and this the only place you can see them.

MEDAN

MALAYSIA

JAKARTA

SURABAYA

BANDUNG

WELCOME TO THOUSANDS OF ISLANDS, ONE COUNTRY

There aren't many countries that count close to 300 different ethnic groups with over 700 languages as their inhabitants. In fact, it wasn't until foreign traders reached the region that it became known as the Indonesian archipelago instead of a group of distinct and separate islands.

Over 17,000 islands make up Indonesia, and across this area, you'll find volcanoes and tropical beaches, dragons and orangutans, rice paddies and rain forests, mangroves and ancient temples. Did you know that Indonesia is home to the world's largest flower too? Its name is *Rafflesia arnoldii*, but locals know it as the corpse flower because of the terrible smell it produces!

Indonesia's capital city, Jakarta, is enormous and hectic. There are towering skyscrapers, an old town lined with Dutch colonial buildings, huge national monuments, and giant shopping malls. It's bright, loud, busy, bustling—and never boring!



AGNES MONICA
B.1986

Aka Agnez Mo, one of Indonesia's favorite pop stars and actors, she has won more awards than any other Indonesian singer.

KELIMUTU

At the summit of this volcano, you can look down into three beautifully colored crater lakes.



RAJA AMPAT

This archipelago of over 1,500 tropical islands is home to coral reefs with thousands of different types of brightly colored fish.



RADEN ADJENG KARTINI
1879–1904

Human rights activist Kartini pioneered educational rights for girls and women in Indonesia.



SRI MULYANI INDRAWATI
B.1962

Powerful economist Indrawati has been a director of the World Bank as well as Indonesian Finance Minister.

PUNCAK JAYA

The highest peak in all of Indonesia, this striking mountain range has snow and glaciers, despite being so close to the equator.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

100,000 to 1.6 million years ago: *Homo erectus* (a direct ancestor of modern humans) walks the land on the island of Java.

2000 BC: People from Taiwan begin to arrive and settle in the archipelago.

AD 600s: A kingdom known as the Srivijaya is in power in areas of the Indonesian archipelago.

1200s: Islam arrives in Sumatra and gradually becomes the dominant religion.

1512: Portuguese traders are the first Europeans to arrive in Indonesia.

1619: Traders from the Dutch East India Company take over Java and other Indonesian islands.

1945: During World War II, the Dutch lose control and nationalist leader Sukarno declares Indonesian independence.

1967: In the aftermath of a failed coup, Sukarno hands over power to military leader General Suharto.

1999: East Timor votes for independence from Indonesia.

2004: More than 220,000 people die after a massive earthquake and tsunami hits the islands.

2010: Indonesia becomes the third-fastest-growing economy in the world, after China and India.

INDONESIA

KEY FACTS		SPREAD THE SPIRIT OF NURTURING RIGHTNESS	
CAPITAL Tokyo	MONEY Yen	NATION CODE JP	
LARGEST CITIES Tokyo Yokohama Osaka Nagoya Sapporo	NAMED FOR Its name in Japanese, which means "the sun's origin"	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Japanese	
POPULATION 126,800,000	FLOWER Chrysanthemum or cherry blossom	BIRD Japanese green pheasant	





KINKAKU-JI TEMPLE
The top two floors of this Zen temple are completely covered in gold leaf, making it glimmer in the sunlight.



GION
This Kyoto district is famous for the Gion geishas, artistic entertainers who sing, dance, and serve guests wearing traditional kimonos, hair, and make-up.



ARASHIYAMA BAMBOO GROVE
The soft light and gentle swaying of thousands of bamboo trunks makes this grove feel like another world.

KOREA

HIROSHIMA PEACE MEMORIAL PARK
This park is dedicated to peace. It was created to remember the awful destruction of the cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, when the USA dropped atomic bombs on them.



HENN NA HOTEL, NAGASAKI
Don't expect a human to help you at this hotel—it's run by robots! (Some of which look like dinosaurs!)



FUKUOKA CASTLE
Only ruins remain of the castle, but visitors come in droves to see the cherry blossoms from up high in the crumbling turret.



OKINAWA
Snorkel with manta rays and sea turtles and explore underwater caves in Japan's southern-most prefecture.

THE ATSUTA JINGU SHRINE
Legend has it that an ancient samurai sword is housed in this 2,000-year-old sacred Shinto shrine.



KENROKU-EN GARDEN (ISHIKAWA)
This 200-year-old garden is considered one of Japan's most beautiful and has plants that flower at different times, creating a new look for each season.



JIGOKUDANI MONKEY PARK
What would you do if you came across a natural hot spring in the freezing snow? Follow the lead of the macaques and take a bath!



STUDIO GHIBLI
This animation studio has produced some wonderfully unique films over the years. *Spirited Away*, *Princess Mononoke*, and *My Neighbor Totoro* are just a few.

GREAT BUDDHA OF KAMAKURA
Look closely at the ears of this giant bronze Buddha, and you'll see some gold leaf. When the statue was built in 1252, it was all entirely covered in gold.



ITSUKUSHIMA SHRINE, HIROSHIMA
This "island of worship" has been a place of pilgrimage since ancient times, and the "floating" torii gate rising from the ocean is a sight to see!



THE HAKONE OPEN-AIR MUSEUM (KANAGAWA)
If you think art museums are boring, then this open-air sculpture park is going to be a fun surprise—look out for the giant head lying on its side.



MOUNT FUJI
Snow-capped "Fuji-san" is an active volcano and Japan's highest peak. Join the 300,000 people who climb it every year.



OSAKA CASTLE
When Toyotomi Hideyoshi succeeded in unifying Japan in the 16th century, he built this five-story castle as a display of power.



HIMEJI CASTLE
The Japanese call this 400-year-old castle the White Heron castle because it is white and looks so elegant.

NAOSHIMA
This incredible art island is full of curiosities big and small. Look out for enormous sculptures scattered around the area and balancing on the end of the boat dock.



NAGOYA

TOKYO

YOKOHAMA

OSAKA

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

You may think of Japan as an island off the eastern edge of Asia, but it's actually an archipelago of nearly 7,000 islands! The four major islands are Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. The city of Tokyo, Japan's busiest city and its capital, is on the largest island of Honshu. Because Japan sits near three of the Earth's tectonic plates, it experiences around 1,500 earthquakes every year.

Japanese culture celebrates hard work and humility, and respecting your elders is very important. Did you know that Japanese people are some of the longest-living in the world? It could be down to their diet, which is rich in fish, rice, and vegetables. There are very few places on Earth that haven't taken to serving the country's signature dish, sushi.

From one end of the country to the other, you will come across snow-capped mountain peaks and beautifully manicured gardens, high-tech skyscrapers and bendy, bamboo forests, monkeys bathing in hot springs, and hotels run by robots! There is nowhere else on the planet quite like Japan.

TOKYO SKYTREE

This tower's observation deck has a glass walkway, and if you stand on it and look down, you can see the streets...far below!

TSUKIJI FISH MARKET

A fish market might sound like a stinky place to visit, but this is one of the busiest fish markets on Earth in a country that invented eating raw fish!

UENO PARK AND ZOO

This huge park is popular during cherry blossom season, and is home to museums, concert halls, and temples as well as a zoo.



HAYAO MIYAZAKI
B.1941

Miyazaki directed *My Neighbor Totoro* and is known the world over as one of the greatest storytellers and makers of animated films. He was a co-founder of the famous Studio Ghibli.



NAOMI OSAKA
B.1997

Reaching world number one in women's singles tennis, Osaka is the first Asian player to hold this title.



CHIAKI MUKAI
B.1952

The first Japanese woman in space and the first Japanese citizen to go on two spaceflights, she happens to be a heart surgeon too!



TAIHŌ KŌKI
1940–2013

Perhaps the greatest sumo wrestler of all time, Taihō won 45 consecutive matches and achieved the highest rank at just 21 years old.



TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI
1537–1598

Hideyoshi became one of Japan's preeminent warriors, samurais, and politicians, and is credited with unifying the nation of Japan.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

2500 BC: People on the Japanese archipelago are using stone tools and earthenware.

AD c.250–552: The Yamato court expands and rules; they will become known for their large burial mounds.

607: The Horyuji Temple is built, which contains the oldest surviving wooden structure in the world.

794: Kyoto becomes the capital.

1490–1590: Wars are fought among feudal lords as they seek power, land, and influence.

1590: Toyotomi Hideyoshi unifies Japan after 100 years of instability and fighting.

1639: Japan rejects western colonialism and religion, closing itself off from the rest of the world for 200 years.

1854: Japan and the USA sign the Treaty of Peace and Amity, which ends Japan's isolation.

1941–1945: Japan enters World War II. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are the targets of the first atomic bombs.

1956: Japan becomes a member of the United Nations.

1995: The city of Kobe is devastated by a large earthquake killing over 6,000 people.

2005: The Kyoto Protocol is drawn up and signed by nations determined to reduce climate change.

2011: More than 20,000 people die as a tsunami causes widespread destruction across the country.



JAPAN



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 450–750: The ancient kingdom of Licchavi is established in Nepal after losing power in India.

1200–1800: The Malla dynasty comes to power and rules over the Kathmandu Valley, dividing it into city-states under a Malla king.

1769: Gurkha ruler Prithvi Narayan Shah conquers Kathmandu and lays the foundations for a unified kingdom.

1814–1816: War breaks out between the Kingdom of Gorkha (Nepal) and the East India Company because both want to expand their borders.

1914–1918: Nepalese citizens fight for Britain in World War I.

1923: A treaty with Britain ensures Nepal's sovereignty.

1953: Tenzing Norgay from Nepal and Sir Edmund Hillary from New Zealand become the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

1988: A massive earthquake hits the border of Nepal and India, killing a thousand people.

1994–1999: A communist government is formed, then dissolved before Maoists (Chinese communists) take over; this results in many Nepalese leaving for India.

2005: Maoists and opposition leaders agree on a plan to bring back a democratic process in Nepal.

2008: Nepal becomes a republic, and a Maoist leader becomes prime minister.

2014: Nepal's tourism authority declares that all climbers on Everest must return down the mountain with 18 pounds of trash, to help clear the mess left behind over the years.



SUSHILA KARKI
B.1952

Karki is the first woman in Nepal to become the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, respected for her zero tolerance toward corruption.



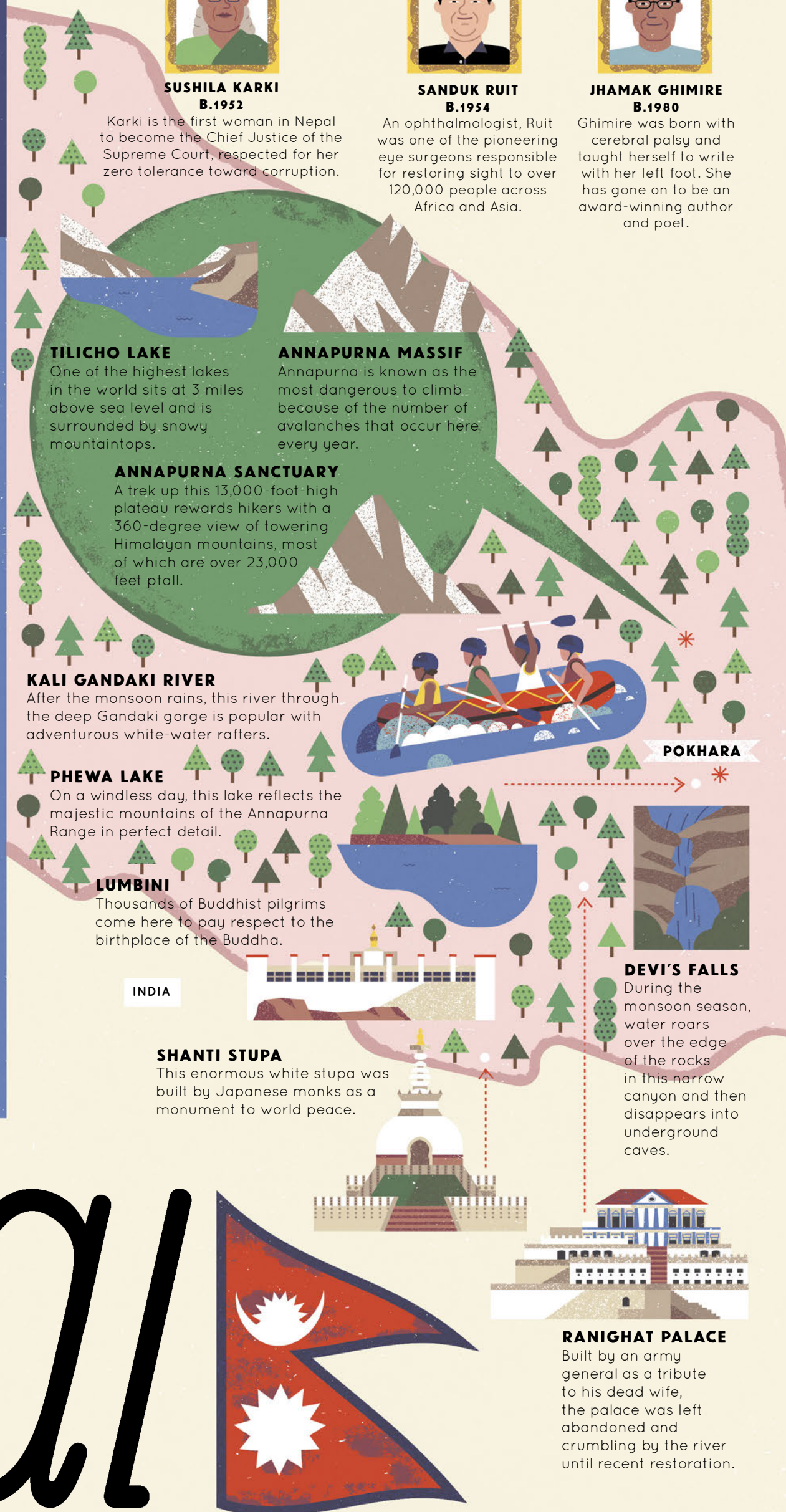
SANDUK RUIT
B.1954

An ophthalmologist, Ruit was one of the pioneering eye surgeons responsible for restoring sight to over 120,000 people across Africa and Asia.



JHAMAK GHIMIRE
B.1980

Ghimire was born with cerebral palsy and taught herself to write with her left foot. She has gone on to be an award-winning author and poet.



TILICHO LAKE

One of the highest lakes in the world sits at 3 miles above sea level and is surrounded by snowy mountaintops.

ANNAPURNA MASSIF

Annapurna is known as the most dangerous to climb because of the number of avalanches that occur here every year.

ANNAPURNA SANCTUARY

A trek up this 13,000-foot-high plateau rewards hikers with a 360-degree view of towering Himalayan mountains, most of which are over 23,000 feet tall.

KALI GANDAKI RIVER

After the monsoon rains, this river through the deep Gandaki gorge is popular with adventurous white-water rafters.

PHEWA LAKE

On a windless day, this lake reflects the majestic mountains of the Annapurna Range in perfect detail.

LUMBINI

Thousands of Buddhist pilgrims come here to pay respect to the birthplace of the Buddha.

INDIA

SHANTI STUPA

This enormous white stupa was built by Japanese monks as a monument to world peace.

POKHARA

DEVI'S FALLS

During the monsoon season, water roars over the edge of the rocks in this narrow canyon and then disappears into underground caves.

RANIGHAT PALACE

Built by an army general as a tribute to his dead wife, the palace was left abandoned and crumbling by the river until recent restoration.

NEPAL



WELCOME TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD

Most people know about Nepal because of the steady stream of adventurers and mountaineers arriving with a dream to climb the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest, or Sagarmatha as it's known in Nepal. Only a few will make it to the peak, but most will go home with a newfound love of the country that hosts no less than eight of the ten highest mountain peaks on Earth!

While it's famous for its mountains, Nepal has a diverse landscape that stretches down to lowland plains, where temperatures are hot and humid. Most Nepalis live in the capital city, Kathmandu, and most of the population identify themselves as Hindu, which means they believe in reincarnation—where the soul lives on through many lives and in different forms.

From bustling Kathmandu to small southern villages, you'll see stunning temples, busy marketplaces, ancient palaces, and national parks that are home to rhinoceroses, elephants, and Bengal tigers.



TENZING NORGAY
1914–1986

Famous for being one half of the mountaineering duo—the other being Sir Edmund Hillary—that was first to reach the summit of Mount Everest.



GAUTAMA BUDDHA
C.563–483 BC

Credited as being the spiritual leader whose teachings were responsible for founding Buddhism.

GORKHA DURBAR

This 16th-century palace, fort, and temple sits precariously on the edge of a cliff overlooking the Trisuli Valley.

MANAKAMANA TEMPLE & CABLE CAR

A two-tiered mountaintop pagoda, this sacred Hindu temple is reached by riding 2 miles in a cable car.

LANGTANG NATIONAL PARK

In the high meadows of this national park, you can see red pandas and Himalayan black bears. You might even be lucky enough to spot a snow leopard.

NAGARKOT

This small village has the best views of the Himalayas. Eight out of thirteen ranges can be seen from here.

SWAYAMBHUNATH (MONKEY TEMPLE)

Climb the 365 steps to the gold-domed temple and you'll be greeted by hundreds of monkeys!

HANUMAN DHOKA

This huge royal palace complex once had 35 courtyards known as chowks. However, an earthquake in 1934 reduced this to just 10.

PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE

The largest temple complex in Nepal, this is one of the four most sacred Hindu sites in Asia.

ASAN MARKET

This busy and vibrant market has been a trading place for hundreds of years. Today you can buy anything from colorful fabrics to interesting spices.

BOUDHANATH STUPA

An important pilgrimage site for Buddhists, this huge stupa was built in the 14th century on a busy trade route so that passersby might be converted.

KATHMANDU

LALITPUR

BHARATPUR

BHAKTAPUR

This medieval city-state has many palaces and temples, but one of the most striking sights is an open square covered in clay pots drying in the sun.

MOUNT EVEREST

Mighty Mount Everest, the tallest mountain on Earth, was formed over 60 million years ago when the Indian and Asian tectonic plates crashed together.

CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

This is the oldest national park in Nepal and is home to one-horned rhinos, royal Bengal tigers, leopards, monkeys, deer, and sloth bears.

GOLDEN TEMPLE (KWA BAHAL)

Believed to have been founded in the 12th century, the temple gets its name from the intricate gold-covered exterior.

DURBAR SQUARE

There are over 130 courtyards and 55 temples, as well as an ancient palace, in this busy and beautiful square.

PATAN MUSEUM

Housed in a former royal palace, the museum displays sacred and traditional artworks of Nepal.

KEY FACTS

MOTHER AND MOTHERLAND ARE GREATER THAN HEAVEN

CAPITAL

Kathmandu

MONEY

Nepalese rupee

NATION CODE

NP

LARGEST CITIES

Kathmandu
Pokhara
Lalitpur
Birgunj
Biratnagar
Bharatpur

NAMED FOR

Thought to be named after an ancient dynasty called "Nepa"

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Nepali

FLOWER

Rhododendron

BIRD

Danphe

POPULATION

29,970,000





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER




- 1917:** Britain decides to create a national home for Jewish people in Palestine.
- 1939:** The British government attempts to limit the number of Jewish people migrating to Palestine to 10,000 per year.
- 1940s:** The persecution of Jewish people by the Nazis in World War II creates a mass migration of Jews to Palestine.
- 1947:** The United Nations steps in and recommends that Palestine be divided into separate Jewish and Arab states.
- 1948–1949:** Israel declares independence—almost immediately war breaks out between Arabs and Israelis.
- 1949–1960:** Close to 1.3 million Jewish refugees settle in Israel.
- 1967:** Israel attacks Egypt over access to the Suez Canal—it becomes known as the Six Day War and leaves Israel with control over more of Palestine.
- 1982:** Israel invades Lebanon in an attempt to expel leaders of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO).
- 1993:** The Israeli Prime Minister and PLO leader sign an agreement to plan for Palestinian self-government.
- 2003:** The United States, European Union, Russia, and the United Nations all step in to try and resolve Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- 2016:** Israel refuses to work with 12 countries who voted for Israeli-Palestinian peace. Violence ensues.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY

Israel is a young country, but an ancient land—people have been living here for thousands of years. But even more remarkable, Israel is at the center of much of human culture’s roots. It’s the spiritual home of two of the world’s biggest religions, Christianity and Judaism, and is also an important part of Islamic culture. Wherever you travel in Israel, you’ll find towns, rivers, mountains, and seas that will be familiar from the Christian Bible, the Jewish Tanakh, and the Islamic Koran.

Alongside the incredible cultural history centered around Israel, there’s the amazing desert landscape, the super-salty Dead Sea, and cities rich in diversity—people from all over the world call Israel home.

It’s also home to some delicious Middle Eastern food—make sure you find a falafel to munch on as you explore this wonderful country.

KEY FACTS		NO NATIONAL MOTTO	
CAPITAL Jerusalem	MONEY New shekel	NATION CODE IL	
LARGEST CITIES Jerusalem Tel Aviv Haifa Rishon LeZion Petah Tikva	NAMED FOR An ancient tribe in the region	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Hebrew	
	FLOWER Anemone coronaria	BIRD Hoopoe	
POPULATION 8,600,000			
			



URI GELLER
B.1946

Illusionist and magician Geller is most famous for a trick where he would seemingly bend spoons with his mind.



ADA YONATH
B.1939

Yonath won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2009, becoming the first woman in the Middle East to win a Nobel Prize for science.

ISRAEL





GAL GADOT
B.1985

Winning a Miss Israel pageant in 2004 may have kickstarted Gadot's career, but her role as Wonder Woman made her an international film star.

ROSH HANIKRA GROTTOES

The beautiful grottoes in this chalky cliff face are mesmerising.



HAIFA



BASILICA OF THE ANNUNCIATION

It's thought that this site is where Mary was told by an angel that she would give birth to the son of God.

THE WESTERN WALL

One of the holiest places for Jews and Christians, the Western Wall is about 2,000 years old.



DOME OF THE ROCK

This Muslim temple is one of the oldest pieces of Islamic architecture still standing. It's about 1,300 years old.



THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

This hill in outer Jerusalem was once covered in olive groves, and remains one of the most important religious sites for Christians and Jews alike.



KING DAVID'S TOMB

It may not actually be the resting place of King David, but it's almost 1,000 years old and still makes you imagine a boy, a slingshot, and a giant named Goliath!



CARMEL MARKET

This buzzing market is a great place for food, jewelry, art...almost anything you can think of!



TEL AVIV



PETAH TIKVA



RISHON LEZION



MEDITERRANEAN SEA

THE POOL OF ARCHES

A boat is the best way to experience this 1,000-year-old water reservoir. Don't forget to look up at the incredible arches and pillars.



GAZA AND WEST BANK

A small strip of land on the coast called Gaza, and parts of the area called the West Bank around Jerusalem are governed by the Palestinian people.

MINI ISRAEL MUSEUM

If you don't have time to see all of Israel, you can see models of all the most important sites here in miniature scale!



AVDAT

Explore the remains of this 2,300-year-old Nabatean city destroyed by earthquake in the 7th century.



MASADA NATIONAL PARK

This national park is not about the wildlife; it's about thousands of years of human history and great battles fought at this iconic Israeli fortress.

FIND A FALAFEL

Falafel is the street food of choice in Israel, made with chickpeas and served in a fresh pita bread.



RAMON NATURE RESERVE

Israel's largest national park is famous for the Makhtesh—a crater-like feature formed by erosion. Keep your eyes peeled for ibex and gazelles.



UNDERWATER OBSERVATORY PARK

There's more than 800 species of marine life in Israel's largest aquarium.



TIMNA PARK

Zip around this stunning desert park on a go-anywhere mountain bike.

DOLPHIN REEF

Dive into the Red Sea and swim with the playful bottle-nosed dolphins and colorful tropical fish. Pop your head under the waves to see the beautiful coral.



FLOAT IN THE DEAD SEA

It's almost ten times saltier than the ocean, which makes floating in it very easy!



THE GARDEN TOMB

This tomb, cut from rock, is said by some to be the tomb where Jesus Christ was buried.



GETHSEMANE

This is believed to be the garden where Jesus was arrested after being betrayed by Judas.



ROCKEFELLER MUSEUM

An archaeological museum with artifacts dating back to prehistoric times, including a statue from Jericho made 9,000 years ago.



THE ISRAEL MUSEUM

This is the country's most important museum and gallery. You'll find ancient historical objects, art, and lots of fun things to do here.



YOTAM OTTOLENGHI
B.1968

Accomplished chef Ottolenghi became internationally famous with his cookbooks featuring Israeli and Middle Eastern cuisine.



SIGALIT LANDAU
B.1969

A sculptor and installation artist, Landau is best known for her *Salt Works* sculptures, where she immersed metal objects in the Dead Sea until they became calcified.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

3000–2000 BC: Inscriptions uncovered near Jiroft, in southeastern Iran, are thought to be the world's earliest known writing.

1340–1250 BC: The Elamite civilization builds the Chogha Zanbil ziggurat (stepped tower) to honor the Elamite god, Inshushinak.

522–486 BC: Darius the Great creates the world's first superpower by dividing Persia (Iran) into provinces, creating a system of money, and choosing one common language.

AD 632: The Prophet Muhammad dies. The same year, Arab forces attack Persia, and by AD 651, the last Persian king is dead and the empire is history.

1051: Turkish Seljuks conquer Persia and create an empire reaching to Syria, Palestine, and Constantinople.

1218: Genghis Khan and his Mongol army invade and conquer most of Persia.

1786: Agha Mohammad Khan moves the capital of Persia to Tehran before he is murdered by his servants.

1797–1834: Persia fights wars with Russia and loses Azerbaijan and Armenia.

1935: Persia asks the international community to refer to it as "Iran."

1962: Iranian leader Mohammad Reza implements the "White Revolution," improving education and women's rights and minimizing the power of the clerics.

1980–1988: The Iran-Iraq War begins. In Iran, 87 cities and nearly 3,000 villages are bombed. More than 900,000 people are killed on both sides.

2015: Iran agrees to restrict its nuclear program in return for the lifting of economic sanctions by the international community.



OMAR KHAYYAM
1048–1131

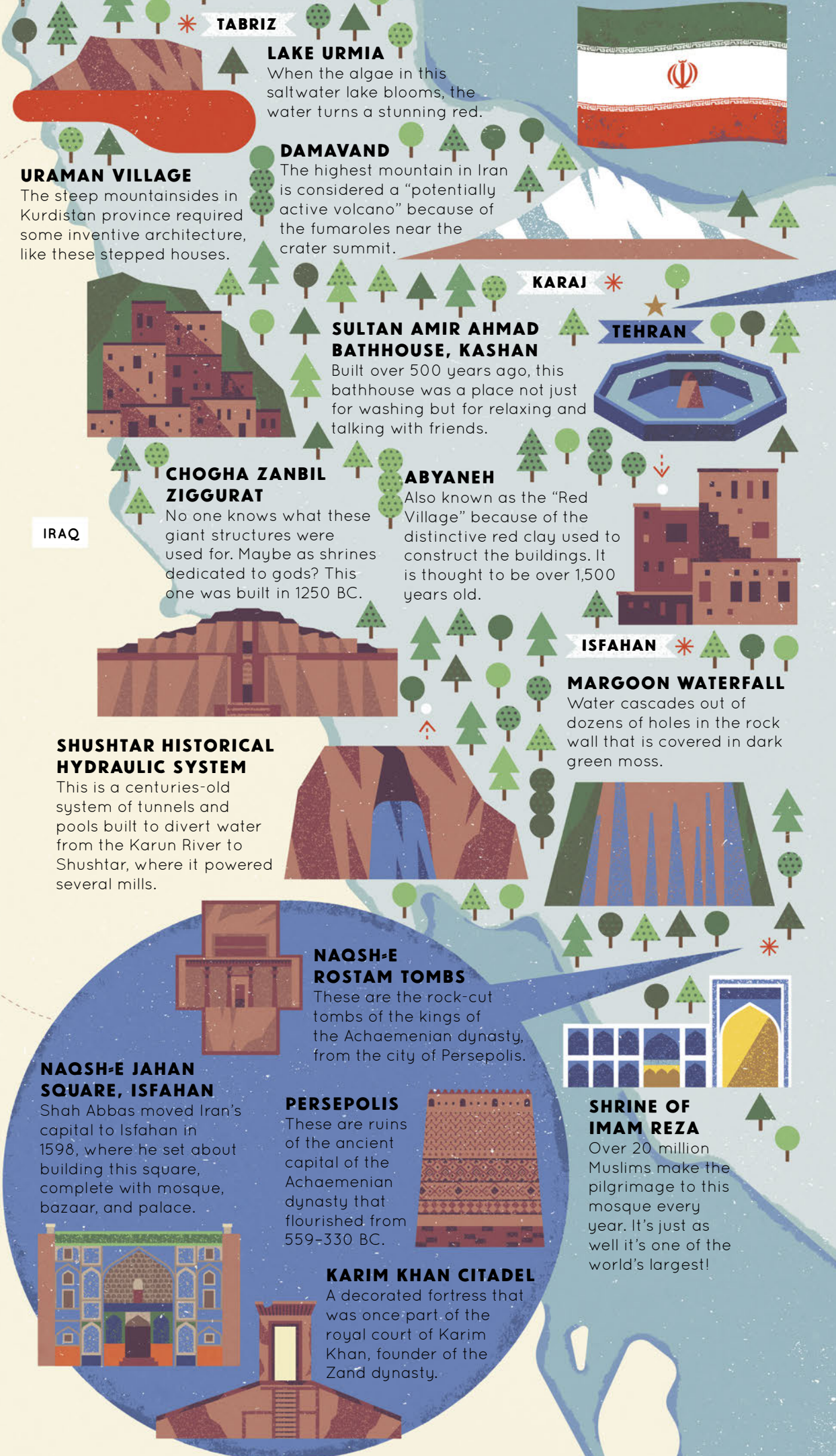
Astronomer, astrologer, physician, philosopher, and mathematician, Khayyam developed an accurate solar calendar and helped create the basic principles of algebra.



CYRUS THE GREAT
C. 600–530 BC

Responsible for creating the largest empire the world had seen, Cyrus the Great was known for his political and military intelligence.

IRAN



TABRIZ

LAKE URMIA

When the algae in this saltwater lake blooms, the water turns a stunning red.

DAMAVAND

The highest mountain in Iran is considered a "potentially active volcano" because of the fumaroles near the crater summit.

URAMAN VILLAGE

The steep mountainsides in Kurdistan province required some inventive architecture, like these stepped houses.

KARAJ

SULTAN AMIR AHMAD BATHHOUSE, KASHAN

Built over 500 years ago, this bathhouse was a place not just for washing but for relaxing and talking with friends.

TEHRAN

CHOGHA ZANBIL ZIGGURAT

No one knows what these giant structures were used for. Maybe as shrines dedicated to gods? This one was built in 1250 BC.

IRAQ

ABYANEH

Also known as the "Red Village" because of the distinctive red clay used to construct the buildings. It is thought to be over 1,500 years old.

ISFAHAN

MARGOON WATERFALL

Water cascades out of dozens of holes in the rock wall that is covered in dark green moss.

SHUSHTAR HISTORICAL HYDRAULIC SYSTEM

This is a centuries-old system of tunnels and pools built to divert water from the Karun River to Shushtar, where it powered several mills.

NAQSH-E ROSTAM TOMBS

These are the rock-cut tombs of the kings of the Achaemenian dynasty, from the city of Persepolis.

NAQSH-E JAHAN SQUARE, ISFAHAN

Shah Abbas moved Iran's capital to Isfahan in 1598, where he set about building this square, complete with mosque, bazaar, and palace.

PERSEPOLIS

These are ruins of the ancient capital of the Achaemenian dynasty that flourished from 559–330 BC.

KARIM KHAN CITADEL

A decorated fortress that was once part of the royal court of Karim Khan, founder of the Zand dynasty.

SHRINE OF IMAM REZA

Over 20 million Muslims make the pilgrimage to this mosque every year. It's just as well it's one of the world's largest!

BADAB-E SURT
Mineral-rich water bubbles from the Earth's crust and cascades down the mountain, creating pools on the flat ledges. Sunlight makes the red dirt under the water glow.

TURKMENISTAN

AZADI TOWER
Built to commemorate the 2,500-year anniversary of the Persian Empire, the tower is covered in 8,000 blocks of white marble.

THE GRAND BAZAAR
The oldest bazaar in Tehran is over 6 miles long with a series of corridors lined with vendors selling just about everything!

GOLESTAN PALACE
An extravagantly decorated collection of buildings arranged around a central pool and gardens; it's regarded as the jewel of Tehran.

KHARANAQ
The Old Town of this 4,000-year-old mud-brick village is completely abandoned; a small population of around 130 people still inhabit the New Town.

NARIN CASTLE
Constructed out of mud-brick over 2,000 years ago the castle had a clever plumbing system built into its walls.

YAZD
DASHT-E LUT
Here in the Lut Desert, the ground temperatures can reach a scorching 159 degrees Fahrenheit!

NAMAKDAN SALT CAVE, QESHM ISLAND
The longest salt cave in the world at over 4 miles, its passages lead to a huge cavern with salty white stalactites and stalagmites.

JAMEH MOSQUE
This mosque is famous for the beautifully intricate and detailed mosaic tiling on its 15th century dome and the 160-foot-high minarets (towers) on either side of the entrance.

AMIR CHAKHMAQ SQUARE
The square is closed to cars, which means you can stand and admire the stunning three-story mosque with its multiple sunken alcoves for as long as you like.

ZOROASTRIAN TOWERS OF SILENCE
According to the Zoroastrians, once someone dies, their body is vulnerable to evil spirits, so mourners would place the bodies of the deceased on the top of these towers to be eaten by birds.

KEY FACTS

INDEPENDENCE, FREEDOM, (THE) ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

CAPITAL
Tehran

MONEY
Iranian rial

NATION CODE
IR

LARGEST CITIES
Tehran
Mashhad
Isfahan
Tabriz
Karaj

NAMED FOR
The land of the Aryans

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Persian (Farsi)

POPULATION
83,200,000

FLOWER
Red rose

BIRD
Nightingale

ONCE HOME TO A MIGHTY EMPIRE, THE LEGACY OF GREATNESS

The second-largest country in the Middle East, Iran is also the home of one of the oldest civilizations in the world—beginning with the Elamite Kingdom in the 4th century BC and reaching the height of its influence under Cyrus the Great and his Achaemenid Empire in the 6th century BC.

Following the Arab conquest of the region in the 7th century, Iran experienced what is known as the Islamic Golden Age, where Arabic science, culture, and economy thrived and some of Iran's most spectacular structures, like the Shrine of Imam Reza and Isfahan's Jame Mosque, were built. Throughout history, Iran has provided a canvas for humankind's brilliant innovation and expertise.

From the towering peak of Mount Damavand to searing deserts and salt plains, Iran's landscape is a seemingly endless succession of mind-bogglingly beautiful sights. Despite a troubled recent political history that includes war and violent coups, Iranians have maintained a strong sense of identity and national pride and continue to excel on the world stage in science, technology, and astronomy.



PARDIS SABETI
B.1975

Sabeti is a geneticist who developed an algorithm that explains how genes affect disease. She's also the lead singer of a rock band!



PARISA TABRIZ
B.1983

Tabriz calls herself the "Security Princess" because she's a computer security whiz. She's also the director of engineering at Google.



PIERRE OMIDYAR
B.1967

Omidyar completed a degree in computer science and went on to work at Macintosh and Apple before creating another company you might have heard of: eBay.

PAKISTAN

JORDAN RIVER

This is the lowest river in the world, starting on the slopes of Mount Hermon and ending at the Dead Sea.

ROMAN THEATER

In the 2nd century, when Jordan's capital was the city known as Philadelphia, this Roman amphitheatre could seat 6,000 people.

CAVE OF THE SEVEN SLEEPERS

According to legend, seven Christian boys hid in this cave to escape discrimination. Legend says they fell asleep and emerged 300 years later!

AMMAN CITADEL

High on Amman's tallest hill, the citadel site includes a 5,600-foot-long Bronze Age wall, the AD 160 Roman Temple of Hercules, and the 8th century Umayyad Palace.

MOUNT NEBO

From the top, you can see the Dead Sea, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. Christians believe it was here that Moses first laid eyes on the "Promised Land."

DEAD SEA PANORAMA

This lookout, high above the Dead Sea, is the best place to get a view of the world's lowest body of water.

AMMAN BEACH

The Dead Sea has such a high concentration of salt that nothing can live in it. The salt makes it easy to float in and the mineral-rich mud is good for the skin.

MA'IN SPRINGS

Here is a series of over 60 hot springs with varying temperatures. There are also waterfalls between the pools, giving a nice break from the desert heat.

AJLOUN CASTLE

A 12th-century castle, sitting atop a mountain—this was a strategic point in the defence against Crusaders.

AL-MAGHTAS

This small natural spring, is thought to be the place that Jesus was baptised.

GADARA (UMM QAIS)

These ancient Greco-Roman ruins were once a popular resort town for wealthy Romans.

DAR AS-SARAYA MUSEUM, IRBID

Jordan's second-largest city is home to this fascinating museum, with artifacts from the Bronze and Iron Ages, and Neolithic statues that are 9,000 years old.

JERASH

Here lie the ruins of a once huge and powerful Roman city. Much of Jerash was destroyed by an earthquake in AD 749. The huge Forum, surrounded by 160 giant columns, still remains.

QUSAYR 'AMRA, ZARQA

Once an imposing desert castle thought to have been a royal retreat; beautiful 8th century frescoes still remain.

MADABA MAP

In the church of Saint George, you'll find a mosaic map of the Middle East covering part of the floor. It's the oldest surviving representation of Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

MOSES'S SPRING, WADI MUSA

Some people believe this natural spring is the place where Moses struck the rock to bring forth water for his thirsty followers.

WADI MUJIB NATURE RESERVE

The Wadi Mujib River runs through a canyon of towering sandstone cliffs. You can hike along the path of the river and swim in the pools.

DANA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Jordan's biggest nature reserve is a haven for wildlife, including 25 endangered species. Look out for ibex, gazelles, sand cats, and wolves.

KING'S HIGHWAY

An ancient roadway that was an important trade route—connecting Africa with Mesopotamia.

LITTLE PETRA

Rock-carved houses, temples, and dining rooms are densely packed in this ancient Nabatean village.

WADI RUM

This red sand desert is dotted with gnarly rock formations. It has featured as the setting for dozens of movies, including *Star Wars* and *Transformers*.

AL-KHAZNEH, PETRA

There really is a temple carved into the red stone of the mountain. This stunning building is thought to be the tomb of Nabatean King Aretas IV.

RED SEA

Unlike Jordan's other famous sea, this one supports plenty of underwater life, making it perfect for scuba diving.

QUEEN RANIA OF JORDAN B.1970

Born in Kuwait, Rania moved to Jordan, where she met and married King Abdullah; she's known for her work in supporting education, health, and disadvantaged communities.

AHMAD ABUGHAUSH B.1996

Ahmad is a tae kwon do athlete who won Jordan's first-ever Olympic gold medal in 2016.

MOSES C.14TH CENTURY

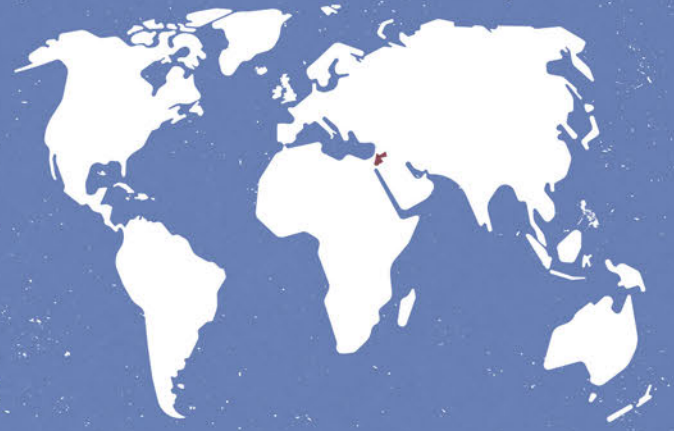
Was Moses a real or legendary figure? Biblical scholars say that he was a prophet who could speak with a divine being.

WHERE BIBLE STORIES MEET ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

Jordan is part of an area of land located between Asia, Africa, and Europe, and it is an important place to three of the world's largest religions—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Jordan has been home to many different civilizations; from the Nabataeans to the Babylonians, the Greeks and Romans, and even the Ottomans used Jordan as a base for their empires. As a result of all this human activity over the millennia, there are more ancient sites here than in almost any country on Earth.

Jordan's most visited and most famous site is the Nabataean city of Petra, also known as the Rose City because of the color of the rock the buildings are carved from. Petra is over 1,500 years old. Other major archeological sites in Jordan include the Roman city of Jerash, the Ayyubid Ajloun Castle, the Umayyad ruins of Qasr Amra, and the religious sites of Mount Nebo, where Moses sighted the promised land, and the natural spring where Jesus was baptised. All this and we haven't even started on Jordan's natural wonders, like the Dead Sea and the red desert, Wadi Rum.

Jordanians are known for being particularly hospitable and will always greet you by saying "ahlan wa sahlan" ("I welcome you") before feeding you copious amounts of food. They are also big sports fans, with soccer and basketball being followed by millions.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

10,000–4000 BC Humans settle in the area known as the Fertile Crescent; they build houses, domesticate animals, and grow crops.

1200 BC: Three distinct kingdoms emerge in Jordan, they are Edom, Moab, and Ammon. They had little contact with one another.

300 BC–AD 400: The Greeks, the Nabateans (nomadic Arabs), and the Romans are all attracted to the region because of its position between Africa and Asia.

600s: The Sunni dynasty of the Umayyads brings Islam to the region, and it becomes the dominant religion.

1100s–1200s: Conflict between Christians and Muslims, known as the Crusades, sweeps across the Middle East, including Jordan.

1516: Ottoman Turks invade and defeat the Mamluks in Jordan as well as taking the holy city of Jerusalem and Damascus in Syria.

1914–1918: Arab nationalists revolt against Ottoman rule, and by 1918 Arabs control Saudi Arabia, parts of southern Syria and Jordan.

1946: Jordan becomes an independent nation under King Abdullah.

1951: King Abdullah I is assassinated by a Palestinian extremist. His son Talal reigns for just one year due to illness. Talal's 17-year-old son, Hussein, becomes king.

1994: Jordan and Israel sign a peace treaty and agree to work together on security, water, and economic matters. The first road between the two countries is built.

2002: Jordan and Israel agree to pipe water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea, which is shrinking.

KEY FACTS

GOD, COUNTRY, KING

CAPITAL

Amman

MONEY

Jordanian dinar

NATION CODE

JO

LARGEST CITIES

Amman
Zarqa
Irbid
Russeifa
Madaba

NAMED FOR

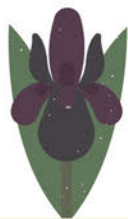
The Jordan River, which is thought to be derived from the Semitic word *Yarad*, meaning "the descender"

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Arabic

FLOWER

Black iris



BIRD

Sinai rosefinch



POPULATION

10,130,000



JORDAN



DIMA AND LAMA HATTAB
B.1980

These twin sisters were the first women in the Middle East to take part in the Marathon des Sables—a six-day, 156-mile ultramarathon.



KING ABDULLAH I
1882–1951

One of the key players in overthrowing Ottoman rule, he became the first king of independent Jordan.



AMEERA AL-TAWHEEL
B.1983

Saudi princess, Al-Taweel works to end poverty, provide disaster relief, and empower women in Saudi Arabia and around the world.



MANAL AL-SHARIF
B.1979

When women were finally granted the right to drive in 2017 and then issued licences in 2018, it was largely because of the efforts of this woman.



SARAH ATTAR
B.1992

Attar was one of two female athletes allowed to compete in the Olympics for Saudi Arabia for the first time in 2012. She ran the 800 meters and competed again in 2016 in the marathon.

JORDAN

AL ULA

More than 800 mud-brick and stone houses form a maze-like village. Built over 2,000 years ago, it's now like an abandoned ghost maze.

ZAABAL CASTLE

There's more to this centuries-old fort than meets the eye—the courtyard acts as a rainwater catchment that drains into a well system that waters Sakakah city.

MADAIN SALEH AND QASR AL-FARID (THE LONELY CASTLE)

There are over 130 intricately carved rock-tombs here, including the giant, stand-alone Qasr al-Farid.

SAUDI ARABIA

UMLUJ

You probably weren't expecting to find a tropical beach with clear blue water so close to the desert, but that's exactly what you'll find at Umluj.

JEDDAH TOWER

The cloud-piercing Jeddah Tower is designed to be the tallest building in the world—at 3,280 feet.

AL WAHBAH CRATER

Once thought to have been formed by a meteor strike, it's now accepted that this enormous crater, with its giant salt plate in the center, is volcanic.

JEBEL FIHRAYN (EDGE OF THE WORLD)

The dizzying view from the top drops down over herders and camels following ancient caravan routes.

WORLD SIGHTS PARK

No time to fly to France to see the Eiffel Tower? Or to India to see the Taj Mahal? No worries, just see the smaller version here.

AL MASMAK FORTRESS

It was from inside this 19th-century fort that Abdul Aziz Al Saud planned to conquer and unite the provinces that make up the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

RIYADH

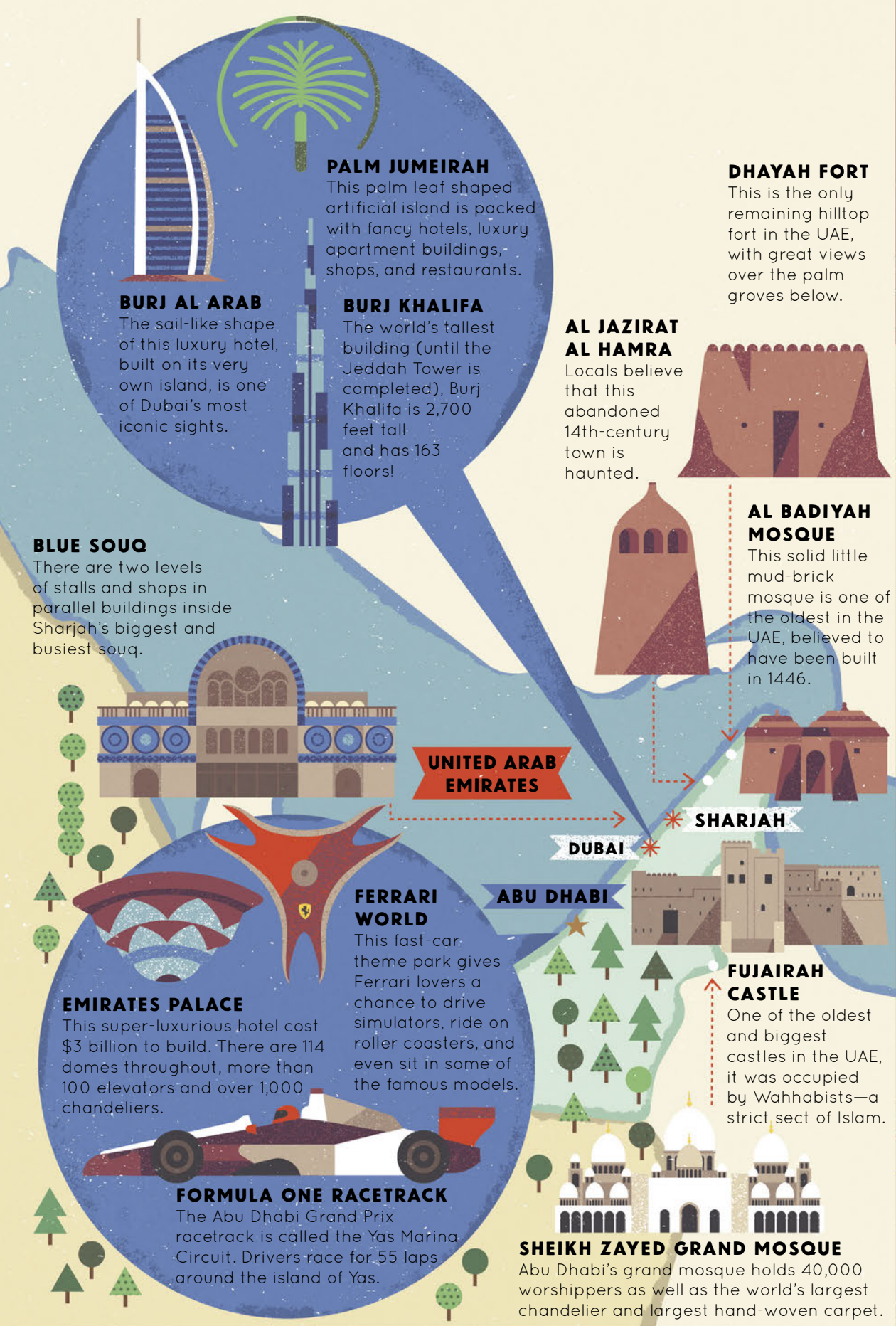
DESERT DYNASTIES, SOARING SKYSCRAPERS AND FAST CARS

Prior to the 7th century the land that now makes up Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was largely made up of the crisscrossing paths worn by nomadic tribes. It's hard to imagine now when you see the sky-piercing megastructures that make up cities like Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The discovery of huge oil reserves has a lot to do with the kind of luxury on display these days. Hotels, shopping malls, expensive resorts, and Formula One race tracks are some of the first things people think of when you mention these countries, but below the sparkling surface of the big cities, there are fascinating historical sights, including ancient Nabatean burial tombs carved from rock, abandoned mud-brick towns, grand forts, and exquisite mosques.

You can find the world's most spectacular Islamic places of worship in both Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The biggest of the mosques can accommodate millions of worshippers. The natural wonders of the region are slowly beginning to attract their fair share of worshippers too, and you may be surprised to know that there are beautiful beaches with clear blue water as well as sheer cliffs rising from the desert floor to be explored.

SAUDI ARABIA & UNITED ARAB EMIRATES





KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Saudi Arabia: Riyadh
UAE: Abu Dhabi

LARGEST CITIES

Saudi Arabia:
Riyadh
Jeddah
Mecca
UAE:
Dubai
Abu Dhabi
Sharjah

POPULATION

Saudi Arabia:
34,140,000
UAE: 9,680,000



SAUDI ARABIA: THERE IS NO GOD OTHER THAN GOD AND MUHAMMAD IS THE MESSENGER OF GOD
UAE: GOD, NATION, PRESIDENT

MONEY

Saudi Arabia: Saudi riyal
UAE: UAE dirham

FLOWER

Saudi Arabia: Royal
jasmine
UAE: Tribulus omanense



NATION CODE

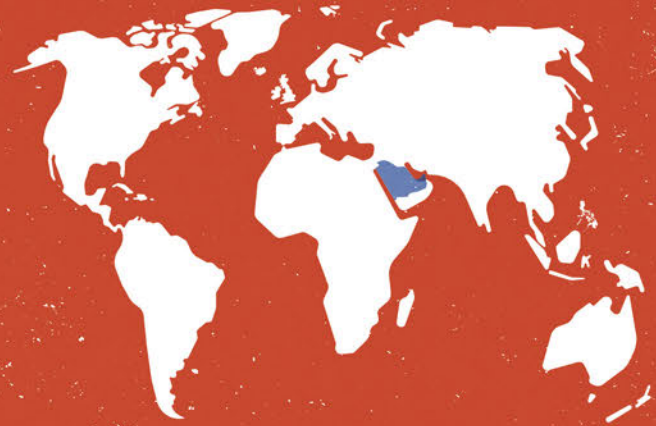
Saudi Arabia: SA
UAE: AE

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Saudi Arabia: Arabic
UAE: Arabic

BIRD

Saudi Arabia:
Falcon
UAE:
Falcon



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

SAUDI ARABIA

15th century: The Bedouin chieftain Mani al Muraidi establishes the town of Diriyah, which is now part of Riyadh.

1744: Muraidi's great-great-great-grandson, Sheikh Muhammad bin Saud, allies with Wahhabists to expand the Al Saud domain.

1818–1824: The first Saudi state is invaded and Diriyah destroyed by Egyptian and Ottoman forces. The Saud family establish a second state with the capital at Riyadh.

1932: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is proclaimed and Abd Al-Aziz is the first king.

1938–1945: Oil is discovered in the Dammam Dome and the Saudis agree to allow the US access to oil if the US will protect the Saudi royal family.

2018: Women are issued licences and allowed to drive for the first time in Saudi Arabia.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

1760: The Baniyas tribe discovers fresh water on the island of Abu Dhabi and establishes settlements there.

1958–1962: Oil is discovered in Abu Dhabi and production begins; the first export occurs in 1962.

1971: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is founded. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan becomes the first leader.

1985: The UAE establishes its first national airline, Emirates.

1999: Construction on the world's tallest hotel, Burj Al Arab, is completed and the hotel is opened to guests.

2009: Dubai becomes the first city in the region to have a mass public transportation system.

2010: Burj Khalifa tower opens in Dubai, the world's tallest building.



**AHLAM
B.1969**

This very popular Emirati singer has made 10 albums and appeared as a judge of *Arab Idol* and *The Voice Ahla Sawt*.



**HAMDAN BIN MOHAMMED
AL MAKTOUM
B.1982**

The Crown Prince of Dubai, Hamdan is an expert horse rider, winning gold medals in the World Equestrian Games.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

1.8 million BC: A hand tool found in the Lenggong Valley, Perak, dates human habitation back to this time.

10,000–2500 BC: Austronesian peoples begin settling in the region and establish the first trade villages.

AD 200–700: Buddhist-Hindu kingdoms are formed around important trade routes in Kedah and Sarawak.

1400s: The Malay chief Parameswara founds Malacca and converts to Islam. His empire expands and this era becomes known as Malacca's Golden Age.

1511: The Portuguese attack and conquer Malacca in order to secure its important position in the rich spice trade.

1641: Dutch colonists attack Malacca, and after a desperate siege finally overpower the Portuguese.

1786–1826: The British occupy Penang and sign a treaty with the Dutch that divides the Malay area in colonial zones. Singapore, Malacca, and Penang come under British control.

1840s: The discovery of tin at Perak attracts waves of Chinese miners to the area.

1953–1963: The first general elections on the Malay peninsula are easily won by an Indian and Chinese Alliance. Malaya, Singapore, Sabah, and Sarawak form an independent Malaysia.

1990: Malaysia undergoes some big industrialization and building projects, including the Proton car and the Petronas Twin Towers (the tallest buildings in the world at the time).

2004: A devastating tsunami hits Southeast Asia. Malaysia's islands of Penang and Langkawi are the worst affected, and 52 people died on Penang.

2017: As part of the 60th National Day celebrations, the government launches the Negaraku initiative, designed to instil a love of their country in the people.



LEE CHONG WEI
B.1982

With 69 badminton titles under his belt, Lee Chong Wei is one of the world's greatest players.



SHEIKH MUSZAPHAR SHUKOR
B.1972

As if being an orthopaedic surgeon wasn't enough, Dr. Shukor is also Malaysia's first astronaut. His first trip to space in 2007 was to the International Space Station.



MICHELLE YEOH
B.1962

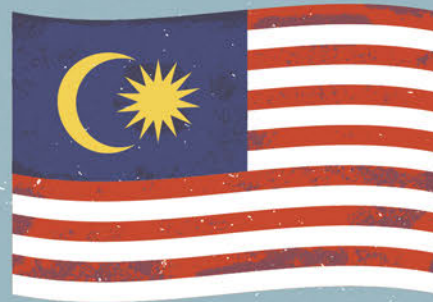
Yeoh is famous for her Hong Kong action films (she did all her own stunts!) and for roles in *James Bond* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

SPECTACULAR FORESTS, FOOD, AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Divided into two parts by the South China Sea, Malaysia is made up of the Peninsula side, which is the most populated part, and the Borneo side, which is wild and rugged.

The country's location in Southeast Asia was, for many years, an important trade route for European colonial powers wanting to cash in on the profitable spice market; because of this, there is a fascinating mix of cultures and religions, particularly on the Peninsula. The most dominant influences over the centuries have been Chinese, Indian, British, Dutch, and Portuguese, and these influences can be seen in the architecture, religious buildings, and the food—with the best places to get a feel for the colonial past in seaside cities like Malacca.

Malaysia's capital city is a thriving metropolis, famous for its hawker food markets, enormous shopping malls, and the sky-piercing Petronas Twin Towers.



malaysia

MOUNT KINABALU

Borneo's tallest mountain (13,400 feet) was formed 10 million years ago and was once covered in glaciers.

KOTA KINABALU

KINABATANGAN RIVER

This river welcomes scores of wildlife to its banks, including the Asian elephant and the Borneo pygmy elephant.

SEPILOK REHABILITATION CENTER

Logging in Sabah's forests has critically endangered Malaysia's mighty orangutans; this rehab center was the first of its kind aimed at rescuing orphaned baby orangutans.

SIPADAN

The island of Sipadan was created when a coral reef grew on top of an extinct underwater volcano. It's now considered to be one of the best scuba diving places on Earth.

SARAWAK CULTURAL VILLAGE

See inside a traditional longhouse, watch dancing and music performances from five of the biggest tribes in Borneo, and taste local delicacies.

NIAH CAVES

Inside these absolutely enormous caves is evidence of human habitation from 40,000 years ago.

BAKO NATIONAL PARK

This park is home to around 300 proboscis monkeys.

KUCHING CAT MUSEUM

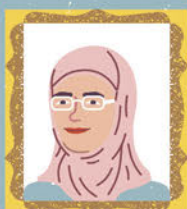
"Kuching" means "cat," so it seems right that this city should host the world's first cat museum. Exhibits range from a mummified Egyptian cat to delicate porcelain statues.

RAFFLESIA, GUNUNG GADING NATIONAL PARK

The biggest flower in the world blooms in this national park, though don't get too close—it could easily be known as the smelliest flower in the world too.

JUARA TURTLE PROJECT, PULAU TIOMAN

Sea turtles have been around for 130 million years, but the last two centuries have seen their numbers plummet; this project aims to halt this decline.



WAN AZIZAH WAN ISMAIL
B.1952

The first Malaysian woman to become deputy prime minister, she is also the minister for women, family, and community development.



CHEONG CHOON NG
B.1969

Cheong Choon Ng invented the loom band—remember that craze? His invention quickly made him a millionaire.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Kuala Lumpur

LARGEST CITIES

Kuala Lumpur
George Town
Ipoh
Johor Bahru
Petaling Jaya

POPULATION

31,620,000

UNITY IS STRENGTH

MONEY

Malaysian ringgit

NAMED FOR

From the Malay word *Melayu*—meaning "land of mountains"

FLOWER

Hibiscus
rosa-sinensis

NATION CODE

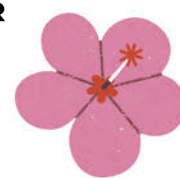
MY

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Malay

BIRD

The rhinoceros hornbill





KIM GU
1876–1949

A politician and leader of the independence movement against the Japanese, he served as the premier of the Korean provisional government after World War II.



CL
B.1991

Lee Chae-rin (aka CL) was leader of K-pop band 2NE1, and has become one of the most famous pop stars in the country.



YI SO-YEON
B.1978

Yi So-yeon is an astronaut and scientist who became the first Korean to fly in space in 2008.

CHINA



PARK WAN-SUH
1931–2011

Park Wan-suh wrote her first novel when she was 40 and went on to become one of South Korea's most respected contemporary writers.



QUEEN SEONDEOK
C.595–647

The first female ruler in the history of Korea. She held the kingdom together through difficult times and was considered a wise and strong leader.

VICTORIOUS WAR MUSEUM

The Korean War ceased in 1953, but officially never ended—although this museum proclaims North Korea's victory.



KIM IL-SUNG SQUARE

Kim Il-sung Square is named after North Korea's founding leader. It's an important social and political space for the country.

NORTH KOREA

NAKSANSA

A Korean Buddhist temple complex built on a cliff overlooking the ocean. The first version was built in the 7th century.

MOUNT KUMGANG

Take a guided hike up one of the country's best-known mountains.

HAMHUNG

GARDEN OF MORNING CALM

Visit these spectacular gardens and explore the 5,000 species of plants found there.

PYONGYANG

NAMP'Ō

DORA OBSERVATORY

This is a good way to see the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea—the area that has separated the two countries since the end of the Korean War.

HWASEONG FORTRESS

Built in the 18th century by King Jeongjo to protect the remains of his father, Prince Sado.



HAEINSA

This temple has been home to a complete set of Buddhist scriptures, carved into 81,258 wooden blocks, for more than 800 years.

SEOUL

INCHEON

LOTTE WORLD TOWER

This 123-floor, 1,800-foot skyscraper is the tallest building in South Korea, and the 6th tallest building in the world!



SOUTH KOREA

BUSAN

CHEOMSEONGDAE

Constructed in the 7th century, this is the oldest astronomical observatory in Asia!

HAHOE FOLK VILLAGE

Journey back in time 600 years, and see buildings preserved by the same clan that founded the village in the 16th century.



CHANGDEOKGUNG

Considered the most beautiful of the Joseon dynasty's Five Grand Palaces, this was built 600 years ago and has been destroyed and rebuilt again in that time.



POOPOO LAND

This museum is a little bit odd—you can ride a colon-shaped slide and sit on poo chairs. At least it doesn't smell...



GWANGJANG MARKET

This is a great place to experience pajeon—Korean spring onion pancakes, a street-food favorite.

KIMCHI FIELD MUSEUM

Kimchi is Korea's national food. This is the place to see, smell, and taste the more than 100 kimchi dishes.



DONGDAEMUN MARKET

This market is more like a small town, and there's more than 30,000 shops here to pick from!



TRICKEYE MUSEUM SEOUL

This museum is full of tricks of the eye! Take crazy photos of yourself that defy imagination!

TEDDY BEAR MUSEUM

Play with the exhibits at this museum!



CHEESE THEME PARK

Korea might not be the first place that comes to mind for cheese, but this museum has it all—cheese-themed rides, cheese-making classes, and cheesy photo opportunities.

CHEONJEYEON WATERFALLS

Take a trip to Jeju Island and see this beautiful three-tiered waterfall.



THE LAND OF MORNING CALM

Korea is in fact two countries—North Korea and South Korea—the result of a division made after World War II and the effects of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and its allies, and the USA and its allies. After many thousands of years of history, and having regained the land from the Japanese, the land and its people were separated. This turned into the Korean War, which has left the two countries with a very tense relationship!

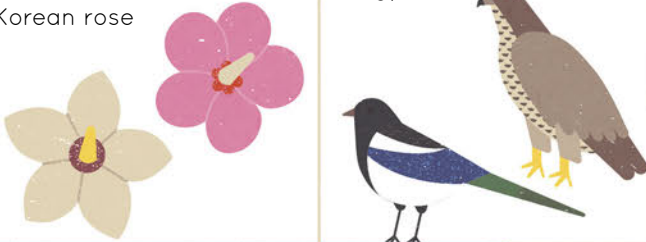
Since the end of the Korean War, South Korea has become one of the most successful economic nations on Earth, with an enormous impact on modern life in the shape of cars and electronics. It's also introduced the world to K-pop—Korean pop music, as famous for its impressive dancing as it is for its catchy tunes. The cities are big and busy, and on every street, you'll find Korean food that will blow your mind with its intense and spicy flavours.

North Korea has endured a very different life—it's a very closed country, not easy to visit and known for its totalitarian rule over the country's people. It's been controlled by one family since the end of World War II.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 2333 BC:** The god-king Dangun is said to have established the Gojoseon kingdom.
- 300 BC:** The Jin state is established on the southern Korean peninsula.
- 86 BC:** The Dongbuyeo kingdom is established by a prince named Hae Buru.
- AD 918:** The Goryeo dynasty is founded by Wang Geon and rules Korea until 1392.
- 1392:** General Yi Seong-gye establishes the Joseon dynasty, which survives until the 20th century.
- 1910:** Japan takes over Korea and establishes it as a colony.
- 1945:** After Japan's defeat in World War II, Korea is divided into two countries, North Korea and South Korea.
- 1945–1948:** North Korea is under Soviet occupation and South Korea under American occupation.
- 1948:** Kim Il-Sung becomes premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).
- 1950:** War begins between North Korea (with Russian and Chinese support) and South Korea (with support from the USA and its allies).
- 1953:** Fighting stops between the two countries, though the war never officially ends.
- 1988:** South Korea hosts the Olympic Games in Seoul.
- 1994:** Kim Jong Il becomes leader of North Korea after the death of his father Kim Il-Sung.
- 2011:** Kim Jong Il dies, and his son Kim Jong-Un becomes the Supreme Leader of North Korea.
- 2013:** Park Geun-hye becomes the first female president of South Korea.

KEY FACTS		NORTH KOREA: POWERFUL AND PROSPEROUS NATION SOUTH KOREA: TO BROADLY BENEFIT HUMANITY/ DEVOTION TO HUMAN WELFARE	
CAPITAL North Korea: Pyongyang South Korea: Seoul	MONEY North Korean won South Korean won	NATION CODE North Korea: KP South Korea: KR	
LARGEST CITIES North Korea: Pyongyang Hamhung Namp'o South Korea: Seoul Busan Incheon	OFFICIAL LANGUAGES North & South Korea: Korean		
	FLOWER North Korea: Magnolia sieboldii South Korea: Korean rose	BIRD North Korea: Goshawk South Korea: Oriental magpie	
POPULATION North Korea: 25,700,000 South Korea: 51,230,000			



KOREA

HAEUNDAE BEACH
Haeundae is one of South Korea's most popular beaches. After a swim, you can join the Sand Festival and build a giant castle!

**CRISTETA COMERFORD B.1962**

The first woman and the first person of Asian descent to hold the post of official White House executive chef. She has held the position since 2005.

HANGING COFFINS, SAGADA

Local tradition states that the higher a coffin is hung on the mountainside, the more loved and respected the deceased person was.

**VIGAN**

Colonial history comes alive in Vigan city, where 18th-century Spanish buildings are beautifully preserved.

**IFUGAO RICE TERRACES**

If all Ifugao's rice terraces were stretched out in a straight line, they would wrap around half of the Earth's circumference.

**TIMBAC MUMMIES**

Hidden away in mountain caves, these mummies were entombed in their small wooden caskets over 500 years ago.

**CALOOCAN
QUEZON CITY****TAAL VOLCANO**

Surrounded by a lake, this volcano is the lowest in the world and is still very much an active threat.

SHIPWRECKS, CORON

Just off the tropical island of Coron, dive down and explore the sunken wrecks of a couple of Japanese warships from World War II.

**BORACAY**

This popular tourist destination was closed for six months in 2018 to let nature rehabilitate. Luckily, the stunning tropical beaches are now open again.

BARRACUDA LAKE

As you dive deeper into this ocean lake, the water becomes warm before cooling again near the ocean floor. The temperature change is due to a mix of salt and fresh water.

**PUERTO PRINCESA
SUBTERRANEAN RIVER**

Winding through 5 miles of limestone caves from the forest to the sea, this river can be explored by boat and kayak.

**JOSE RIZAL
1861-1896**

Rizal is the country's nationalist hero. He argued for a peaceful end to Spanish colonial rule. He was also a doctor, author, and poet!

**REINABELLE REYES
B.1984**

Reyes is an astrophysicist and data scientist who has written a blog featuring young Filipino scientists and hosted a science TV show.

TUBBATAHA REEF

This coral reef is considered one of the best dive spots in the Philippines, with a dizzying array of tropical fish, colorful coral, and even the odd sea turtle.

**ZAMBOANGA**

PHILIPPINES

**BINONDO**

The world's oldest Chinatown (outside of towns in China, of course), Binondo is still a thriving financial hub.

INTRAMUROS

The Spanish began building the walled city of Intramuros in 1521 as their political and military base in Asia.

**FORT SANTIAGO**

This 16th-century Spanish fort was an important defensive fort for the spice trade to Europe and the Americas for over 300 years.

THE BIG LAGOON, EL NIDO




The clear, turquoise waters of the Big Lagoon are surrounded by dramatic limestone cliffs, making this slice of paradise feel like a secret hideaway.

VOLCANOES, SPANISH COLONISTS, AND PARADISE BEACHES

There are 7,641 islands in the archipelago known as the Philippines. Luzon is the most populated island, and is where you'll find the capital city, Manila. With this many islands, it's easy to see why the country has become known for beautiful beaches and amazing scuba-diving and snorkeling sites. There are magnificent beaches surrounded by limestone karsts that create secret coves and lagoons to explore.

The Philippines is one of the countries that sits dangerously close to what's known as the Pacific Ring of Fire, a horseshoe-shaped area in the Pacific Ocean where lots of earthquakes and volcanoes occur.

It's thought that the Philippines has been inhabited for close to 40,000 years, but it wasn't until its strategic position on trade routes between China, India, Indonesia, and Japan grew that it began to attract significant foreign interest. It was colonized by Spain in 1521 when the explorer Ferdinand Magellan arrived on the island of Cebu. There is still plenty of evidence of Spanish colonialism throughout the islands, with one of the most striking sites being the walled city in Manila with its 16th-century defensive fort. The Philippines didn't become fully independent until 1946, after a deal was signed between Spain and the United States.

KEY FACTS			FOR GOD, PEOPLE, NATURE, AND COUNTRY		
CAPITAL Manila		MONEY Philippine peso	NATION CODE PH		
LARGEST CITIES Quezon City Manila Caloocan Davao City Cebu Zamboanga		NAMED FOR In honor of King Philip II of Spain		OFFICIAL LANGUAGES Filipino and English	
		FLOWER Jasminum sambac		BIRD Philippine eagle	
POPULATION 104,900,000					



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

40,000–25,000 BC: People begin to cross the shallow seas and land bridges from the Asian mainland to the Philippine archipelago.

3000–200 BC: Waves of people from Indonesia, to the south, and South China, to the northwest, begin to arrive and settle on the islands.

AD 900–1300: Chinese traders set up posts in coastal spots to conduct business with India, Indonesia, and even Japan.

1300s–1400s: Arab traders and Muslim clergy from Indonesia and Malaya introduce Filipinos to Islam.

1500s: Portuguese explorer Magellan lands at Cebu and claims the island for Spain. The second Spanish expedition names the archipelago “Islas Filipinas,” after the Spanish king.

1892–1896: The Filipino independence movement gains momentum, with intellectual nationalist Jose Rizal at the forefront. Spain crushes uprisings and executes Rizal.

1898–1899: The United States defeats Spain in the Spanish-American War, and the Philippines is given to the US.

1934: The US promises the Philippines independence by 1946.

1941–1946: Japan invades the Philippines during World War II; the US sends in troops and eventually overpowers Japanese forces. The country is then granted independence.

1972–1981: Violence erupts between the Filipino government and Islamic groups in Mindanao who want an independent Islamic province.

2013: The country suffers two natural disasters, an earthquake and then a typhoon. Around 6,500 people are killed.

MAYON VOLCANO
It's best to view the near-perfect cone shape of Mount Mayon from a distance. This volcano is very active and erupts regularly.

CHOCOLATE HILLS
Sadly, these round-topped mountains are not made of chocolate. They get their name from the brown color of the grass covering them in summer.

SIQUIJOR
Filipinos believe there are magic powers at play on this island. It's popular with witch doctors and shamans and it's also full of pretty waterfalls and swimming holes.

MAGELLAN'S CROSS
When Ferdinand Magellan first landed in Cebu in 1521, he demanded that a Christian cross be erected to mark the European arrival.

WHALE SHARKS, OSLOB
Getting close to the biggest fish in the ocean is a gobsmacking experience, but the fact that the sharks are attracted to this spot by handfeeding is controversial.

KAWASAN FALLS
A series of three jungle waterfalls with cool swimming holes filled with impossibly bright blue water at the base.

SIARGAO
Of the thousands of beaches to choose from in the Philippines, this island has the best one for surfing.

SUNKEN CEMETERY, CAMIGUIN
A lone cross in the ocean marks the spot where a cemetery, and much of the surrounding city, was sunken following a volcanic explosion in the 1870s.

HINATUAN ENCHANTED RIVER
Like magic, the clear blue water of the Hinatuan River emerges from underground to flow a short distance to the Pacific Ocean.

ASIK-ASIK FALLS
Water seems to sprout straight out of the mountain here and cascade over green foliage to the rocks below.



MANNY PACQUIAO
B.1978
A 12-time world champion boxer, Pacquiao is considered by many to be one of the greatest of all time. After retiring from boxing, he became a government senator.



ROBERTO DEL ROSARIO
1919–2003
Rosario invented a machine called the Singalong in 1975, which makes him responsible for karaoke.

cambodia



TA PROHM TEMPLE
The strangler fig trees have curled their way through the bricks of this 12th-century temple. It's impossible to see where the temple starts and the forest ends.



ANGKOR THOM
Not a temple but an entire ancient city surrounded by 26-foot-high walls with five grand gates.



BAYON TEMPLE
This Buddhist, then Hindu temple is distinct because of the many enormous faces carved into stone.



SEREI SAOPHOAN

BANTEAY CHHMAR
For over 800 years, this Khmer temple complex stood abandoned and crumbling. Recent conservation efforts are helping to piece it back together.



PREAH VIHEAR TEMPLE
This 11th-century clifftop temple was claimed by Thailand and Cambodia. An international court decided it belonged to Cambodia.

TONLE SAP LAKE
There are over 170 floating villages on this freshwater lake, the largest in Southeast Asia.



SIEM REAP

BATTAMBANG

BAT CAVES, BATTAMBANG PROVINCE
Thousands of bats spend their days tucked up in these dark caves, emerging in droves at sunset.

BAMBOO TRAIN LINE, BATTAMBANG
Constructed to transport goods on flat bamboo platforms using just a wooden stick as a brake, this rickety track now carries tourists through the pretty forest.

SAMBOR PREI KUK
One of the oldest temple sites in Cambodia, the crumbling remains of buildings are slowly being swallowed by jungle vines.

CARDAMOM MOUNTAINS
This tropical rain forest is Southeast Asia's largest remaining rain forest and is home to Siamese crocodiles, elephants, tigers, and more.

KIRIROM NATIONAL PARK
Cambodia's first national park is popular for its beautiful river and waterfalls, perfect for swimming.

PHNOM TAMAO WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTER
PTWRC rescues and rehabilitates animals rescued from illegal poachers and traders.

PHNOM PENH

TA KHMAU

BOKOR HILL STATION
This abandoned ruin was once a mountain retreat for French soldiers hoping to escape Cambodia's heat.

PHNOM CHHNGOK CAVE TEMPLE
This ancient cave temple is the only one of its kind in Cambodia; it houses a brick temple dedicated to the god, Shiva, and there are elephant-shaped stalactites.

CRAB MARKET, KEP
Most of Cambodia's fresh seafood comes from this seaside town. Watch as the fishermen haul in giant crabs, squid, and piles of fish.

KOH RONG SAMLOEM
White sands, turquoise waters, swaying palm trees—this is Cambodia's tropical island paradise.

SIHANOUKVILLE
Cambodia's most popular seaside resort town is full of water sports: kite surfing, scuba diving, snorkeling, paddle boarding, and kayaking.



NORODOM BUPPHA DEVI 1943–2019
Devi was a princess, government minister, prima ballerina, and director of the Royal Ballet of Cambodia.

KEY FACTS		NATION, RELIGION, KING	
CAPITAL Phnom Penh	MONEY Riel	NATION CODE KH	
LARGEST CITIES Phnom Penh Ta Khmau Battambang Serei Saophoan Siem Reap	NAMED FOR Kambujadesa, a northern Indian tribe that contributed to the formation of the Khmer Empire	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Khmer	
POPULATION 16,490,000	FLOWER Rumduol	BIRD Giant ibis	



KONGNGY HAV
B.1987

Social entrepreneur Kongngy created an eco-friendly and sustainable building brick so that houses could become more affordable in Cambodia.



KING JAYAVARMAN VII
C.1122–1218

Powerful king and warrior, Jayavarman VII was responsible for building the huge Bayon temple complex as well as hospitals and rest houses.

LAOS

VEUN SAI-SIEM PANG CONSERVATION AREA

This protected pristine forest is home to gibbons, rare giant ibis, sun bears, and clouded leopards.

LAKE YEAK LAOM

A strangely circular volcanic crater filled with crystal-clear water and surrounded by lush rain forest.

ELEPHANT VALLEY PROJECT, MONDULKIRI

A 1,500-hectare sanctuary where a small herd of just ten elephants can roam around freely.

TUOL SLENG GENOCIDE MUSEUM

The Khmer Rouge's brutal genocide is commemorated in this vivid museum that was once used as a prison and torture chambers.

THE ROYAL PALACE AND SILVER PAGODA

The palace has been the home of Cambodia's king since 1866; the Silver Pagoda contains national treasures, including jewel-encrusted statues of Buddha.

CAMBODIAN LIVING ARTS THEATER SHOW

Cambodian arts were virtually destroyed by the Khmer Rouge, but traditional theater and dance is being brought back in this colorful live show.

VIETNAM

FROM MIGHTY ANCIENT KINGDOM TO MODERN-DAY SURVIVOR

Cambodia has tropical, white-sand beaches with crystal-clear waters, pristine tropical rain forests that hide wondrous wildlife like ocelots, sun bears, elephants, and gibbons; picturesque waterfalls and volcanic crater lakes; floating villages; and temple ruins disguised by jungle vines.

It's hard to believe that a country that was once home to the mighty Khmer Empire, responsible for constructing the largest religious monument in the world—the Temples of Angkor—is the same place that experienced a devastating genocide at the hands of the Khmer Rouge. Cambodia's history and hardships are impossible to ignore, but it's a country that has defied its dark past to emerge as a proud nation of people who look to the future with optimism.

Cambodians are determined to prove that they won't be defined by their dark past but instead by their rich ancient heritage; their pride in Khmer culture and their passion for the future.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 802–1431: The powerful and expansive Khmer Empire ruled over most of today's Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and southern Vietnam.

1100s: The temple complex Angkor Wat is built—construction takes over 30 years.

1594: Thai forces capture the Cambodian capital of Lovek.

1658–1690: Vietnam invades Cambodia and claims control.

1820–1851: The Khmer people of Cambodia revolt against Vietnamese rule and eventually succeed in overthrowing the occupying forces.

1863: Cambodia becomes a protectorate of France.

1941–1946: Cambodia is occupied by Japan during World War II; following the end of the war, France steps back in.

1953: Cambodia wins independence from France and becomes the Kingdom of Cambodia.

1969: The United States begins bombing North Vietnamese forces who have set up bases in Cambodia.

1975 The brutal dictator Pol Pot and his followers, known as the Khmer Rouge, seize power and begin executing hundreds of thousands of educated middle class Cambodians.

1979–1989: Vietnamese forces invade and rename the country the People's Republic of Kampuchea; guerrilla warfare breaks out before Vietnam withdraws.

1998: Pol Pot dies, and the Khmer Rouge regime finally ends.

2003: Leaders of the Khmer Rouge are put on trial for their part in the violent acts carried out on the Cambodian people.

2012: Former King of Cambodia Norodom Sihanouk dies at age 89.



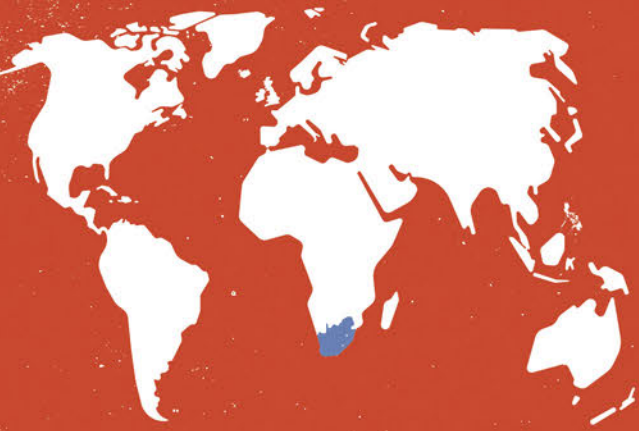
YANNARY SAN
B.1979

A community activist committed to renewable resources and founder of a handicraft business established to revive the traditional Cambodian silk industry.



EAR UY
B.1983

Co-founder and CEO of Cambodia's first online gaming development studio, he helped create the popular "Asva the Monkey" game app.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

200 BC–AD 400: Migrants from parts of northern Africa move south and join with local San and Khoikhoi people.

1480–90: Portuguese navigators and explorers sail around the tip of South Africa and become the first Europeans to set foot in the country.

1652: The Dutch East India Company establishes the Dutch Cape Colony, which will eventually become Cape Town.

1795–1814: British and Dutch forces fight over control of the Cape Colony, with the British Empire overpowering the Dutch in 1814.

1835–1843: The Boers (descendants of the Dutch colonisers and French and German settlers) break from British rule and establish republics in the north and east.

1867–1902: The discovery of diamonds and gold in the Boer Transvaal republic ignites a series of wars that the Boers lose to the British.

1910: The British form the Union of South Africa from the Cape Colony, Natal Colony, Transvaal Colony, and Orange River Colony.

1913: The Natives Land Act is introduced and results in land segregation along racial lines.

1931: South Africa becomes independent from the UK.

1948: The government introduces the apartheid policy, where people and land are separated on the basis of race.

1963: Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, is jailed for fighting against apartheid. He is held until 1990.

1994: Apartheid ends and black people vote in a national election for the first time. Nelson Mandela is voted in as president.

2006: South Africa becomes the first African country to allow same-sex marriage.

2010: South Africa hosts the soccer World Cup.



ELON MUSK
B.1971

Tech entrepreneur Musk helped to develop affordable electric cars and has plans to build a colony on Mars.



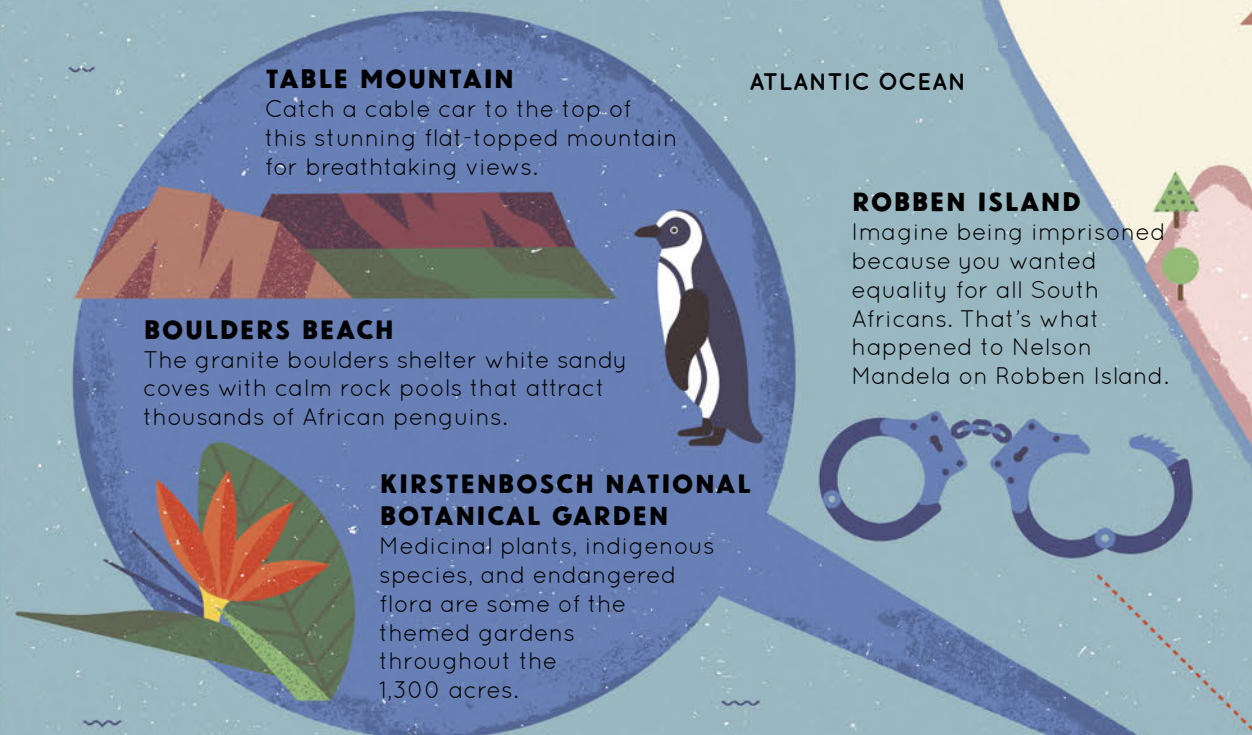
THATO KGATLHANYE
B.1993

Kgatlhanye invented a solar backpack, made from recycled plastic bags, which stores power so kids can use it for lighting at night.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF SAFARI AND SURF

South Africa is the place where all your wild animal dreams come true. Get up close to some of the planet's most spectacular creatures including lions, elephants, hippos, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, leopards, and buffalo. The landscape is so vast and dramatic that experiencing the natural wonder of this country's limestone caves, majestic mountains, sandy deserts, deep canyons, and stunning beaches might just distract you from the wildlife.

Humans have lived in South Africa for thousands of years and left behind fossilized remains, tools, and rock art, much of which can still be seen today. The indigenous African tribes lived a hunter-gatherer and farming existence before Dutch settlers and English colonists arrived. The history of this beautiful country has by no means always been peaceful and wars have been fought over land, the gold, and the precious stones the land contains. Life today is more harmonious, and South Africa's largest cities are a fascinating blend of its past, modern western fashions alongside local art, music, and traditions.



SOUTH africa



NELSON MANDELA
1918–2013

Mandela was devoted to ending racial segregation in South Africa. The country's first black president, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.





AB DE VILLIERS
B.1984

Cricketer De Villiers once scored 100 runs in a One Day International off just 31 balls. The fastest ODI century ever!

BOTSWANA

BOAB TREES OF MAPUNGUBWE

These upside-down trees (called this because their branches look like roots) can live for thousands of years.

ZIMBABWE

BLYDE RIVER CANYON

Running for 16 miles, this is one of the biggest canyons in the world.

MOZAMBIQUE

CRADLE OF HUMANKIND

Want to meet your ancient ancestors? Over 40% of the world's human fossils have been found at this site.

GOLD REEF CITY

Part history lesson, part theme park, Gold Reef City shows the history of the Gold Rush era.

APARTHEID MUSEUM

Learning from the mistakes of the past, the museum shows what life was like under apartheid.

MAGOEBAKLOOF, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Known as the "land of the silver mist" because the mountain and valleys are often shrouded in soft mist.

KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

The "big five"—lions, leopards, rhinos, elephants, and buffalo—all roam free in Kruger National Park.

PRETORIA

JOHANNESBURG

SOWETO

THE UNION BUILDINGS, PRETORIA

This is where you'll find South Africa's government and the office of the president.

THE BIG HOLE, KIMBERLEY

Dug in the search for diamonds, this giant hole is 1,500 feet across and 800 feet deep.

SPIRIT OF THE EMAKHOSINI

This gigantic bronze beer pot surrounded by seven huge horns on a hill in Ulundi is a memorial to Zulu kings.

BLOEMFONTEIN

LESOTHO

DURBAN

HOLE IN THE WALL

A giant sandstone wall towers out of the ocean with a natural arch in the middle—big enough to sail a boat through.

ST. LUCIA ESTUARY

Where else can you kayak close to hundreds of hippos and Nile crocodiles while black rhinos sip at the shoreline?



CHARLIZE THERON
B.1975

Lights, camera, action! Theron is a famous Hollywood movie star and the first South African to win an Oscar for her acting.



NAMIBIA

KGALAGADI TRANSFRONTIER PARK

Made up of sand dunes and dry river beds, it's believed that rivers here only flow once every 100 years.

CEDERBERG WILDERNESS AREA

Porcupines, armadillos, and honey badgers call this jagged, rocky terrain their home. There's also ancient Khoisan rock art.

TUGELA FALLS, DRAKENSBURG MOUNTAINS

The Tugela River plunges 3,100 feet over the rock wall of the Drakensberg Mountains and freezes into giant ice columns in the winter.

CANGO CAVES

There are limestone stalagmites in these huge caves that are over 20 million years old.

JEFFREYS BAY

The "J Bay" attracts sea and sand worshippers who love to swim, snorkel, fish, scuba dive, sail, kayak, and surf.

CAPE TOWN

STELLENBOSCH

This is the second-oldest town in South Africa and still has many whitewashed buildings that Dutch settlers built.

PINNACLE POINT CAVES, MOSSEL BAY

Ancient stone tools show that human beings once lived in these caves between 170,000 and 40,000 years ago.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Pretoria, Cape Town and Bloemfontein

LARGEST CITIES

Cape Town
Durban
Johannesburg
Soweto

POPULATION

56,000,000

DIVERSE PEOPLE UNITE

MONEY

South African rand

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

11, including Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans, English, and Sepedi

FLOWER

King protea

NATION CODE

ZA

BIRD

Blue crane





TUTANKHAMUN
C.1342–1325 BC

Known as the “Boy King” or King Tut, Tutankhamun became a pharaoh at just nine years of age and ruled for ten years before he died.

CATACOMBS OF KOM EL-SHOQafa

This necropolis (City of the Dead) was dug deep underground to house over 300 corpses.



POMPEY'S PILLAR

This 100-foot-high column rises out of the ruins of the Temple of Serapeum. It will leave you wondering how it still stands amongst the rubble.

CITADEL OF QAITBAY

This 600-year-old fortress was built to protect the city of Alexandria from invading forces.



THE CAIRO CITADEL

Built in the 12th century, Egyptian rulers made this heavily fortified citadel their home for over 700 years.



EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

Egyptians buried their royalty with gold, jewelry, and other precious items. Many of these are found here, including Tutankhamun's burial mask.

KHAN EL-KHALILI

Look out for the beautiful, detailed Islamic architecture and stalls selling Pharaonic artifacts at this 15th-century market.



GREAT PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

Deep inside these mammoth stone structures, the ancient Egyptians entombed their most important people.

SAQQARA

The Step Pyramid here is thought to be the oldest major stone structure in all of Egypt.



GREAT SPHINX OF GIZA

With the body of a lion and the head of a human, this sphinx statue is 65 feet tall and than 240 feet long.

ALEXANDRIA

NILE RIVER DELTA

This is where the Nile River empties into the Mediterranean Sea and it covers nearly 150 miles of coastline.



MANSOURA

CAIRO

GIZA

ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY

This monastery stands near where Moses is believed to have made his proclamation about the Ten Commandments.

MOUNT SINAI

The bible says that God spoke to Moses from the top of Mount Sinai.

WADI AL-HITAN (VALLEY OF THE WHALES)

The fossilized remains of a long-extinct species of whale litter the landscape of rocks and sand here.

SIWA OASIS

Siwa has palm trees and clearwater springs, mud-brick homes, and dirt tracks for donkey carts.

WHITE DESERT

Why does it look like the desert is covered in snow? The powder you can see is chalk dust!

HURGHADA

Relax in Egypt's fanciest beach resort town!

THE TEMPLES OF ABYDOS

This was built as a place of worship for the Egyptian god Osiris, Lord of the Underworld and Judge of the Dead.

SS THISTLEGORM DIVE SITE

This British army freighter sank in the Red Sea after being bombed by German forces. You can now scuba dive through the ghostly cargo of the ship.



ANWAR SADAT
1918–1981

Sadat is one of the only Egyptian political leaders who worked toward peace with Israel. He also wanted to help Egyptian people live free of poverty.



RAMSESSES II
C.1304–1214 BC

A brilliant military leader, Ramsesses II is considered one of the greatest pharaohs who ever lived.

VALLEY OF THE KINGS

Egyptians stopped building pyramids and started burying their pharaohs here, in tombs cut into the rock face.

LAKE NASSER

This huge human-made lake is shared by Egypt, Sudan...and Africa's largest reptile, the Nile crocodile.

ABU SIMBEL TEMPLES

It took 20 years to carve these temples into the stone mountainside. They were designed to celebrate Ramsesses's battle victories.

KARNAK TEMPLE COMPLEX

This complex was built over the course of 2,000 years with each pharaoh leaving their own tribute to the gods.

ASWAN DAM

When you stop the flow of one of the largest and most powerful rivers, you get the world's largest dam.




SUDAN

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE PHARAOHS

There's no place that can capture your imagination the way Egypt can, with its mind-blowing giant pyramids and ancient pharaohs entombed with treasures. The majestic River Nile winds its way through desert sands and past cities with ancient citadels. This country's civilization starts thousands of years ago, and so much of this ancient world can still be seen today. From the Valley of the Kings to the Egyptian museum in Cairo, learn about the way life was lived all those years ago.

When you've finished exploring the ancient world, there's all the wonders that nature provides, like the White Desert and the majestic Mount Sinai. Watch white-sailed feluccas (a type of boat) on Lake Nasser and go exploring underwater shipwrecks in the Red Sea.

In the country's biggest cities, there are busy markets and modern shopping centers, beautiful mosques, and fascinating museums. In fact, the country's capital, Cairo, is so big and so complex that Egyptians know it as Umm al-Dunya or the "mother of the world."

KEY FACTS		ANKH, UZA, SENEB (LIFE, HEALTH, WELL-BEING)	
CAPITAL Cairo	MONEY Egyptian pound	NATION CODE EG	
LARGEST CITIES Cairo Alexandria Giza Port Said Suez	NAMED FOR The Greek word Aigyptos		OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Arabic
	FLOWER Lotus		BIRD Steppe eagle 
POPULATION 101,590,000			



EGYPT



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 3500–3000 BC:** The Egyptians invent hieroglyphics—a system of writing that uses pictures and symbols.
- 2500 BC:** The Great Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx are built.
- 1500 BC:** The pharaohs are no longer buried in pyramids; instead they are placed in tombs in the Valley of the Kings.
- 1390–1213 BC:** The Temple of Luxor is built.
- 331 BC:** The Macedonian king, Alexander the Great, conquers Egypt and establishes the city of Alexandria.
- 30 BC:** The last pharaoh of Egypt, Cleopatra VII, commits suicide and the country is ruled by the Roman Empire.
- AD 639–646:** Egypt comes under Arab rule and is converted to Islam.
- 969:** Cairo becomes the capital of Egypt.
- 1517:** Egypt is conquered by the Ottoman Empire.
- 1869:** The Suez Canal, connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, is completed.
- 1953:** The Republic of Egypt is established, and Egypt becomes a powerful Arab nation in the Middle East.
- 1978:** President Anwar Sadat signs a peace treaty with Israel, known as the Camp David Accords, ending decades of hostilities.
- 2018:** A beautiful 4,400-year-old tomb is discovered at the Saqqara pyramid complex—the most complete find in decades.



CLEOPATRA VII
69–30 BC

The last Egyptian pharaoh to rule before the Roman conquest, Cleopatra was famed not just for her beauty but for her fiercely intelligent leadership.



LOTFIA EL NADI
1907–2002

El Nadi was the first Egyptian woman and first woman from the Arab world to become a licensed pilot.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

1200 BC: Traders from Phoenicia (modern-day Lebanon) arrive.

500 BC: The Carthaginians from Tunisia control North Africa, including Morocco.

AD 40: The Roman Empire conquers Morocco.

278: Romans establish a regional capital at Tanger, in Northern Morocco.

600s: Arabs invade and bring with them the Arabic language and Islam.

1000s: The Berbers establish a series of powerful dynasties.

1500s–1600s: Arab dynasties conquer the Berbers; the Alaouite Dynasty comes to power in 1631 and still rules today.

1777: Morocco is the first country to recognize the United States as an independent nation.

1912: Morocco becomes a protectorate of France though Spain continues to have control over its coastal zones.

1956: The French protectorate ends, and Morocco becomes an independent nation known as the Kingdom of Morocco.

2011–2012: The Moroccan people protest against the unchecked powers of the king; he is forced to reform the constitution.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE SETTING SUN

One day you might find yourself twisting and turning through narrow streets in an ancient kasbah, the next you're riding a camel along the shores of a golden-sand beach—this is Morocco! From the heights of the Atlas Mountains to the desert sands and shady oases of the Sahara, Morocco is a land of extremes—expect heat and dust, but you'll also find caves and forested mountains. The country's history plays out in the cities and towns with stunning Islamic mosques, the mud-brick buildings of the Berbers, Moorish arches from Spain, and Roman ruins.

If the bustle of the big cities and buzzing marketplaces becomes too much, escape to dramatic national parks to spot endangered monkeys or rock climb North Africa's tallest mountain top, explore caves or snooze in the shade of a palm tree in an expansive oasis. Whichever way you turn in this African nation, you'll find history and natural wonders. The influences from Europe and the Arab world combined with stunning landscapes make Morocco a place like no other.

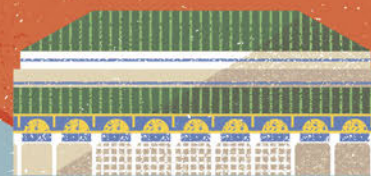
KOUTOUBIA MOSQUE

This 12th-century mosque was named after the booksellers who even today set up stalls at the base of the minaret.



BAHIA PALACE

This palace is now a museum where you can wander through nearly all of the 150 intricately designed rooms and gardens.



JEMAA EL-FNAA MARKET

This buzzing square and marketplace, full of food stalls and entertainers, is better than any action movie you'll ever see.

TAGHARTE BEACH, ESSAOUIRA

Along the golden sand here, you can swim, surf, or sunbathe all day...or maybe just go for a ride on a camel.



JBEL TOUBKAL

The highest peak in Morocco's Atlas Mountains and in the whole of North Africa.



LEGZIRA BEACH

A remote and windswept beach with an enormous stone arch carved by the sea.



CHAIMA LAHSINI
B.1993

A human-rights campaigner, journalist, and feminist, Chaima works for gender equality and women's rights.

MOROCCO



CAVES OF HERCULES, TANGIER
Legend has it that Hercules, the hero and god, took a nap in this cave before collecting golden apples from the Hesperides' Garden.



IBN BATTUTA
1304–1369

He was the original backpacker. He visited much of the Islamic world as well as most of Asia, and wrote a book about his travels.

KASBAH OF THE UDAYAS, RABAT

The winding streets of this 12th-century citadel have whitewashed buildings, the city's oldest mosque and beautiful gardens.

VOLUBILIS, MEKNES

These crumbling Roman ruins were once home to around 20,000 people.

CHEFCHAOUEN MEDINA

Almost all the buildings in this town are painted blue!

FRIOUATO CAVES

No one knows how deep these caves go, but they are one of the biggest cave systems in North Africa.

CHOUARA TANNERIES

It can be a little stinky, but journey here to see how traditional leather has been made for centuries.

FES EL BALI

Behind these ancient walls, you'll find the world's oldest university and the largest car-free urban area on Earth.

JNAN SBIL

Wander around the lake, fountains, and shady groves of this imperial garden.

CASABLANCA

HASSAN II MOSQUE, CASABLANCA

Gaze up at this mosque, which has the world's second tallest minaret.

BAB EL-MANSOUR, MEKNES

A 50-foot-high front door with marble columns and mosaics forms the gateway to Meknes, one of Morocco's four imperial cities.

IFRANE NATIONAL PARK

Take a hike through this mountainous national park. Look out for the endangered Barbary macaque.

PALMERAIE

This oasis has thousands of palm trees—join the camels cooling off in the shade.

OUZOUUD FALLS, TANAGHMEILT

The El-Abid River rushes over three tiers to the shady olive groves below.

MARRAKESH

AÏT BENHADDOU

This ancient fortified village is made up of buildings constructed from red earth behind defensive walls and corner towers.

OURIKA VALLEY

Wildflowers and cherry blossoms light up the valley in spring. This is a lovely retreat from the Moroccan heat any time of the year.



MERIEME CHADID
B.1969

A groundbreaking explorer, astrophysicist, and astronomer, Chadid leads major scientific expeditions to the polar regions.



FRENCH MONTANA
B.1984

Born Karim Kharbouch, this rapper and DJ moved to New York when he was 13 and became an international recording artist.

ALGERIA



HICHAM EL GUERROUJ
B.1974

The world's greatest ever 1,500 meter runner. El Guerrouj won the world championship four times and has two Olympic gold medals.

TODRA GORGE, TINERHIR

The sheer limestone cliffs on either side of this gorge become so narrow in parts that trekkers must walk in single file.

DADÈS VALLEY

This valley is lined with fortified mud-brick settlements called kasbahs, giving it the nickname "the valley of a thousand kasbahs."

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL
Rabat

LARGEST CITIES
Casablanca
Rabat
Fez
Salé
Marrakesh
Agadir

POPULATION
36,640,000

GOD, HOMELAND, KING

MONEY
Moroccan dirham

NAMED FOR
The Spanish word for Marrakesh, *Maruecos*. The name Marrakesh means "Land of God"

FLOWER
Rose



NATION CODE
MA

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Arabic and Berber

BIRD
Moussier's redstart



OBELISK

Giant pillars like this were once used to mark the graves of important leaders.

CHAPEL OF THE TABLET

Many believe that this chapel contains the gold-covered chest that holds the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are carved.

QUEEN OF SHEBA'S BATH

Legend has it that this is where Sheba, ruler of a kingdom in southwestern Arabia, came to bathe.

ERITREA

TEMPLE OF YEHA

Known as the Temple of the Moon, this is the oldest standing structure in Ethiopia.

DANAKIL DEPRESSION

Officially one of the hottest and driest places on the planet, active volcanoes, hot springs, and a lava lake make this environment extreme.

ABUNA YEMATA GUH

This limestone cave was carved by a priest in the 5th century as a place of worship. It's 650 feet tall with a roof covered in frescoes.

SUDAN



ABEBE BIKILA
1932-1973

A champion marathon runner, Abebe won a gold medal in Rome in 1960 in bare feet. He went on to win again in Tokyo in 1964.

FASIL GHEBBI

This fortress-like castle was built in the 17th century, when the city of Gondar was the nation's capital.

AKSUM

MEK'ELE

SIMIEN MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

The rocky pinnacles and steep gullies are the perfect place to spot the endangered walla ibex.

GONDAR

BAHIR DAR

LAKE TANA

Holding 50% of Ethiopia's fresh water, this enormous lake is the source of the Blue Nile River.

AWASH NATIONAL PARK

Lions, leopards, warthogs, and hippos are just a handful of the wonderful wildlife in this national park.

DJIBOUTI

BLUE NILE FALLS

The locals know the falls as Tis Abay, meaning "great smoke," because of all the spray that comes off the water as it drops 138 feet to the rocks below.

ADDIS ABABA

MELKA KUNTURE

This prehistoric site showcases stone tools and fossils over 1.4 million years old.

NAZRET/ADAMA

NECHISAR NATIONAL PARK

Spot herds of hundreds of zebras on the Nechisar Plain.

LAKE ABBE

Bubbling magma pushes through the Earth's crust in this vast salt lake to create tall towers of dissolved calcium carbonate.

DIRE DAWA

BABILE ELEPHANT SANCTUARY

It's estimated that there are fewer than 2,000 elephants left in Ethiopia. A few hundred live here.

NATIONAL MUSEUM

Visit the remains of world-famous "Lucy," our earliest ancestor, or check out the fossilized remains of a saber-tooth cat and enormous prehistoric pig.

MOUNT ENTOTO

The best view of Ethiopia's capital city is from the top of this mountain.

MERCATO

Africa's largest open-air market sells everything from spices to second-hand clothes.

OMO VALLEY

Enormous lip plates, body scars, and hair dyed with red earth are just some of the ways the tribespeople here enhance their looks.

THE RIFT VALLEY

This enormous valley is a rift that will split the African continent in two in a couple of million years.

SOF OMAR CAVE

The longest limestone cave in Africa at over 9 miles long. It's only possible to get inside by following an underground stream.



TIRUNESH DIBABA
B.1985

One of the greatest track athletes in the world, Dibaba has three Olympic gold medals, five World Championships, and four World Cross Country titles.

MENELIK II
1844-1913

Emperor Menelik is credited with doubling the size of the Ethiopian Empire and repelling the Italian invasion.

LAKE CHAMO

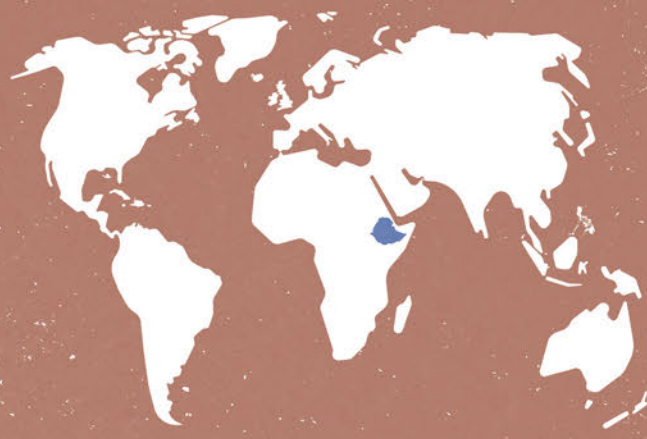
The banks of this lake are often crowded with Nile crocodiles basking themselves in the midday sun.

KENYA

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF OUR ANCIENT ANCESTORS

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries on Earth, and its people are fiercely proud of the fact that they have never been colonized. Ethiopians are diverse, made up of over 80 different ethnic groups each with their own language. This is a land of breathtaking natural sites, from the enormous Rift Valley to the source of the Blue Nile, and the hottest, driest place on the planet, the Danakil Depression.

Ethiopia's rich history has left behind stunning reminders of what went before. From churches carved in stone to ancient obelisks and the most important of all—a prehistoric archaeological site that tells us the story of how humans developed. In the nation's capital and largest city, Addis Ababa, you'll find an enormous open-air market, museums packed with precious artifacts, and a towering mountain covered in eucalyptus trees. Ethiopia has endured the hardships of war and cruelty of famine, emerging as a proud and strong nation. At every turn, there is something uniquely striking to see and experience.





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 3.2 million years ago:** Early humans, known as hominids, begin to walk upright on the land.
- 1.75 million years ago:** Standing human beings, known as *Homo erectus*, begin to use stone tools at Melka Kunture.
- 10th century BC:** An empire known as D'mt comes to power and establishes a capital city at Yeha.
- 1st century AD:** The Aksumite Empire is founded and becomes known as one of the four major civilizations of the world (Rome, China, and Persia are the other three).
- 300s:** Ethiopia becomes one of the first nations in the world to adopt Christianity.
- 615:** The first Muslim settlement in Africa is established at Negash.
- 1632:** Gondar is proclaimed capital of Ethiopia.
- 1769–1855:** Ethiopia becomes ruled by regions after Gondar begins to lose influence. This period is known as the "Era of the Princes."
- 1896:** Italy attempts to invade Ethiopia, but is defeated by Ethiopian forces under Emperor Menelik II.
- 1936–1941** Italy invades again; this time they overpower Ethiopian forces and occupy the country for five years before the British step in and help push them out.
- 1983–1985:** One of the worst famines in world history results in the death of over 1.2 million Ethiopians.
- 1993–2000:** Eritrea splits from Ethiopia and becomes an independent nation, but clashes on the border turn into war before a peace accord is signed in 2000.
- 2005:** Italy returns the final piece of the 4th-century Axum obelisk to Ethiopia 60 years after looting it.
- 2014:** Ethiopia opens East Africa's largest astronomical observatory in the Entoto mountains.

KEY FACTS

ETHIOPIA STRETCHES HER HANDS UNTO GOD

CAPITAL Addis Ababa	MONEY Birr	NATION CODE ET	
LARGEST CITIES Addis Ababa Dire Dawa Mek'ele Nazret/Adama Bahir Dar Gondar	NAMED FOR From the Greek words <i>aitho</i> meaning "I burn" and <i>ops</i> meaning "face"	FLOWER Calla lily	ANIMAL Lion
			
POPULATION 113,860,000	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Amharic		

HARAR
The oldest Islamic city in Africa, there are around 100 mosques within its walls.



SAHLE-WORK ZEWEDE
B.1950
Zewde is Ethiopia's first female president. As of 2019, she is the only serving female head of state in Africa.



DINKNESH, AKA LUCY
3.2 MILLION YEARS OLD
"Lucy" is one of our earliest human ancestors. Despite having ape-like features and characteristics, she could walk on two feet.



ETHIOPIA



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

900 BC: A Neolithic civilization known as the Nok settle at the Jos Plateau in central Nigeria.

AD 800s–1400: The Hausa kingdoms and Borno dynasty are formed in the north, and the Oyo and Benin kingdoms are established in the south.

1472: Portuguese explorers land in Nigeria and begin trading with brass and copper for pepper, cloth, and slaves.

1500s–1800s: The slave trade results in thousands of Nigerians being sent to the Americas.

1850–1914: The British arrive and strengthen their hold over the country they call the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.

1956: Oil is discovered in Nigeria at the Oloibiri oilfield after 50 years of searching.

1960: Nigeria achieves independence.

1967: Civil war breaks out when three eastern states attempt to become the Republic of Biafra.

1979–1990s: The country is caught up in a series of political coups and messy leadership changes. The political climate is very unstable.

1996: The Nigerian soccer team win gold at the Atlanta Olympics.

2000: Tension between Muslims and Christians becomes violent and a series of tribal wars begin.

2014: Nigeria's economy becomes the largest in Africa.

2015: Muhammadu Buhari becomes president and promises to fight corruption. It is the first peaceful transfer of power between rival parties in the nation.

WELCOME TO AFRICA'S POWERHOUSE COUNTRY

This is Africa's most populated country and—after oil was discovered in 1956—one of its richest. The country's largest city, Lagos, has over 21 million inhabitants! The first people to make Nigeria their home are believed to be the Nok civilization, which existed well before Romans began building roads.

The countryside in Nigeria is made up of tropical rain forests, grasslands, mountain ranges, and coastal mangroves and swamps. Despite a difficult and often violent history of colonial occupation, slave trading, and civil war, there have been recent efforts to protect Nigeria's natural wonders by creating large national parks. These are some of the best places to spot rare and interesting wildlife, like pangolins, elephants, rhinoceroses, baboons, African buffalo, and lions.

Modern Nigeria is a mix of cities with skyscrapers, traditional thatched-hut villages, beautiful beaches, and sacred underground caves. It's a place where cultures, arts, architecture, and religions meet, creating a fascinating and constantly changing country.



CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE
B.1977

Novelist, short-story writer, and public speaker Adichie writes about being a young, black Nigerian woman and has won many international awards for her work.



**WIZKID AKA
AYODEJI IBRAHIM BALOGUN**
B.1990

Wizkid began recording his own songs at age 11 and in 2016 became a global superstar when his collaboration with Drake went to number one in 15 countries.



TAFAWA BALEWA SQUARE

The entrance to this huge central square is bordered by four giant statues of horses and surrounded by the 25-story Independence House.



THIRD MAINLAND BRIDGE

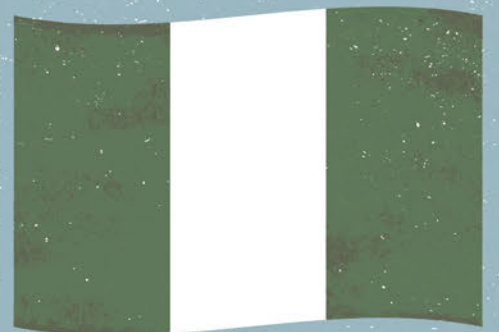
Connecting Lagos Island to the mainland, this is Nigeria's longest bridge.





LEKKI CONSERVATION CENTER

Suspended walkways let visitors stroll through the treetops at eye level with monkeys and birds, and a safe distance from the crocodiles below.

NIGERIA



KEY FACTS		UNITY AND FAITH, PEACE AND PROGRESS	
CAPITAL Abuja	MONEY Naira	NATION CODE NG	
LARGEST CITIES Lagos Kano Ibadan Abuja Port Harcourt Benin City	NAMED FOR British colonists named Nigeria after the River Niger	OFFICIAL LANGUAGES English (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and many other languages are also spoken)	
	FLOWER Yellow trumpet	BIRD Black crowned crane	
POPULATION 204,159,000	 		

KAINJI LAKE
When the Niger River was dammed to create the Kainji Lake it completely submerged the homes of 50,000 people who had to find a new place to live.

ZUMA ROCK
Locals believe that this 2,400-foot-high rock with features resembling a human face contains mythical powers that protect nearby communities.

OSUN-OSOGBO GROVE
A sacred grove with sculptures, statues, and shrines dedicated to the fertility goddess Osun.

ERIN-IJESHA WATERFALL
Crash through dense woodland to find this seven-tiered waterfall with small bathing pools at each level.

ROYAL PALACE OF OBA OF BENIN
This 13th-century palace, rebuilt in the early 20th century after the war with Britain, was the home of the traditional leader of the Edo people.

SURAME CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
These crumbling stone walls are the remains of the headquarters of the 16th-century Kebbi kingdom.

QUEEN AMINA'S WALL, ZARIA
Built to protect the great 16th-century warrior queen Amina, these huge earthen walls also protected the inhabitants of the city of Zaria.

OGBUNIKE CAVES
During the Nigerian civil war, this system of caves joined by narrow tunnels was used as a hiding place for hundreds of locals.

OLOIBIRI OILFIELD
After 50 years of searching, oil was finally discovered here, at the Oloibiri Oilfield, in 1956.

ANCIENT KANO CITY WALLS
Foundations for these enormous defensive walls were built nearly 1,000 years ago and were completed in the 14th century, when they were close to 50 feet high.

ABUJA NATIONAL MOSQUE
This huge gold-domed mosque with four towering minarets is Nigeria's national mosque.

ABUJA ARTS AND CRAFTS VILLAGE
Talented craftspeople display their works from thatched huts and houses in this busy market village in the center of town.

MILLENNIUM PARK
Nigeria's cities are big and bustling, but Millennium Park is a peaceful place with open green spaces and beautiful lights at night.

YANKARI NATIONAL PARK
This is the best place to see elephants in Nigeria. Over 300 of the world's largest land mammal call this park home.

WIKKI WARM SPRINGS
Underground geothermal activity pushes warm water up through the ground creating these pools, perfect for people to relax in.

ANCIENT NOK SETTLEMENT
The ancient Nok culture is believed to have existed 500 years before the founding of Rome. They're known for their detailed clay sculptures.

AWHUM WATERFALL
Two separate cascades of water plunge off steep limestone cliffs into the narrow gorge and caves below.

GASHAKA-GUMTI NATIONAL PARK
The largest national park in Nigeria and also the most remote, making it a great place to spot chimpanzees, golden cats, lions, elephants, and hippos.

NGWO PINE FOREST
A quiet and picturesque forest of pine trees is also home to a waterfall that empties into a pool inside a limestone cave.

IBENO BEACH
This 28-mile-long stretch of sand is one of the longest beaches in West Africa and attracts swimmers, sunbathers, and scuba divers.



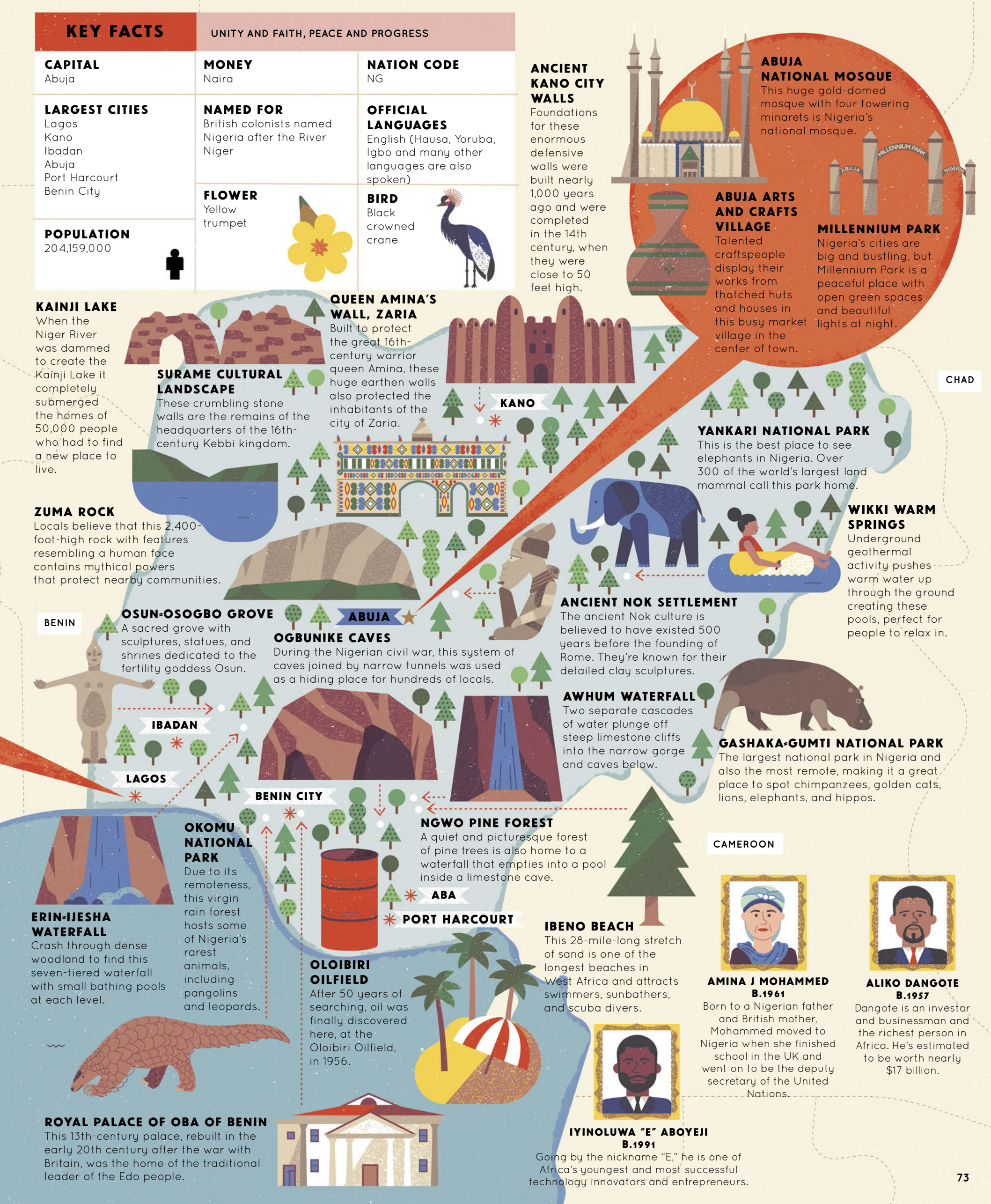
AMINA J. MOHAMMED
B.1961
Born to a Nigerian father and British mother, Mohammed moved to Nigeria when she finished school in the UK and went on to be the deputy secretary of the United Nations.



ALIKO DANGOTE
B.1957
Dangote is an investor and businessman and the richest person in Africa. He's estimated to be worth nearly \$17 billion.



IYINOLUWA "E" ABOYEJI
B.1991
Going by the nickname "E," he is one of Africa's youngest and most successful technology innovators and entrepreneurs.





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

160 million years ago: A large area of land splits off from what is now Africa, containing what becomes India and Madagascar.

80 million years ago: Madagascar separates from India and becomes the island it is today.

AD 700–1200: Austronesian peoples begin arriving to the island from Indonesia, on outrigger canoes.

800–900: Arab merchants begin trading with locals along the north coast of Madagascar.

1500: The Portuguese sea captain Diogo Dias gets blown off his course to India and becomes the first European to set foot on the island. He names it St. Lawrence.

1500s: English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese all attempt to settle in Madagascar and establish trade routes, but they are fought off by the local Malagasy people.

Late 1500s: The Sakalava people become the first to form an empire here.

1600s: The east coast of the island becomes a lawless place and is largely controlled by pirates.

1810–1828: Radama I, king of the Merina people, unifies the country and overpowers the Sakalava Empire—with help from the British.

1890: The British agree to Madagascar becoming a French protectorate in exchange for influence in Zanzibar, Tanzania.

1960: After years of brutal fighting with the French, Madagascar becomes independent.

1975: Didier Ratsiraka takes control and forms a dictatorship that lasts for 18 years.

1993: Albert Zafy wins democratic elections to become the president of Madagascar.

2017: A new species of lemur, known as the Groves' dwarf lemur, is discovered by scientists.

THE EARTH'S BIODIVERSE WONDERLAND

When Madagascar split from the African mainland more than 160 million years ago, it began the process of evolving a vast array of unique flora and fauna. You might have heard of Malagasy wildlife—there are hundreds of species found on the island that are found nowhere else in the world. Its most famous furry export is the wide-eyed lemur, and two of the rarest and most endangered of the species, the aye-aye and the golden bamboo lemur, are both found here. There are more than 11,000 species of plant that can only be found here too!

Madagascar's isolation has had a significant impact on its human population as well as its flora and fauna. Despite being part of Africa, the people of Madagascar refer to themselves as Malagasies and have closer genetic ties to the people of Southeast Asia than Africa. It's thought that the first peoples arrived in long canoes from Indonesia. For centuries, the people of Madagascar managed to repel European invaders before finally falling to the French. The country became independent in 1960, but you will still see traces of the French in the language and the food.

The majority of the island lies within the tropics, but it is so big that the climate ranges from cold in the central highlands to hot and sunny in the west to wet and steamy in the rain forests of the east. On any given day, it's possible to experience unique wildlife, weather, and welcomes.



QUEEN RANAIVALONA I
1778–1861

Also known as Madagascar's Mad Queen, Ranaivalona cut ties with European powers and used forced labor to do public works. She also banned Christianity.

TSINGY DE BEMARAH NATIONAL PARK

The Malagasy word "tsingy" translates to "where one cannot walk barefoot." When you see this mass of limestone spikes, you'll see why!

AVENUE OF THE BAOBABS

These two rows of "upside-down" trees are hundreds of years old, some as old as 800 years! They have trunks that measure 150 feet in circumference.

ISALO NATIONAL PARK

The landscape here shifts from sandstone formations to fern-tree-lined canyons, waterfalls, and waterholes.

ILAKAKA SAPPHIRE MINES

The first sapphire was discovered here in 1998. It kicked off a gem rush and the small town of 40 people swelled to 60,000. It became the largest supplier of sapphires in the world.



madagascar



NOSY BE

The name means “Big Island” in Malagasy, but it’s also known as “The Perfumed Island” because of all the ylang-ylang plantations.



ANKARANA CAVES

The combination of limestone and heavy rainfall has created sinkholes and cave systems here, with underground rivers.



ALBERT RAKOTO RATSIMAMANGA
1907–2001

Ratsimamanga was a scientist who worked on understanding the medicinal properties of Madagascar’s unique flora.

MOUNT MAROMOKOTRO

The highest mountain in Madagascar is a major source of rivers and sometimes covered in snow at the peak.

NOSY MANGABE

This tropical island is home to the endangered long-fingered lemur, known as the aye-aye.

MASOALA NATIONAL PARK

From Masoala’s coral reefs to its tropical rain forests it’s believed that 50% of Madagascar’s biodiversity can be found here.

PIRATE CEMETERY

When the pirates of this tropical island died, they were laid to rest here—a buccaneer burial ground.



AMBODIFOTATRA

The tiny one-street town of Ambodifotatra is Île Sainte-Marie’s capital and the home of Madagascar’s oldest church.



SHIPWRECKS AT PIRATE BAY

A large number of pirate shipwrecks off the coast of Île Sainte-Marie; many are thought to still contain treasure.



MAHAJANGA

ANALAVORY GEYSERS

These geysers actually erupt because of the activity from the aragonite mines nearby.

ZAHAMENA NATIONAL PARK

There are more than 112 species of bird in this park and 67 of them are unique to Madagascar, such as the red owl and the serpent eagle.



NOSY ALAÑAÑA LIGHT

At a towering 200 feet, this functioning lighthouse is the tallest in Africa. Its purpose is to stop boats running aground on the tiny Isle of Prunes.

TOAMASINA

ANTANANARIVO

ANTSIRABI

ANTONGONA

The Vazimba people were first to use these clifftops as sites for dwellings in the 16th century, high above the surrounding lands.



ROVA ALASORA

Andriamanelo a Merina king, built a fortified complex here in 1540 to protect his royal family. Only the foundations remain today.

RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK

The steamy rain forests of this national park are home to some of the world’s rarest lemur species, including the golden bamboo lemur.



ALI KAMÉ
B.1984

An Olympic decathlon athlete, Kamé was a gold medallist at the African Championships and a bronze medallist at the All-Africa Games.

ANDOHALO PLACE

This was the first marketplace in the city and the place where official royal ceremonies were held.



AMBOHIMANGA

The Royal Hill of Ambohimanga was the home of Merina royalty; the site contains many of their burial tombs.



FIANARANTSOA

RANOMAFANA THERMAL BATHS

The natural hot springs in Ranomafana National Park have been used to feed a public swimming pool.



MADAGASCAR SLIM
B.1956

A folk and blues guitarist, Slim won Canada’s World Music Album of the Year in 2000.



GISÈLE RABESAHALA
1929–2011

The first woman to become a minister in Madagascar’s government, she devoted her life to fighting for human rights.

TSARANORO MASSIF

The 2,600-foot sheer rock wall is a magnet for rock climbers from all over the world.

MAHAFALY TOMBS

The Mahafaly built large tombs topped with zebu horns and sculpted wooden columns to honor their dead. They can be seen on the roadside in the country’s south.



KEY FACTS

CAPITAL
Antananarivo

LARGEST CITIES
Antananarivo
Toamasina
Antsirabi
Fianarantsoa
Mahajanga

POPULATION
26,970,000

LIBERTY, FATHERLAND, PROGRESS

MONEY
Malagasy Ariary

NAMED FOR
The European interpretation of the Malagasy word *Madagasikara*

FLOWER
Poinciana



NATION CODE
MG

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Malagasy and French

BIRD
Fish eagle





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

6 million BC: One of the earliest descendants of humans, the hominid *Orrorin tugenensis*, lived in the Tugen Hills in Kenya.

1.8 million BC: Upright man (*Homo erectus*) begins using tools in the Lake Turkana region.

2000 BC: Nomadic tribes begin to arrive in Kenya from Ethiopia.

2500 BC–1500 BC: Bantu groups from Sub-Saharan Africa arrive in Kenya and begin working with metals.

AD 900: Islamic groups settle in Mombasa; this is the beginning of the Swahili civilization.

1498: The Portuguese arrive and establish a naval base at Mombasa; their arrival lessens the Arab dominance.

1840s: German missionaries and explorers Johann Krapf and Johannes Rebmann become the first Europeans to see Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya.

1890–1895: Kenya and Uganda come under the control of the British and become known as British East Africa.

1963: Kenya becomes an independent nation with Jomo Kenyatta as its first prime minister.

2013: Jomo Kenyatta's son, Uhuru Kenyatta, narrowly wins the presidential election.

2015: Archaeologists discover stone tools at Lomekwi. Believed to be 3.3 million years old, they are the oldest tools ever discovered.

2017: The government declares a national disaster due to the severe drought affecting most of the country.

KENYA

UGANDA

MOUNT KENYA

The highest mountain in Kenya and the second-highest in Africa, after Mount Kilimanjaro, is an extinct volcano.

OL PEIETA CONSERVANCY

At this sanctuary, lucky safari-goers might spot the “big five”—elephant, lion, leopard, rhinoceros, and Cape buffalo.

EWASO NYIRO RIVER

In the dry north, this river brings life to the animals that flock to its banks; it's particularly popular with Nile crocodiles.

LAKE NAKURU NATIONAL PARK

Black and white rhinos, endangered Rothschild's giraffes, lions, leopards, and hippos all call this park home.

THE GREAT RIFT VALLEY

There are few places on the planet where you can see the Earth's crust moving; here in Kenya the Somali plate and the Nubian plate are splitting apart and creating a giant crack.

KISUMU

NAKURU

NAIROBI

KARURU FALLS

These are the highest waterfalls in Kenya with a 900-foot drop over three tiers. Lush green forests surround the powerful falls.

LAKE NAIVASHA

This is a birdwatcher's paradise. Expect to see cranes, marabou storks, cormorants, and pelicans. Keep an eye out for lurking hippos.

MAASAI CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

This center aims to preserve Maasai culture and heritage while providing job opportunities for women artisans from the nearby village.

MAASAI MARA NATIONAL RESERVE

Each year, thousands of wildebeest cross the savanna plains of this park in search of greener pastures. It's known as the Great Migration.

AMBOSELI NATIONAL PARK

This is where you come to get your dose of iconic Africa—watch a herd of wild elephants crossing the dry plains with Mount Kilimanjaro in the background.

KEY FACTS

LET US ALL PULL TOGETHER

CAPITAL
Nairobi

MONEY
Kenyan shilling

NATION CODE
KE

LARGEST CITIES
Nairobi
Mombasa
Kisumu
Nakuru
Eldoret

NAMED FOR
The second-highest mountain in Africa, Mount Kenya

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Swahili and English

POPULATION
53,320,000

FLOWER
Orchid



BIRD
Lilac-breasted roller



TANZANIA





JOMO KENYATTA
C.1897-1978

An anti-colonialist who believed in Kenyan independence, he became the country's first prime minister in 1963 and president in 1964.



WANGARI MAATHAI
1940-2011

Maathai was the first African woman to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for her work in reducing poverty and conserving the environment.

SAMBURU NATIONAL RESERVE

Samburu was home to the famous lioness known as Kamunyak who adopted and protected more than six orphaned oryx calves.



GIRAFFE MANOR

Look out! At this hotel Rothschild's giraffes poke their heads through the windows hoping for a snack!



BOMAS OF KENYA

In one of Africa's largest auditoriums, more than 50 different bomas (homesteads) perform traditional music and dance.



NAIROBI SAFARI WALK

This boardwalk takes you on a stroll with a view over cheetahs, white rhinos, leopards, and lions!



HELL'S GATE GORGE

Named after a narrow gap in the towering limestone cliffs where an ancient river passed through.

LAMU ISLAND

The mix of architectural styles and artistry on the island tells the story of its past. You'll see Arab, Indian, and Chinese influences.



MARAFI DEPRESSION

This sandstone canyon has been worn away over centuries by wind and rain to become a gorge filled with stony peaks in colors of pink, orange and white.



MOMBASA



MOMBASA MARINE PARK

The warm tropical waters and coral reefs of this marine park make it ideal for diving and snorkeling.

FORT JESUS

This 400-year-old fort was built by the Portuguese to protect their seaport position on the trade route to India.



DIANI BEACH

This wide strip of white sand lapped at by turquoise waters has been voted Africa's best beach.



SAVANNAS AND SEAPORTS—WELCOME TO KENYA

With its Indian Ocean coastline, Kenya has attracted its fair share of international visitors over the years—everyone from the Portuguese, Chinese, English, and Arab peoples saw that this seaport was a treasure trove for trade, so have all staked a claim to the land. Millions of years before the coast became a draw for outsiders, however, Kenya was home to the planet's earliest human beings. We know this because ancient stone tools have been discovered in the Turkana region.

Aside from all the human activity, Kenya is home to the world's most spectacular wildlife. Its national parks and conservation areas boast white and black rhinoceroses, elephants, lions, tigers, buffalo, leopards, giraffes, hippopotamuses, Nile crocodiles, and a critically endangered antelope. Wildebeest make their annual migration across Kenyan plains, and there's even an a place you can stay where giraffes will join you for breakfast.

It should come as no surprise that a country with wildlife so spectacular would have a landscape to match. Sandstone canyons, plunging waterfalls, extinct volcanoes, wide-open savannas, and a valley where the Earth's crust can be seen moving apart can all be found here. Kenya is a snapshot of the Africa that everyone dreams about.



DAPHNE SHELDRIK
1934-2018

Sheldrick spent her life saving and rehabilitating wild animals. She developed a milk formula to feed orphaned elephants and rhinoceroses.



DAVID RUDISHA
B.1988

The only person to have ever run 800 meters in under 1 minute 41 seconds, he is the 2012 and 2016 Olympic champion and the 2011 and 2015 World Champion.



RICHARD TURERE
B.2000

To help save his family's livestock from being eaten by lions, Turere invented a light system that mimics the pattern of a person walking with a flashlight to scare off the lions.



YATTA PLATEAU

This is no ordinary plateau—it is the largest and longest lava flow in the world!

LUGARD FALLS

Not so much a waterfall as a series of white-water rapids running over rocks on the Galana River.

HIROLA ANTELOPE

The Hirola is the world's rarest antelope. It's also known as the four-eyed antelope because of dark markings under its eyes.



MALINDI

For 300 years, Malindi was a port town trading in ivory and slaves, until slavery was abolished in 1873. Now it's popular with beach-loving tourists.





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 200: Bantu-speaking tribes from west and central Africa begin moving into the area now known as Mozambique.

1000s: The largely agricultural Shona Empire expands from Zimbabwe into present-day Mozambique.

1498: A Portuguese expedition, led by Vasco de Gama, arrives off the Mozambican coast.

1400s–1600s: The Portuguese establish forts and trading posts and push inland from the coast, giving land to European settlers.

1700s–1800s: Mozambique becomes one of the biggest slave trade centers in the world.

1842: Portugal bans the slave trade, but it secretly continues.

1878: Portugal leases large sections of land to external companies who use local labor to further their businesses.

1930–1960s: The Portuguese decide to break up the trading companies and impose their direct rule over Mozambique. Thousands of Portuguese settlers flood into the country.

1975: After years of fighting for an end to Portuguese rule, the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo) wins independence for the country and becomes the ruling party.

1977–1992: Civil war breaks out between the Frelimo government, who want to remain the only political party, and Renamo rebels, who also want power.

2001: The Zambezi Valley floods and close to 70,000 people are left homeless.

2013: Government forces and the rebel group Renamo, begin fighting again. The violence means that thousands flee their homes.



KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Maputo

LARGEST CITIES

Matola
Maputo
Nampula
Beira
Chimoio

POPULATION

30,370,000



THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

MONEY

Metical

NATION CODE

MZ

NAMED FOR

An Arab trader named
Mussa Bin Bique or Mossa
Al Bique who visited the
coast and went on to live
there

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Portuguese

FLOWER

Maroon
bell bean



ANIMAL

African
elephant



JOAQUIM CHISSANO
B.1939

President of Mozambique from 1986 to 2005, he is recognized for bringing democracy to the country.



MARIA MUTOLA
B.1972

Mostly an 800-meter runner, Mutola is Mozambique's first Olympic gold medalist and won three World Championships.

CAHORA BASSA LAKE AND DAM

Africa's fourth-largest human-made lake was formed when a giant dam was built on the Zambezi River in 1974.



THE LION HOUSE

Originally built as a lodge for visitors to see animals in the Gorongosa Park, the lodge was abandoned when it kept flooding...that's when the lions moved in.



CHINAMAPERE ROCK PAINTING

Thought to be thousands of years old, these ancient rock paintings show animal and human figures.



CHIMOIO



NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

The main attraction here is the taxidermied native animals drinking at a neon-green waterhole.

TUNDURU BOTANICAL GARDENS

An oasis of green in busy Maputo, this is a pretty spot to escape the tropical heat.

MAPUTO CENTRAL MARKET

Built more than 120 years ago, there are so many stalls inside this Portuguese colonial market that sellers have begun spilling out into the street.



GRANDE HOTEL OF BEIRA

Built as a luxury hotel in 1954 with Art Deco style architecture and an Olympic-sized pool, it closed in 1974 and has since become overrun with squatters.



INHACA ISLAND

A mere 7,000 years ago, this island was part of the mainland. Today it's now 30 miles offshore from Maputo.



MATOLA

MAPUTO



MOZAMBIQUE

TANZANIA

NIASSA RESERVE

This is the largest protected area in Mozambique and is home to an impressive 350 endangered African wild dogs.

MABU FOREST

Locals have known about this old-growth rain forest for centuries, but scientists didn't know about it until 2005!

MOUNT NAMULI

At 8,000 feet, this is the second-tallest mountain in Mozambique. It's the imposing 2,300-foot granite cliff face that makes it the most striking.

QUIRIMBAS NATIONAL PARK

The 12 main islands of this small archipelago are known for their powdery white-sand beaches and beautiful coral reefs, perfect for snorkeling.

GORONGOSA NATIONAL PARK

The civil war in Mozambique devastated the numbers of big mammals, like lions, hippos, and wildebeest but numbers have begun rising again.

NAMPULA

MACUTI LIGHTHOUSE AND SHIPWRECK, BEIRA

Walk through this rusted wreck just below the abandoned lighthouse. Though it looks dramatic, the ship was deliberately run aground to form a breakwater.

BEIRA

MANYIKENI

This 12th–17th-century archaeological site contained glass beads and seashells, suggesting the settlement traded with coastal towns.

POMENE RESERVE

This small marine reserve protects a pristine mangrove estuary and pretty lagoon where it's possible to spot the rare dugong marine mammal.

TOFO BEACH

Out past the wide expanse of sand, you'll see giant manta rays, dolphins, whale sharks, and even humpback whales on their migratory path.

DOLPHINS AT PONTA DO OURO

Just north of the border with South Africa, people come here for the chance to interact with lots of dolphins.



LUÍSA DIOGO
B.1958

Diogo was the first woman to hold the position of prime minister of Mozambique.

She has a reputation for being an intelligent economist.



STONE TOWN, MOZAMBIQUE ISLAND

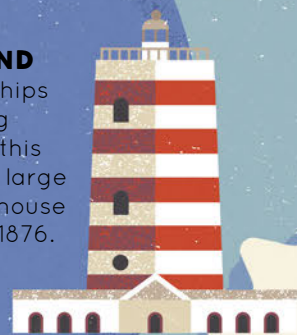
This tiny island was once the capital of Portuguese East Africa. Stone Town, with its impressive defensive fort, was the colonial headquarters.

MAKUTI, MOZAMBIQUE ISLAND

Nothing like the Portuguese colonialism of Stone Town, Mozambique's other city is made up of traditional thatched homes.

GOA ISLAND

To prevent ships from running aground on this tiny island a large square lighthouse was built in 1876.



SANTA CAROLINA

This tiny island has all the tropical wonders of the other archipelago islands and is also home to an abandoned resort.

BENGUERRA ISLAND

The second-largest island in the archipelago, its surrounding waters are still used by trading dhows (traditional boats).

THE AQUARIUM

A protected natural reef pool on Bazaruto Island, it gets its name because of the tropical fish and perfect snorkeling conditions.



MALANGATANA NGWENYA
1936–2011

A painter and a poet, Ngwenya used the struggles of ordinary people and the Mozambican quest for independence as his inspiration.



CLARISSA MACHANGUANA
B.1976

Basketball player Machanguana has played in America's WNBA and in Spain's national league.

BEAUTIFUL BEACHES, HISTORICAL ISLAND FORTS, AND WILDLIFE RESERVES

With its stunning tropical coastline, the east African nation of Mozambique has attracted attention from traders and travelers for centuries, but it was the Portuguese who established a powerful trade colony here in the 16th century. The tiny Mozambique Island became the capital of their African empire, and it's still possible to see the crumbling remnants of this colonial past in the defensive fort in Stone Town. When Mozambique finally achieved independence from Portuguese rule in the 1970s, the country then suffered years of civil war and violent fighting while political parties struggled to establish a workable government.

Mozambique remains a poor country, with many of its people living in poverty. However, the end to civil war has meant that industries like tourism and conservation have begun to grow. Animal populations have started to flourish again, and in places such as Gorongosa National Park and Niassa Reserve, it's possible to see large herds of elephants, endangered wild African dogs, hippos, lions, and wild buffalo.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

10,000 to 3,000 BC: The first humans, known as the Twa, moved into the region.

5th to 11th century AD: Tribespeople known as Hutus arrive and start farming the land.

14th century: Tutsi tribespeople begin migrating to the region and use their superior fighting skills to become the dominant tribe.

19th century: Tutsi king Kigeri IV Rwabugiri establishes the boundaries of the kingdom of Rwanda.

1899: The German Empire colonises the country, and it becomes known as German East Africa.

1916: Belgium forces invade and occupy Rwanda.

1946: The United Nations declares Rwanda a trust territory to be governed by Belgium; Tutsi kings rule indirectly.

1962: Rwanda proclaims itself a republic and becomes an independent country under Hutu president Grégoire Kayibanda.

1990: Rebel Tutsi forces from Uganda invade Rwanda and demand a change in rule.

1994: Hutu extremists go on a brutal rampage, killing hundreds of thousands of Tutsis. This is known as genocide.

2001: A new flag and national anthem is announced to help bring Hutu and Tutsis together as Rwandans.

2018: Rwanda becomes the second African nation to have an equal balance of women and men as government ministers.

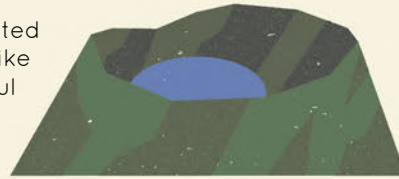


GISUMA

In 2009, 56 women got together and decided to improve their lives by creating a coffee-bean growing collective. Their beans are now sold worldwide.

MOUNT BISOKE

This active volcano last erupted in 1957. For now it's safe to hike to the top to see the beautiful crater lake.



MOUNT KARISIMBI

This is the highest mountain in the Virunga Mountain Range. It's so high that the peak is covered in snow even during the dry season.



NYAMYUMBA HOT SPRINGS

These pools of bubbling hot water are thought to have special healing powers.



PFUNDA TEA ESTATE

During the busiest harvesting season this tea plantation processes 100 tons of tea per day!



GISENYI

GISHWATI-MUKURA NATIONAL PARK

A protection program has saved the park from deforestation and created a safe home for golden monkeys, chimpanzees, and birds.



LAKE KIVU

Rwanda's largest lake may look beautiful but it doesn't smell great. This is because of the high concentration of methane gas contained in its waters.

KIBUYE (KARONGI)

We know Rwanda is landlocked, but Karongi is known as a beach because of the sandy shore lapped at by the waters of Lake Kivu.



NYUNGWE FOREST NATIONAL PARK CANOPY WALK

Walking through the treetops in this ancient forest gives you a chance to come eye to eye with chimpanzees.

MUSANZE CAVES

Created by rivers of lava millions of years ago, this cave complex includes the largest in Rwanda. It's over 1.25 miles long and houses thousands of bats.



RUHENGERI

KARISOKE RESEARCH CENTER

The legacy of zoologist Dian Fossey, who dedicated her life to the survival of mountain gorillas, is showcased here.

GITARAMA

NDABA WATERFALL

Legend has it that the torrent of water plunging over the rockface to the pool 100 meters below was once honey, which attracted people from the forests.

KING'S PALACE & RWESERO MUSEUM, NYANZA

Initially built as a palace for King Mutara III Rudahigwa, the compound now includes a modern art museum.

HUYE



HUYE (BUTARE TOWN)

This university town is home to more students than any other town on the African continent.

RWANDA

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF A THOUSAND HILLS

IBY'IWACU CULTURAL VILLAGE

Locals will introduce visitors to Rwandan customs and traditions here, including dances, songs, food, and natural medicines.

MOUNT SABYINYO

Known by locals as "Old Man's Teeth" because of the jagged peaks at the mountain's summit.

MOUNTAIN GORILLAS IN VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

One of the only places on Earth where it's possible to see the majestic and critically endangered mountain gorillas in their natural habitat.

BYUMBA

LAKE BURERA AND LAKE RUHONDO

These twin lakes are free of hippos and crocodiles—the perfect spot for humans to swim around in.

KIGALI

PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AND ART MUSEUM

The home of the president before the genocide. Now it's a museum showing how he lived.

GENOCIDE MEMORIAL

Over 800,000 people were killed during the Rwandan genocide, which is too awful to imagine. This memorial aims to honor the victims.

KIMIRONKO MARKET

The busiest market in Rwanda's capital city. It sells everything from fruit and vegetables to fabric, secondhand clothes, and tourist trinkets.

WILDLIFE SAFARI ON THE SAVANNA PLAINS

Look out for elephants, buffalo, antelopes, zebras, giraffes, monkeys, leopards, hyenas, lions, serval cats, and rhinos.

LAKE IHEMA

The biggest lake in the park is a popular fishing destination. Visitors are usually more excited about seeing the hippos and crocodiles!

BIRDWATCHING AT THE MUYUMBU CAMPSITE

Spot a red-faced barbet, brown-throated weaver, gray-crowned crane, or even an African finfoot.



AGNES BINAGWAHO

Pediatrician, Binagwaho has won international awards for her work in improving the health of children in Rwanda.



JEAN DE DIEU NKUNDABERA

Wheelchair athlete Nkundabera is Rwanda's first Olympic medalist. He claimed bronze in Athens in 2004 in the 800-meter T46 sprint.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Kigali

LARGEST CITIES

Kigali
Huye (Butare)
Gitarama
Ruhengeri
Gisenyi
Byumba

POPULATION

12,810,000

UNITY, WORK, PATRIOTISM

MONEY

Rwandan franc

NAMED FOR

The Rwanda-Rundi word Rwanda, meaning "large in size"

FLOWER

Red rose

NATION CODE

RW

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Kinyarwanda, French, English, and Kiswahili

BIRD

Shoebill



ANTOINETTE UWIMANA

Uwimana is the country director of Women to Women International, and has helped improve the lives of over 75,000 Rwandan women.



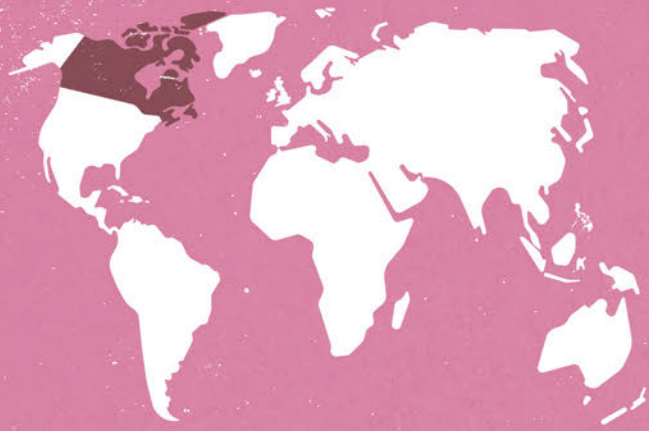
HENRI NYAKARUNDI B.1977

Not everyone in Rwanda has access to electricity, so Nyakarundi invented a solar-powered cart that can charge up to 80 cell phones at a time.



JIMMY GATEETE B.1982

The "God of Goals," soccer player Gatete scored for the national team during the 2004 African Cup of Nations, ensuring they made their first finals.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

30,000–15,000 BC: Paleo-Indian peoples cross from Siberia into parts of the Yukon, Canada, and Alaska, USA.

AD 796: The Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi formed an alliance known as the Three Fires Confederacy.

C.1450: The Haudenosaunee Confederacy is formed, bringing together five distinct nations from the Great Lakes District. No one knows for sure how old the Confederacy is.

1497: Italian explorer John Cabot lands in Newfoundland and claims the territory for England.

1534: French explorer Jacques Cartier claims the Gulf of Saint Lawrence for France.

1608: Quebec City is founded and over time becomes the capital of what is known as New France.

1763: After suffering defeat during the Seven Years' War, France gives control of its Canadian territories to Great Britain.

1857: Queen Victoria declares Ottawa to be the new capital of Canada.

1867: The Dominion of Canada is formed.

1914: Canada joins British troops to fight in World War I.

1931: British parliamentary power over Canada ends.

1939: Canada declares war on Germany and joins World War II.

1965: The red maple leaf on a white background becomes Canada's national flag.

1982: Queen Elizabeth II signs off on Canada's first independent constitution.

2010: Canada wins 14 gold medals in the Winter Olympics, the most ever won by one country!

2014: A Canadian lab creates a vaccine to combat Africa's deadly Ebola virus.

2019: The Toronto Raptors become the first non-US team to win the National Basketball Association title.



LAURA SECORD
1775–1868

Secord walked 100 miles to warn British, Canadian, and Native American troops of an imminent American attack during the War of 1812.



WAYNE GRETZKY
B.1961

Considered the greatest hockey player of all time, Gretzky is the highest scoring player in National Hockey League (NHL) history.

WELCOME TO A WILDERNESS FOR ALL

This vast and wild country is the second-largest on Earth (after Russia). It's full of stunning, snow-capped mountain ranges, enormous freshwater lakes, and miles of forests with wandering moose, munching musk ox, powerful bears, lumbering bison, sleek bobcats, gnawing beavers and other wildlife. There's so much to do outdoors, like skiing, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, and rock-climbing, that it's easy to forget that Canada's cities are fun too.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, French and British explorers battled for the right to colonize the land and the country still has strong ties to its French and English history. Canada is now regarded as one of the most multicultural countries in the world.

One of the best things to do in Canada is watch a game of hockey—the fast and rough winter national sport. But outside of the ice rink Canadians are famously friendly and peaceful.



ROBERTA BONDAR
B.1945

Canada's first female astronaut and the first neurologist in space, Bondar was the head of space medicine at NASA for over ten years.

CALGARY STAMPEDE

The Calgary Stampede shows off Western Canadian culture alongside rodeo events such as bull-riding and barrel racing.

BANFF NATIONAL PARK

This national park is known for glaciers, ice fields, conifer forests, and the beautiful turquoise waters of the glacial Lake Moraine.

CAPILANO SUSPENSION BRIDGE

Hold tight as you walk across this 450-foot-long bridge, 230 feet above the Capilano River and dense forest.

STANLEY PARK

Vancouver's biggest park has almost half a million trees! The Hollow Tree is a 600- to 800-year-old tree stump that could fit an elephant inside.

GROUSE MOUNTAIN

In winter, Grouse Mountain is packed with skiers, snowboarders, and skaters; in summer, hikers walk the trails.

WANUSKEWIN HERITAGE PARK

A cultural and historical center of the First Nations, the park represents 6,000 years of the history of the Northern Plains peoples.

CALGARY

VANCOUVER

PACIFIC OCEAN

SPOTTED LAKE

Each summer, most of the water in this lake evaporates leaving behind hundreds of round puddles. The spots change color depending on the minerals in the soil.

DINOSAUR PROVINCIAL PARK

Almost 60 different dinosaur species were discovered here!

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



CANADA



TERRY FOX
1958–1981

After losing a leg to cancer, Fox started a run from the east to the west coast of Canada to raise money for cancer research. After 143 days, his cancer returned, forcing him to stop.



LOUIS RIEL
1844–1885

As a leader, politician and defender of the rights and culture of the Métis people, Riel led violent rebellions against the Canadian government to safeguard Métis land.

TORONTO

Toronto is famed for being one of the most multicultural and peaceful cities in the world.



NIAGARA FALLS

You can see Niagara Falls from Canada and the USA. Horseshoe Falls is the most powerful waterfall in North America.

POLAR BEARS IN CHURCHILL, MANITOBA

Hundreds of polar bears make their way from the summer tundra toward the pack ice on Hudson Bay to begin the hunting season.



RIDEAU CANAL, OTTAWA

Connecting Ottawa with Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River, this canal freezes in winter, making it the largest skating rink in the world.



CN TOWER, TORONTO

This communications and observation tower is the tallest free-standing structure in the Western Hemisphere.

LAKE HURON

Lake Huron has over 30,000 islands. The biggest is Manitoulin Island, which is the largest freshwater island in the world.

OTTAWA

This is Canada's capital and is also the seventh-coldest capital on Earth!

OTTAWA

MONTREAL

TORONTO

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Ottawa

LARGEST CITIES

Toronto
Montreal
Vancouver
Calgary

POPULATION

37,742,000

MARI USQUE AD MARE (FROM SEA TO SEA)

MONEY

Canadian dollar

NATION CODE

CA

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

English and French

NATIONAL TREE

Maple Tree



BIRD

Gray jay



MONT ROYAL

Walking to the top of Mont Royal will give you great views over the city, and on a clear day, you can see all the way to the Adirondack Mountains in the USA.



OLD MONTREAL

French fur traders have used the port in Montreal for close to 400 years. A more permanent French settlement was established in 1642.



LA BANQUISE RESTAURANT

Ready for gooey melted cheese and rich gravy on French fries? There are over 30 varieties of poutine, the Quebec classic, at this Montreal restaurant.

OLD QUEBEC

Quebec was first founded by Europeans in 1608, and it is the only North American city north of Mexico that has preserved fortifications from this time.



L'ANSE AUX MEADOWS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The only confirmed site of a Viking settlement in North America. Dating from AD 1000, the site features reconstructed Norse sod (turf) houses.



ATLANTIC OCEAN

BAY OF FUNDY

More than 175 billion tons of water move in and out of the Bay of Fundy every day, creating the most extreme tides in the world. You might see a whale there too!



ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND

These colorful waterfront houses capture the unique spirit of the town and the creative spirit of its residents.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MIGUEL HIDALGO Y COSTILLA
1753-1811

Miguel was a priest who believed Mexicans should be free of Spanish rule. He became a leader in the War of Mexican Independence.

TIJUANA



PANCHO VILLA
1878-1923

Mexico's Robin Hood, Pancho was a revolutionary leader who fought for the rights of the poor.

SAN IGNACIO LAGOON

In winter, this lagoon is a hot spot to see eastern Pacific gray whales.

CIUDAD JUAREZ

COPPER CANYON

If all six of these interconnecting canyons were joined as one, it would be bigger than the USA's Grand Canyon.

XOCHIMILCO CANALS

In Xochimilco, you'll find quiet canals with colorful barges sailing by floating gardens.



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

This is the largest museum in Mexico with more than 600,000 artifacts. Don't miss the 24-ton Sun Stone.



MAYAN RUINS OF CHICHEN ITZA

When the sun hits the central temple during the spring and autumn equinoxes, it creates a shadow that looks like a giant snake slithering down the outside.

TEOTIHUACAN

The ruins of this ancient city show canals, palaces, and plazas.



THE ARCH OF CABO SAN LUCAS

Known locally as El Arco (the arch), this sits at the very tip of the Baja California Peninsula where the Pacific Ocean becomes the Gulf of California.



HIDDEN BEACH

Swim through a long tunnel until you emerge onto a secret beach lapped by crystal waters and lit through an enormous hole in the roof.



CULTURAL INSTITUTE CABAÑAS

Originally built as a hospital, this sprawling complex is now home to Mexican contemporary art.

GUACHIMONTONES

This stepped pyramid is covered in grass and is the 2,000-year-old remnant of the Teuchitlán culture.

LA BARRANCA DE HUENTITÁN

On the outskirts of the city is this stunning canyon—a long walk to the bottom of the valley leads to thermal pools.

PACIFIC OCEAN

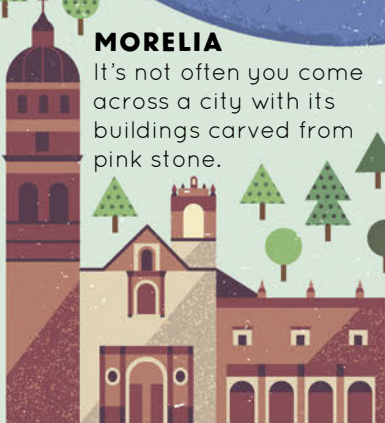
PUERTO VALLARTA

A stroll along Puerto Vallarta's broadwalk is the best of both worlds—beach and city.



MORELIA

It's not often you come across a city with its buildings carved from pink stone.



GUADALAJARA

MONARCH BUTTERFLY BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Each year, millions of monarch butterflies travel from North America to spend winter in the fir trees of this reserve.



ACAPULCO CLIFF DIVERS

Watch in stunned silence as professional high divers leap from the cliffs of La Quebrada into the sea 130 feet below. Please leave this one to the experts.



MEXICO CITY

PUEBLA

OAXACA

Famous as a foodie destination; one of the most popular street-side treats here is a cup of fried grasshoppers!



ELSA AVILA
B.1963

Avila is the first Latin American woman to reach the summit of Mount Everest.



FRIDA KAHLO
1907-1954

One of the most famous artists in the world, Kahlo used her country's culture as inspiration for her work.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL
Mexico City

LARGEST CITIES
Mexico City
Guadalajara
Puebla
Ciudad Juárez
Tijuana

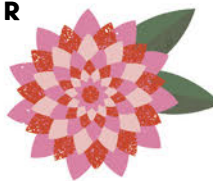
POPULATION
129,200,000

LA PATRIA ES PRIMERO (THE HOMELAND IS FIRST)

MONEY
Mexican peso

NAMED FOR
The Aztec tribe, the Mexico

FLOWER
Dahlia



NATION CODE
MX

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Spanish

BIRD
Crested caracara



WELCOME TO A COUNTRY OF ANCIENT CULTURES, NATURAL WONDERS, AND STRIKING CITIES

What do you think of when you think about Mexico? Is it the white-sand beaches with shimmering turquoise water? Or the spicy, fresh, and fragrant food from markets and street stalls? Perhaps it's the spectacular ancient ruins that tell the story of cultures and experiences from thousands of years ago? Or maybe you think about modern cities with skyscrapers and bustling plazas? Mexico is all these things and more. It's colorful, busy, loud, and proud.

Few places bring history and culture to life the way Mexico does. One day you can find yourself exploring an ancient Maya temple, the next you'll be scuba diving through underground limestone tunnels. There are jungles and mountaintops, mega cities and local villages. And if that's not enough, you should know... Mexico is where chocolate was invented!



ISLA HOLBOX

One of the best places in the world to spot flamingos or swim with whale sharks.

CENOTE DOS OJOS

The name of this ancient cenote (natural sinkhole) means "two eyes" and it refers to the two neighboring cenotes that become one huge cavern.



BONAMPAK MURALS

Inside the Temple of the Murals at this ancient site of the Maya, you'll see bold paintings depicting battles and sacrifice.



ISLA MUJERES

The Maya people saw this island as a place of worship devoted to the goddess of childbirth and medicine.



COZUMEL

Around the island of Cozumel is a paradise for tropical fish—a vast barrier reef that is perfect for humans who snorkel and scuba dive.



XEL-HÁ PARK

This is a natural aquarium with underwater limestone caves and grottos.

TULUM

There's no shortage of astounding ruins on the Yucatan Peninsula, but Tulum's ancient Mayan castle perched above the turquoise water is one to see.

CARIBBEAN
SEA



MONTEZUMA
C.1398–1469

The second Aztec emperor and fifth king of Tenochtitlan, he put all his effort into strengthening and expanding Aztec rule.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

1400 BC: The Olmec civilization forms. The Olmecs are thought to be the first sophisticated civilization in the Americas.

1000–100 BC: The Maya civilization forms. They build pyramids to honor their gods.

AD 1000–1200: The Maya culture collapses, and the Aztecs arrive in Mexico.

1325–1440: The Aztecs establish the city of Tenochtitlan, and the Aztec Empire expands under Montezuma I.

1517–1521: Spanish explorers arrive. Hernán Cortés defeats the Aztecs and claims the land for Spain. Mexico City is built on the same spot as Tenochtitlan.

1600s: Mexico becomes part of the colony of New Spain and Spanish settlers begin to arrive.

1810–1821: The Mexican War of Independence is fought, ending in Spanish defeat. Mexico becomes a republic.

1846–1848: Mexico and the United States go to war over Texas. When the US occupies Mexico City, Mexico agrees to give up much of its land.

1917: The current Mexican constitution is adopted.

1929: The National Revolutionary Party (later the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI) is formed. They hold power for the next 70 years.

1985: A huge 8.1 magnitude earthquake hits Mexico City, killing over 10,000 people and destroying much of the city.

2000: Vicente Fox becomes the first president who is not from the PRI party to be elected in over 70 years.

MEXICO



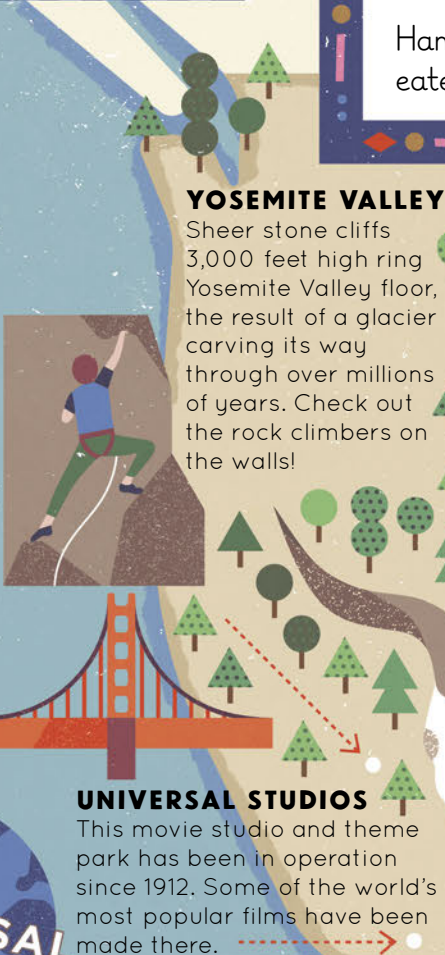


DENALI NATIONAL PARK
Denali is North America's highest mountain, and this Alaskan national park is a wonderland of forest, glaciers, and snow. Get your skis out!



WAIKIKI BEACH
The beautiful water, white sand, and a city built to the edge makes this beach on the island of O'ahu in Hawai'i a must-swim destination!

GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE
The bridge is an icon of San Francisco, even if it's not golden at all! The red steel structure was completed in 1937 and spans the entrance to San Francisco Bay.



YOSEMITE VALLEY
Sheer stone cliffs 3,000 feet high ring Yosemite Valley floor, the result of a glacier carving its way through over millions of years. Check out the rock climbers on the walls!



YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
The USA's, and possibly the world's, first national park. It's huge, beautiful and full of wildlife. Look out for bears, bison, and elk!



MOUNT RUSHMORE
At around 60 feet tall, the four faces of US presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln are carved into the rock.



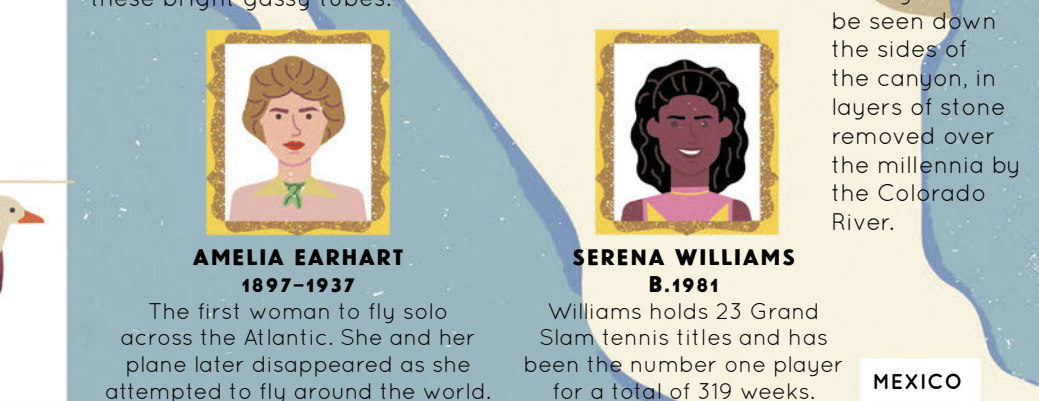
MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK
Inhabited for some 10,000 years, it's famous for the 800-year-old stone dwellings nestled in the cliffs.



UFO MUSEUM & RESEARCH CENTER
In the town of Roswell, New Mexico, you'll find this museum, with a collection of aliens and flying saucers and accounts of extra-terrestrial encounters.



HOUSTON
GRAND CANYON
Two billion years of the Earth's history can be seen down the sides of the canyon, in layers of stone removed over the millennia by the Colorado River.



THE NEON MUSEUM
Las Vegas is a neon wonderland, so of course there's a museum celebrating these bright gassy tubes.



AMELIA EARHART
1897-1937
The first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. She and her plane later disappeared as she attempted to fly around the world.



SERENA WILLIAMS
B.1981
Williams holds 23 Grand Slam tennis titles and has been the number one player for a total of 319 weeks.

KEY FACTS		IN GOD WE TRUST	
CAPITAL Washington, DC	MONEY US dollar	NATION CODE US	
LARGEST CITIES New York Los Angeles Chicago Houston Phoenix	NAMED FOR Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE English	
POPULATION 331,000,000	FLOWER Rose	BIRD Bald eagle	





GEORGE WASHINGTON
1732–1799

The first president of the USA, he was a general who opposed British rule and helped secure American independence.



SACAGAWEA
1788–1812

This Native American Shoshone woman helped Lewis and Clark cross the USA in 1805 and 1806.

CENTRAL PARK

Almost 40 million people visit Central Park every year. It provides a beautiful green space in the heart of one of the biggest cities in the world.

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

One of the most famous skyscrapers, it stands at 102 stories and was the tallest in the world from 1931 to 1970.



STATUE OF LIBERTY

It's become the symbol of America, but was given to the USA by France. The statue is made of copper and the monument is 300 feet tall.



PENTAGON

The Pentagon's distinctly shaped building is home to the US Department of Defense. It's the world's largest office building.



WHITE HOUSE

John Adams was the first US president to live in the White House, in 1800. It's been home to every president since and is also a museum.



SMITHSONIAN

This is actually 17 different museums and galleries dotted around Washington, DC: science, air and space, African American history, art, and more.



WASHINGTON, DC

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

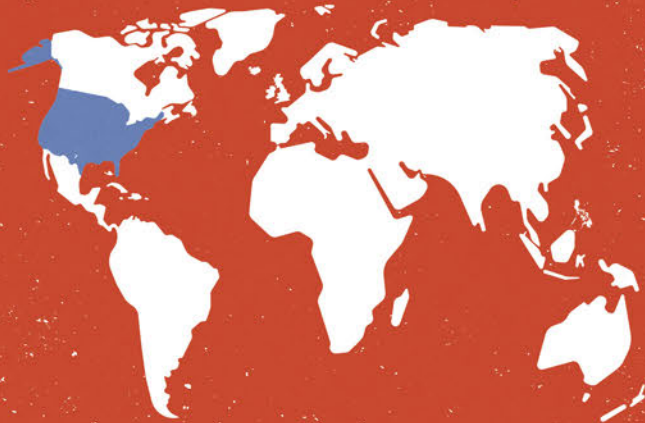
If you like space, rockets and the thought of visiting other planets, this place is for you! The 1969 trip to the Moon launched from here.



MUTTER MUSEUM

Not for the faint-hearted, this museum of medical wonders and curiosities has bodies, organs, bones, and even some sections of Albert Einstein's brain on display!

NEW YORK



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AD 700: The Mississippian culture emerges in midwestern and southeastern areas of North America.

1190: Puebloans construct the Cliff Palace in what is today Colorado.

1565: St. Augustine, Florida, becomes the first European colony in North America.

1620: The Pilgrims arrive and found Plymouth Colony in New England.

1763: Britain takes control of much of the east of North America after defeating the French.

1775: The American Revolution begins, with George Washington leading an army against the British.

1776: The 13 colonies declare independence with the Declaration of Independence.

1804: Explorers Lewis and Clark begin their trek to cross North America.

1861: The American Civil War begins between the anti-slavery Union and the pro-slavery states in the South.

1865: The Civil War ends.

1903: Henry Ford launches the Ford Motor Company.

1917: The USA takes a position as a global power as it enters World War I, turning the tide against Germany.

1969: The Apollo 11 spacecraft lands on the moon, with Neil Armstrong becoming the first person to walk on the moon.

2001: Terrorists fly passenger jets into the World Trade Center towers in New York, destroying them both and killing 2,606 people.

2009: Barack Obama becomes the first African American president.

2016: Donald Trump, son of a wealthy real-estate family, wins the presidential election.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



NEIL ARMSTRONG
1930–2012

A test pilot, an aeronautical engineer, an astronaut, and, of course, the first person to walk on the moon!



OLD HAVANA

Founded in 1519, the oldest part of Havana is laid out the way it was 500 years ago and is defined by the fortified city walls.

MALECON

This broad seaside esplanade stretches for 5 miles along the coast. It's one of Havana's most popular spots for a stroll.

CASTILLO DE LOS TRES REYES DEL MORRO

This ancient fortress had holes built into the back walls so that prisoners could be fed to sharks.



FIDEL CASTRO 1929–2016

Revolutionary and political leader, Castro was Cuba's premier and president for nearly 60 years. He made Cuba the first communist state in the Western Hemisphere.



SATURNO CAVE

Dive into the clear blue waters of this underground swimming hole, complete with stalactites and stalagmites.



VARADERO ECOLOGICAL PARK

The top sights in this park are two huge caves containing resident bat colonies and ancient indigenous rock art.

VARADERO BEACH

Along the soft white sands dotted with thatched beach umbrellas is where you'll find Cuba's most famous and exclusive beach resorts.

VIÑALES VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Limestone mounds with strange domed tops rise from the green grass of the valley floor, where tobacco plants have been farmed for centuries.

HAVANA

MATANZAS

Around 500 years ago, pirates hung out in this small bay. These days poets, artists, and scholars hang out here.

PENINSULA DE ZAPATA

This peninsula has 19 miles of beaches and a giant swamp where you might catch a glimpse of the world's smallest bird, the bee hummingbird.

SANTA CLARA

Che Guevara's body is entombed in a mausoleum here; there's also a museum with his personal belongings and a giant bronze statue of him.

GUANAHACABIBES NATIONAL PARK

This peninsula park is popular for scuba diving, but the thousands of scuttling land crabs steal the show.

SCUBA DIVING AT MARÍA LA GORDA

Legend has it that there is pirate treasure buried off the coast here. Even if you can't find it, the coral reefs are a decent alternative.

PLAYA PARAISO

In English this translates as "Paradise Beach." The crystal-clear waters, palm trees, and white sand are pretty close to perfect.

TRINIDAD

Spanish colonialists made lots of money from sugar farming and built grand homes in Trinidad—all painted in vibrant colors.

SANCTI SPÍRITUS

One of the original seven Spanish settlements in Cuba, this pretty city has the oldest bridge, the oldest church and some of the oldest buildings in the country.



ALICIA ALONSO 1920–2019

Alonso was a prima ballerina and choreographer who established the Cuban National Ballet Company in 1955.



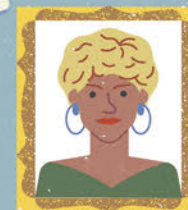
JAVIER SOTOMAYOR B.1967

The world record holder for high jump, Sotomayor is the only human being to have jumped 2.45 meters (8 ft).



ANA BETANCOURT 1832–1901

Betancourt fought for Cuban independence from Spain and for the rights of women. She was from a wealthy family but lived in the forest with the revolutionaries.



CELIA CRUZ 1925–2003

One of the most popular Latin American singers in the 20th century, Cruz made 37 studio albums, won two Grammy awards and starred in movies.

FROM REVOLUTION TO NATURE'S RICHES

From Spanish colony to communist state, Cuba has a past filled with invasion and rebellion. Its heroes are those who have fought for its independence and a Cuban identity. Despite a tumultuous history, the natural beauty of this island—the largest in the Caribbean—is beginning to gain the country new reputations for tourism and culture, adventure and biodiversity. Cuba's colonial past is present in the grand buildings of its cities, built on the back of sugarcane and tobacco farming; its future can be seen in the increasing number of national parks and biosphere reserves, where you can spot wondrous creatures like the miniature bee hummingbird and the tiny Monte Iberia frog, both the smallest of their kind in the world.

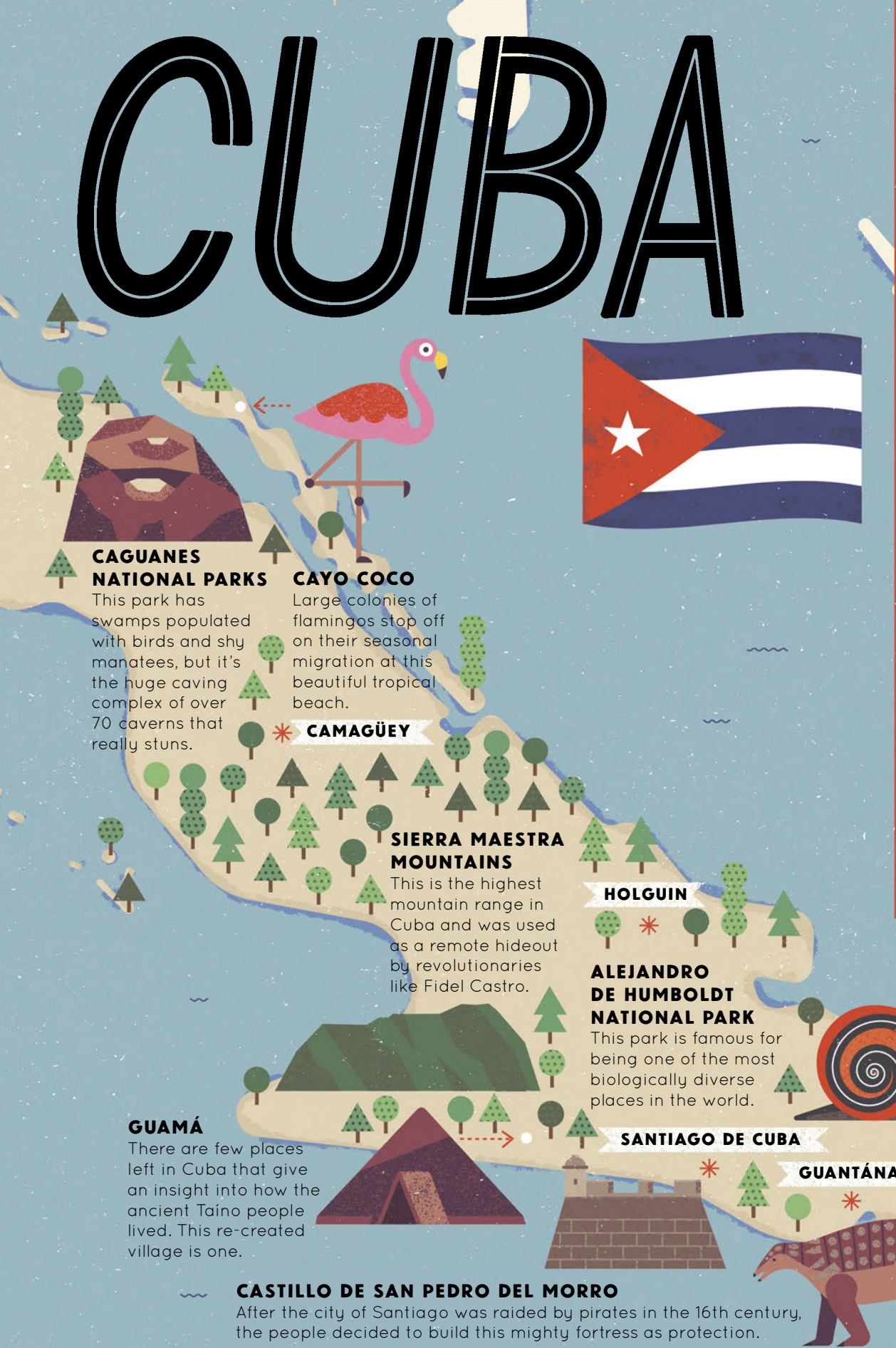
Cuba's pre-colonial inhabitants have left their mark on their homeland in the form of rock art and ancient burial sites. It's also possible to get a feel for life before the Spanish arrived at re-created villages that show how indigenous tribes went about their daily routines all those centuries ago. Today's Cubans are proud and fun loving—dancing, eating, drinking, and promenading are part of everyday life for most locals and who wouldn't want to sing and dance about a place that brings together such a fascinating mix of remote wildernesses, grand cities, simple rural villages, steep mountain ranges, and spectacular coastlines?

KEY FACTS		HOMELAND OR DEATH, WE SHALL OVERCOME!	
CAPITAL Havana	MONEY Cuban peso	NATION CODE CU	
LARGEST CITIES Havana Santiago de Cuba Camagüey Holguín Guantánamo	NAMED FOR The Taíno word <i>cubao</i> meaning “where fertile land is abundant”	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Spanish	
	FLOWER Mariposa	BIRD Cuban trogon	
POPULATION 11,330,000			



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 1000 BC:** The Guanahatabey people from South America arrive in Cuba.
- AD 1200:** The Taíno people arrive, settle, and begin farming maize, tobacco, yucca plants, and cotton.
- 1492:** Explorer Christopher Columbus becomes the first European to arrive in Cuba and claims the country for Spain.
- 1511:** Diego Velazquez establishes the first Spanish settlement, known as Baracoa. The Europeans also introduce diseases, which kill thousands of Taíno people.
- 1607:** Havana is named the capital of Cuba.
- 1898:** Cuban independence fighters join the USA in a war against Spain; when the USA is victorious, Cuba becomes its protectorate.
- 1902:** Cuba becomes independent, but leases Guantánamo Bay to the USA.
- 1952–1959:** Fulgencio Batista becomes dictator of Cuba. Many Cubans aren’t happy and support a revolution by rebel leader Fidel Castro. Castro overthrows Batista and declares Cuba a socialist country and ally of Russia.
- 1961–1962:** Cuba is caught in the middle of the Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union. The USA fails to overthrow Castro in the Bay of Pigs invasion.
- 2002:** Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 Russia begins to lose influence, and in this year, the last Russian military base on Cuba is closed.
- 2008:** Fidel Castro retires and hands over power to his brother, Raul.
- 2015:** US President Barrack Obama and Raul Castro reestablish diplomatic ties between the two countries.



CAGUANES NATIONAL PARKS

This park has swamps populated with birds and shy manatees, but it’s the huge caving complex of over 70 caverns that really stuns.

CAYO COCO

Large colonies of flamingos stop off on their seasonal migration at this beautiful tropical beach.

CAMAGÜEY

SIERRA MAESTRA MOUNTAINS

This is the highest mountain range in Cuba and was used as a remote hideout by revolutionaries like Fidel Castro.

HOLGUIN

ALEJANDRO DE HUMBOLDT NATIONAL PARK

This park is famous for being one of the most biologically diverse places in the world.

GUAMÁ

There are few places left in Cuba that give an insight into how the ancient Taíno people lived. This re-created village is one.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA

GUANTÁNAMO

CASTILLO DE SAN PEDRO DEL MORRO

After the city of Santiago was raided by pirates in the 16th century, the people decided to build this mighty fortress as protection.

MADRE VIEJA

Peer closely under the ferns in this mountain ridge and you might be lucky enough to spot one of the world’s tiniest frogs, the Monte Iberia Eleuth.

BARACOA

Cuba’s oldest and most isolated town hugs a beautiful bay with a white-sand beach. It’s backed by a flat-topped mountain called El Yunque (The Anvil).

PARQUE BACONAO

There are nearly 2,000 different types of flora, some rare bats, and spiders found here. Oh, and dozens of life-sized models of dinosaurs!

ISCHIGUALASTO

Ancient rock formations dot this barren provincial park, also known as the Valley of the Moon!



TAFÍ DEL VALLE MENHIRES

Los Menhires Archaeological Park is home to 50 carved standing stones called megaliths that are almost 3,000 years old!

BOLIVIA



CAMPO DEL CIELO METEORITE FIELD

These craters are believed to have been caused by a large iron-based meteorite that broke up as it entered the Earth's atmosphere.

BRASIL



IGUAZÚ FALLS

The Iguazú Falls are the largest system of waterfalls in the world and are on Argentina's border with Brazil.



IBERA WETLANDS

This is the second-largest wetland in the world—look out for anacondas, jaguars, capybaras, caiman, and much more!



BORGES MEMORIAL MAZE

Located in the grounds of Finca Los Alamos, this modern hedge maze was designed in honor of the famous author Jorge Luis Borges.

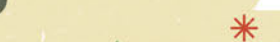


THERMAL BATHS OF VILLAVICIENCIO

Jump into the mineral springs at Villaviciencio, which apparently have healing properties.

SALINAS GRANDES

This huge salt flat shines bright in the sun! It's more than 13,000 feet above sea level and you're likely to see llamas.



CÓRDOBA

MENDOZA

ROSARIO

URUGUAY

GAUCHOS

Gauchos did the hard work of herding and protecting cattle, and became famous as Argentina's very own cowboys.



ACONCAGUA

At roughly 23,000 feet tall, this is the tallest mountain in the Southern Hemisphere!



LAGUNA DEL DIAMANTE

This beautiful but toxic lake is home to flamingos. The nearby volcano casts a reflection on the lake that makes it look like a diamond!



FLORALIS GENÉRICA

This metal sculpture of a flower in Buenos Aires is designed to open in the mornings and close again in the evening.



PACIFIC OCEAN

BUTCH CASSIDY'S CABIN

Butch Cassidy was an American Wild West criminal who fled to Argentina, and settled down for a while in this cabin.



NAHUEL HUAPI LAKE

Hit the lake for kayaking and fishing. This glacial lake might be a little chilly for swimming!



CAVE OF HANDS

This network of caves has stenciled handprints and paintings on the walls that are about 10,000 years old.



BOSQUES PETRIFICADOS DE JARAMILLO NATIONAL PARK

An ancient conifer forest became covered in the ash from the volcanic eruptions that saw the Andes ranges form—turning remnants of the forest to stone.



VALDÉS PENINSULA

Check out this large coastal nature reserve with World Heritage status, home to orcas, seals, sea lions, and whales.

ATLANTIC OCEAN

TIERRA DEL FUEGO

This chain of islands is made up of mountains, glaciers, and fjords—you could explore some of it from a sea kayak!



USHUAIA

ANTARCTIC CRUISE

Jump on a ship from Ushuaia, the most popular starting point for cruises to Antarctica, and prepare to see some icebergs.



MUSEO DEL FIN DEL MUNDO

Take a tour through the history of the land at the end of the world—shipping, whaling, and historic photos of the region and its people.



KEY FACTS		IN UNITY AND FREEDOM	
CAPITAL Buenos Aires	MONEY Argentine peso	NATION CODE AR	
LARGEST CITIES Buenos Aires Córdoba Rosario Mendoza	NAMED FOR After the Spanish arrived, the land became legendary for its wealth of silver	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE Spanish	
POPULATION 42,782,320	FLOWER Erythrina	BIRD Rufous hornero	



CHE GUEVARA
1928–1967
Guevara was a doctor, writer and revolutionary who helped Fidel Castro overthrow Cuba's military dictatorship.



LIONEL MESSI
B.1987
Messi is considered one of the best soccer players in the world and has scored more goals than any other Argentinian.



JORGE LUIS BORGES
1899–1986
Borges was an author and poet who influenced many of the greatest writers with his innovative style.



DIEGO MARADONA
B.1960
Perhaps the most famous name in soccer history, Maradona led Argentina to World Cup victory in 1986.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF SILVER

Argentina is dazzlingly bright, and it's not just silver you'll find here. Argentina is home to some of the world's tallest mountains, great icy regions, long winding coastlines, the incredible Iguazú Falls, and beautiful contemporary cities. And a trip to the southern tip of this carrot-shaped country will have you within a snowball's throw of the Antarctic!

People (or at least, our distant relatives) have lived in this part of South America for 3 million years. Argentina is a country full of natural wonders and a dizzying range of wildlife. You'll love the llamas, jaguars, and capybaras.

The capital, Buenos Aires, is a bright, colorful, and modern city where you can always find something exciting to do. Maybe discover some of the delicious street food, like choripán, or empanadas, or maybe learn the great dance invented here—the tango!



EVA PERÓN
1919–1952

Actor and activist Eva Perón was married to President Juan Perón and was known as the spiritual leader of the country.

MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

c.1400s–1530: The Incas arrive in the lands that will become Argentina.

1516: Juan Diaz de Solis is the first European to visit these Incan lands, searching for gold.

1536: The city of Buenos Aires is founded by Pedro de Mendoza. The city was abandoned and re-founded in 1580.

1810: The first government of Argentina is formed.

1816: Argentina declares independence from Spain.

1853: Argentina becomes a republic with the launch of its constitution.

1944: The San Juan earthquake leaves a third of the population homeless.

1946: Juan Perón becomes president.

1947: Argentinian women get the right to vote.

1978: Argentina hosts and wins the FIFA World Cup.

1982: The Falklands War with the UK takes place.

2013: Argentina-born Jorge Mario Bergoglio becomes Catholic Pope Francis.

ARGENTINA



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

1500: Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral arrives and claims the region for Portugal.

1542: Spanish conquistador Francisco de Orellana completes the first navigation of the Amazon River.

1654: After a brief occupation by Dutch forces, Portugal fights back and claims ownership of Brazil.

1727: The first coffee bush is planted at Para in the north of the country. Brazil will go on to be the biggest coffee producer in the world.

18th to 19th centuries: Millions of Africans are brought by force to Brazil to be sold as slaves and made to work on the coffee plantations.

1815: Brazil changes from being a Portuguese colony to a member country of Portugal's united kingdom.

1822: Brazil breaks ties with Portugal and declares independence.

1888: Slavery is abolished, the last country in the Western world to do so.

1889–1891: The monarchy is overthrown in a military coup and Brazil becomes a republic.

1917: Brazil joins World War I on the side of the Allies.

1958: Brazil wins the FIFA World Cup for the first time.

2010: Dilma Rousseff is the first woman to be elected president of Brazil.

BRAZIL



PELÉ
B.1940

Of all Brazil's soccer heroes, Pelé is thought by many to have been the best player in the history of the game.



GISELE BÜNDCHEN
B.1980

Winning her first modeling competition aged 13, Bündchen has become one of Brazil's most famous faces.



MARTA VIEIRA DA SILVA
B.1986

Soccer stars don't get much bigger than this! She was FIFA's player of the year five years in a row!

AMAZON RIVER DOLPHINS

These pink-colored dolphins have the biggest brains of all dolphin species!

AMAZON RAIN FOREST

If the Amazon rain forest was its own country, it would be one of the largest in the world at 2 million square miles.

MEETING OF WATERS, MANAUS

The sandy-colored Rio Solimoes and the dark Rio Negro, converge here... but they refuse to mix! They continue their two-tone path for 4 miles.

PANTANAL

This is the largest wetland on the planet and has the biggest concentration of caiman anywhere—more than 10 million!

BOLIVIA

PERU

PACIFIC OCEAN

BONITO REGION

You can go snorkeling, caving, and swimming in this tropical wonderland. Look out for macaws, monkeys, capybaras, and marsh deer on your trip!

IGUAZÚ FALLS

This waterfall system on Brazil's border with Argentina is nearly 2 miles wide and is made up of 275 waterfalls!

PARAGUAY



SÃO MIGUEL DAS MISSÕES

These ruins were once home to Jesuit missionaries and the local Indigenous population they were trying to convert.

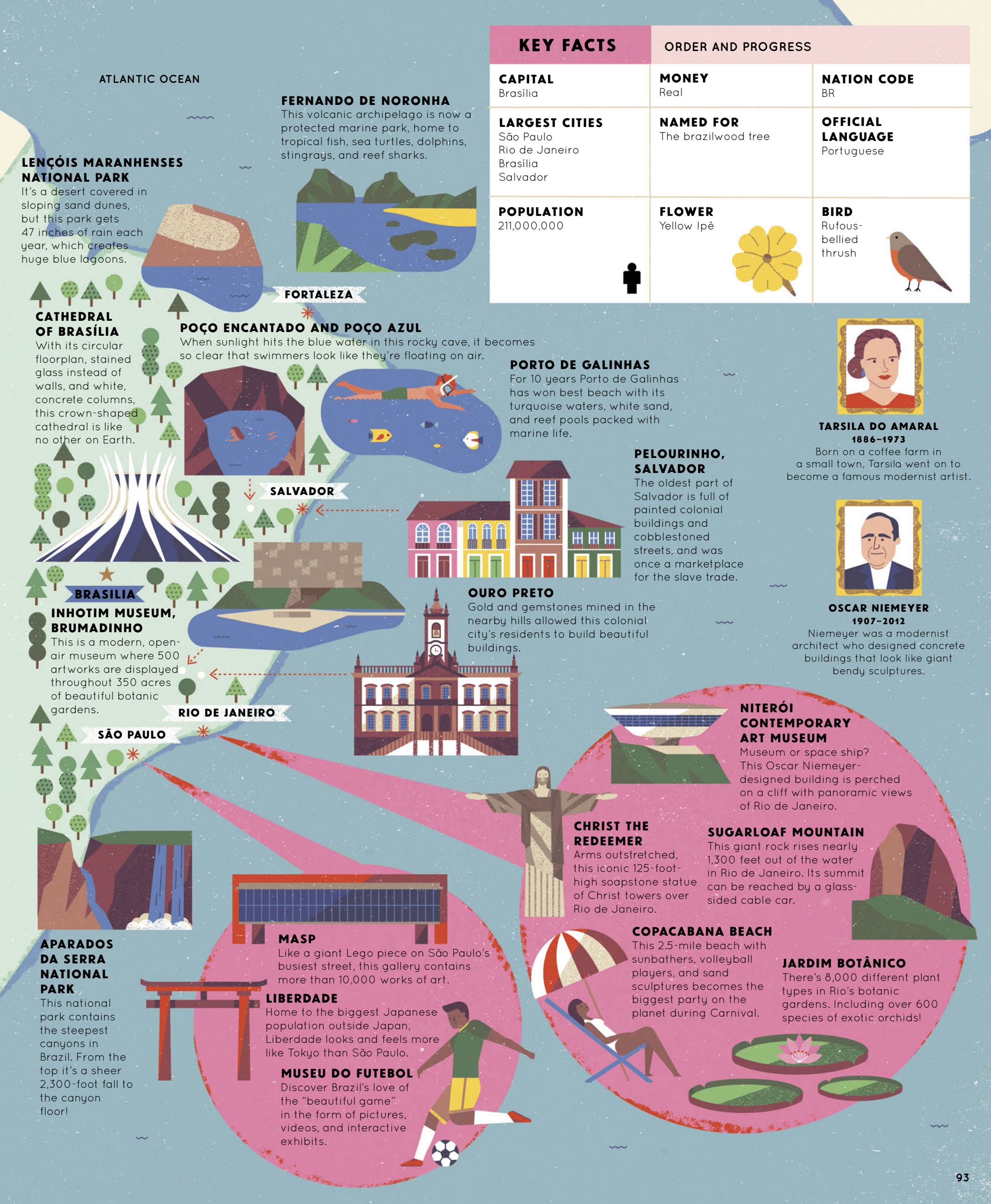
URUGUAY

ARGENTINA

WELCOME TO A SHOWCASE OF NATURE'S GREATEST HITS

From wildlife to wild street parties, Brazil has it all! This land of jaw-dropping natural beauty is home to the world's largest rain forest and the second-largest river, both known as the Amazon—no wonder that over 150,000 species of plants and animals can be found here. Jaguars, pumas, sloths, armadillos, tapirs, toucans, and over 75 species of monkey are just some of the wonderful wildlife you can see in Brazil. And it's not just rain forest and rivers that can be found here—there are waterfalls, wetlands, mountains, sand dunes, beaches, and blue lagoons too.

As well as being famous for its natural wonders, Brazil hosts an enormous street party called Carnival. At Carnival, you'll see people in colorful costumes dancing on elaborately decorated floats that parade through the city. When Brazilians aren't kicking their heels up at Carnival, you're likely to see crowds flocking to the spectacular beaches like Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana or cheering wildly at a soccer game.



ATLANTIC OCEAN

FERNANDO DE NORONHA

This volcanic archipelago is now a protected marine park, home to tropical fish, sea turtles, dolphins, stingrays, and reef sharks.

FORTALEZA

POÇO ENCANTADO AND POÇO AZUL

When sunlight hits the blue water in this rocky cave, it becomes so clear that swimmers look like they're floating on air.

SALVADOR

PORTO DE GALINHAS

For 10 years Porto de Galinhas has won best beach with its turquoise waters, white sand, and reef pools packed with marine life.

PELOURINHO, SALVADOR

The oldest part of Salvador is full of painted colonial buildings and cobblestoned streets, and was once a marketplace for the slave trade.

OURO PRETO

Gold and gemstones mined in the nearby hills allowed this colonial city's residents to build beautiful buildings.

RIO DE JANEIRO

SÃO PAULO

NITERÓI CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM

Museum or space ship? This Oscar Niemeyer-designed building is perched on a cliff with panoramic views of Rio de Janeiro.

CHRIST THE REDEEMER

Arms outstretched, this iconic 125-foot-high soapstone statue of Christ towers over Rio de Janeiro.

SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN

This giant rock rises nearly 1,300 feet out of the water in Rio de Janeiro. Its summit can be reached by a glass-sided cable car.

COPACABANA BEACH

This 2.5-mile beach with sunbathers, volleyball players, and sand sculptures becomes the biggest party on the planet during Carnival.

JARDIM BOTÂNICO

There's 8,000 different plant types in Rio's botanic gardens. Including over 600 species of exotic orchids!

MASP

Like a giant Lego piece on São Paulo's busiest street, this gallery contains more than 10,000 works of art.

LIBERDADE

Home to the biggest Japanese population outside Japan, Liberdade looks and feels more like Tokyo than São Paulo.

MUSEU DO FUTEBOL

Discover Brazil's love of the "beautiful game" in the form of pictures, videos, and interactive exhibits.

APARADOS DA SERRA NATIONAL PARK

This national park contains the steepest canyons in Brazil. From the top it's a sheer 2,300-foot fall to the canyon floor!

CATHEDRAL OF BRASÍLIA

With its circular floorplan, stained glass instead of walls, and white, concrete columns, this crown-shaped cathedral is like no other on Earth.

INHOTIM MUSEUM, BRUMADINHO

This is a modern, open-air museum where 500 artworks are displayed throughout 350 acres of beautiful botanic gardens.

LENÇÓIS MARANHENSES NATIONAL PARK

It's a desert covered in sloping sand dunes, but this park gets 47 inches of rain each year, which creates huge blue lagoons.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Brasília

LARGEST CITIES

São Paulo
Rio de Janeiro
Brasília
Salvador

POPULATION

211,000,000

ORDER AND PROGRESS

MONEY

Real

NAMED FOR

The brazilwood tree

FLOWER

Yellow Ipê

NATION CODE

BR

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Portuguese

BIRD

Rufous-bellied thrush



TARSILA DO AMARAL
1886–1973

Born on a coffee farm in a small town, Tarsila went on to become a famous modernist artist.



OSCAR NIEMEYER
1907–2012

Niemeyer was a modernist architect who designed concrete buildings that look like giant bendy sculptures.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

8000 BC: Human beings are living in the Ancash region of Peru, apparently farming crops.

900–200 BC: Chavin culture develops; the people construct a temple complex at Chavin de Huantar.

200 BC–AD 600: The Nazca culture creates the mysterious Nazca Lines, patterns and drawings of animals best seen from the air.

100 BC–AD 700: Moche culture rises to power. Their rulers are entombed at Huaca Rajada in Sipán.

1200: The Incas begin to absorb small tribes in the Cusco area under the leadership of Manco Capac.

1460: The ninth Inca, Pachacutec, builds the magnificent Machu Picchu.

1533: Civil war breaks out between the Inca empires and the civilization is destroyed.

1534–1543: Spanish conquistadors invade Cusco; Lima becomes the first capital of this new colonial government.

1810–1824: Peruvians wage a war of independence against the Spanish, clinching victory at the Battle of Ayacucho in 1824.

1879: Chile declares war on Peru and Bolivia.

1948–2000: Peru's political leadership seesaws between military coups and free elections.

1998: A peace treaty is made with Ecuador, ending a long-running dispute between the two countries.

2007: A huge 7.9 magnitude earthquake hits Pisco province, destroying 85% of the city's buildings.

2010: Novelist Mario Varga Llosa receives the Nobel Prize in Literature.



**PACHACUTEC
INCA YUPANQUI**
C. 1418–1471

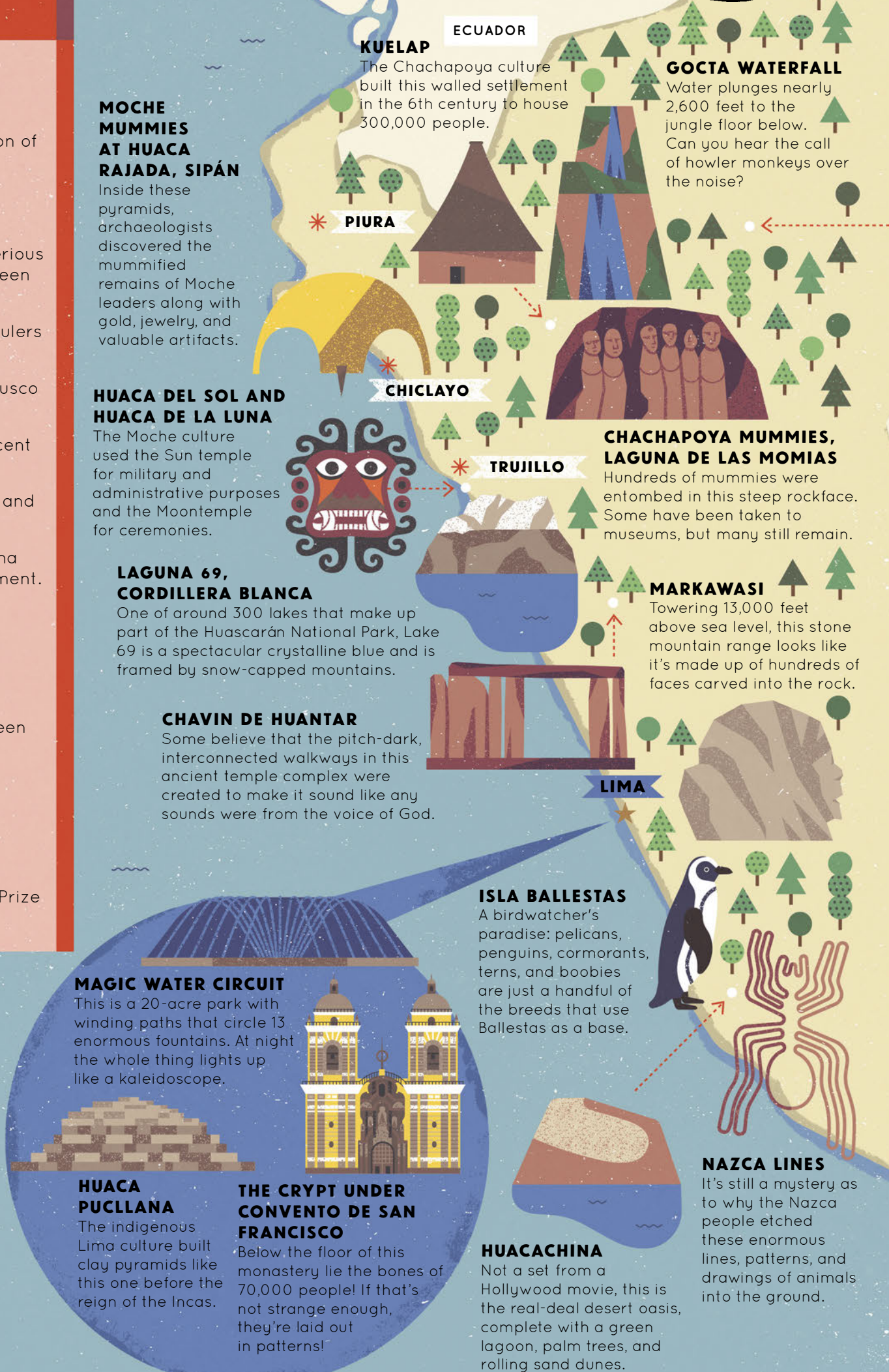
This powerful Inca ruler expanded the Kingdom of Cusco and founded Machu Picchu.



LADY OF CAO
C. AD 420–450

Mummified 1,700 years ago, her body is covered in tattoos and she wears a gold crown, leading archaeologists to believe she was a powerful Moche priestess.

PERU





MARIO VARGAS LLOSA
B.1936

Peru's most famous writer, Vargas Llosa won the Nobel Prize in 2010. He's also known for being a politician, journalist, and professor.



DORIS GIBSON PARRA DEL RIEGO
1910–2008

During a time when women were expected to maintain the family home, Doris Gibson started up a magazine that would go on to be one of Peru's most successful.



RAMÓN CASTILLA
1797–1867

Castilla was a Peruvian president who abolished slavery; he also worked to build schools and improve transport.

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF ANCIENT CULTURES AND NATURAL WONDERS

The sights of Peru defy imagination—the country is home to a large part of the world's biggest rain forest, the second-highest mountain range, ancient cultures, mountaintop temples, gigantic canyons, desert oases, the highest navigable lake on Earth, and mysterious lines carved into the ground that are perhaps thousands of years old (and best seen from the air).

The rich and powerful Inca culture dominated Peru for hundreds of years and left countless ancient ruins as evidence of its presence, but there were many indigenous cultures that existed before them, like the Moche culture, who buried their dead in pyramids with precious artifacts. In more recent times, Spanish conquistadors colonized the country, building churches and introducing the Spanish language. Peru's cities tell the story of these ancient cultures and colonization, and you'll find cathedrals built on the ruins of temples.

In South America's third-largest country, be prepared to encounter spectacular landscapes, fascinating ancient cultures, prehistoric sites, unusual wildlife, and unique cuisine. Word of warning, the humble guinea pig is something of a national dish—you might want to check before you chomp.

PACAYA-SAMIRIA NATIONAL RESERVE

Taking a dip in one of the world's most magnificent rivers becomes a truly magical experience if you manage to spot a Peruvian manatee.

IQUITOS

BRAZIL

MACHU PICCHU

This Inca citadel, built high in the Andean Mountains over 500 years ago, is one of the most famous archaeological sites in the world.

PISAC MARKET

This bustling craft market is a great place to buy handmade textiles, jewelry, and toys, as well as sampling local delicacies like roasted "cuy" (guinea pig!).

OLLANTAYTAMBO

Five-hundred-year-old Inca ruins surround this Sacred Valley village.

CUSCO

COLCA CANYON

This gigantic canyon is twice as deep as the Grand Canyon in the US; giant Andean condors can be seen coasting on updrafts.

AREQUIPA

SILLUSTANI

These cylindrical structures look like watchtowers, but they're prehistoric tombs once used by the Qulla people.

LAKE TITICACA

The Incas believed that this lake was the birthplace of the sun, so there are many ancient ruins around its banks.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL

Lima

LARGEST CITIES

Lima
Arequipa
Trujillo
Chiclayo
Piura
Iquitos

POPULATION

32,510,000

FIRM AND HAPPY FOR THE UNION

MONEY

Sol

NATION CODE

PE

NAMED FOR

A local ruler, Birú, who was encountered by Spanish explorers in the early 16th century

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Spanish, and co-official languages including Quechua and Aymara

FLOWER

Cantuta

BIRD

Andean cock-of-the-rock

KORIKANCHA (SUN TEMPLE) AND CHURCH OF SANTO DOMINGO

Korikancha was once the Inca's tribute to the Sun god, lined with gold sheets. However, it was destroyed by Spanish conquistadors who built the Church of Santo Domingo on the ruins.

PLAZA DE ARMAS

The city's central square is lined with restaurants, coffee shops, and bars. In the middle stands a huge statue of the Inca ruler Pachacutec.

INTI RAYMI FESTIVAL

A colorful Inca festival held every year during winter solstice to celebrate the coming of the sun. It's held in the temple ruins of Sacsayhuaman.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

14000 BC: Nomadic tribes are living in the area that is now Chile.

8000–1000 BC: The Chinchorro tribe becomes the dominant civilization. They begin farming and fishing.

AD 200: The Mapuche people start to emerge as the leading tribe in the area.

c.1475: Incas invade northern Chile and push south until they're stopped by the Mapuche at the Battle of the Maule.

1520: Portuguese explorer Magellan becomes the first European to see Chile when he sails around the southern tip.

1540–1541: Pedro de Valdivia claims Chile for Peru (which is under Spanish rule); he becomes the governor of Chile and establishes Santiago.

1807–1818: Spain is conquered by France, so Chile takes its chance to declare independence. Spanish troops and Chilean independence fighters battle it out until the Spanish resistance is overpowered.

1850s: Mapuche tribes in the south begin a series of rebellions against the government. They are eventually quashed.

1949: Women are given the right to vote (men were granted the same right 24 years earlier).

1973: General Augusto Pinochet leads a military coup to overthrow the government. He establishes a brutal dictatorship where his opponents are persecuted or killed.

2002–2004: Chile signs trade agreements with the European Union, United States, and South Korea.

2010: Thirty-three miners are trapped underground in Copiapó for 69 days before they are all rescued!

2014: After becoming the first woman to be Chile's president in 2006, Michelle Bachelet becomes the first woman to be reelected.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL
Santiago

LARGEST CITIES
Santiago
Valparaíso
Concepción
Puente Alto
Antofagasta

POPULATION
18,950,000



BY RIGHT OR MIGHT

MONEY
Chilean peso

NAMED FOR
From the indigenous Mapuche word *chilli*, meaning "where the land ends" or "the deepest point of the Earth."

FLOWER
Chilean bellflower



NATION CODE
CL

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Chilean Spanish, and indigenous languages including Mapudungun

BIRD
Andean condor



RAPA NUI (EASTER ISLAND)

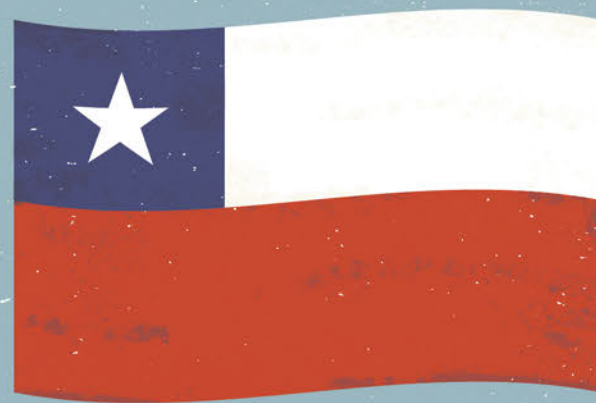
Situated in Polynesia, Chile claimed the island in 1888. On it they found over 900 enormous stone statues with oversized heads known as moai.

GET TO KNOW A LAND OF GLACIERS AND GEYSERS

Measuring 2,600 miles in length along the west coast of the South American continent but only 217 miles across at its widest point, Chile is the narrowest country on Earth. Despite Chile's skinny shape it doesn't scrimp on amazing sights, cultural cities, fascinating history, or mind-blowing natural wonders. The southernmost tip of the country is the jumping-off point for Antarctica, while in the north, in the Atacama Desert (the driest place on the planet), you can walk through a landscape that is more moon-like than anything on the Earth. From desert sands to multiple active volcanoes and geothermal fields packed with geysers, snowfields, and coastal caves carved from marble to mining ghost towns and creeping glaciers, Chile packs a world of beauty within its borders.

Chile's indigenous peoples, the Mapuche, have inhabited southern Chile for over 2,000 years and have fought hard to retain their culture, languages, and land; today they make up nearly 10% of the Chilean population. Chile was conquered by Spain in the 16th century and remained under Spanish rule until declaring independence in 1818. Despite conquests and civil wars, Chileans are fiercely proud of their country and it is one of the most beautiful countries in South America.

CHILE





PABLO NERUDA
1904–1973

Neruda's father wanted him to study math and become a teacher, but he had other plans. He began writing poetry and went on to win the Nobel Prize for literature in 1971.



RODOLFO AMANDO PHILIPPI
1808–1904

Philippi was a paleontologist, botanist, and zoologist who described three new species of South American lizards.

HAND OF THE DESERT

As if mother nature hadn't made the Atacama Desert strange enough, someone decided to add an enormous stone hand rising from the sand.

RECORD-BREAKING SWIMMING POOL

A giant 20-acre pool in Algarrobo cost over \$1 billion to construct and over \$2 million a year to keep running.

ROBINSON CRUSOE ISLAND

The true story of a young man marooned on this island for four years and four months with only a musket, a knife, a Bible, and some tools, inspired the famous book.

LA ARAUCANÍA

This is the best place to get to know the ancient culture of the Mapuche people, including their food, music, and intricate jewelry-making techniques.

TERMAS GEOMETRICAS, PANGUIPULLI

This series of naturally occurring hot springs are hidden deep in a lush forest; each of the 17 pools are connected by red wooden walkways.

CHILEAN LAKE DISTRICT

Full of national parks, forested reserves, and, of course, lakes, it's also possible to ski on the slopes of active volcanoes.

CHIOLOE ISLAND

The largest of Chile's offshore islands is home to the world's smallest deer, the pudú.

GREY GLACIER, TORRES DEL PAINE NATIONAL PARK

Part of the Southern Patagonian Ice Field, this glacier is 4 miles wide and 100 feet high. It occasionally carves off huge icebergs into the Grey Lake.

LOS PINGÜINOS NATURAL MONUMENT

The Magdalena Island in the Strait of Magellan has no human inhabitants but thousands of, you guessed it, penguins.

LAKE CHUNGARA, LAUCA NATIONAL PARK

On a clear, still day this lake reflects the snow-capped peak of the Parinacota volcano. You'll find llamas and alpacas grazing at its edge.

THE HUMBERSTONE AND SANTA LAURA SALTPEETER WORKS

The discovery of synthetic nitrate for gunpowder turned these sodium nitrate mines into ghost towns.

ANTOFAGASTA

ARGENTINA

OJOS DEL SALADO

This is the highest point in Chile and the highest active volcano in the world, at 23,000 feet.

ELQUI VALLEY

High elevation and cloud-free nights make this one of the best places on the planet to stargaze.

VALPARAÍSO

SANTIAGO

PUENTE ALTO

CONCEPCIÓN

VILLARRICA VOLCANO, PUCON

Thin plumes of smoke snake out of this active volcano. But don't let that stop you venturing into some of the only accessible volcanic caves on Earth.

PUMALIN PARK

An American billionaire bought the land that is now Pumalin Park in 1991 to ensure the preservation of the glaciers, volcanoes, rain forests, lakes, and rivers it contains.

QUEULAT HANGING GLACIER

One of Chile's many glaciers, this one has the particular distinction of perching precariously over the edge of a cliff.

CAVERNAS DE MARMOL, LAKE CARRERA

Waves lapping at this marble peninsula have created hollows with swirling patterns on cave walls. The bright blue of the water lights up the caves on a sunny day.

ATLANTIC OCEAN

VALLE DE LA LUNA (MOON VALLEY)

There are parts of the Atacama Desert that have never seen rain, which has created landscapes that look more like the Moon than Earth.

TATIO GEYSERS

Watch where you step, there are over 80 geysers in this geothermal field that shoot up steam and hot water.

PARQUE QUINTA NORMAL

Come to this park and go paddle boating. The creepiest sight is the 170-year-old crumbling greenhouse (or is it a ghost house?).

CERRO SAN CRISTÓBAL

For the best views over Chile's capital city, hike to the mountain peak of Cerro San Cristóbal and then jump on a cable car to get down.

MUSEUM OF MEMORY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

This museum commemorates those who disappeared during the dark years of Pinochet's dictatorship.



GABRIELA MISTRAL
1889–1957

Mistral was the first Latin American to win a Nobel Prize for literature. She won in 1945.



MARIO HAMUY
B.1960

Hamuy is an astronomer who studies supernovae, also known as shooting stars. He even has an asteroid named after him.



CHINCHORRO MUMMIES
7020–5050 BC

Egyptian mummies get all the attention, but the Chinchorro mummies, in the north of Chile, are the oldest mummies on the planet by at least 2,000 years.

TIERRA DEL FUEGO

The southernmost tip of the South American continent is claimed by both Chile and Argentina and is used by anyone looking to pop over to Antarctica.



EVO MORALES
B.1959

President of Bolivia 2006-19, he was the first to come from the country's Indigenous population.



CARMEN ROSA
B.1970

The founder of Bolivia's first indigenous and female-run wrestling foundation, Rosa fights in her traditional dress and is known in her hometown of La Paz as "The Champion."

MADIDI NATIONAL PARK

This park in the Amazon River basin is home to jaguars, ocelots, spectacled bears, giant otters, and pink dolphins.



VALLE DE LAS ANIMAS

These towering spires of mud rock are so unusual that locals once believed that they were the petrified souls of people reaching for the sky.



CABLE CAR

Some cities have trains, trams, and buses, but La Paz goes one better with its cable car public transport system.

VALLE DE LA LUNA

"Moon Valley" is a landscape made of mountains of colored mineral clay that has been eroded into sharp peaks.



THE WITCHES' MARKET

The streets of this strange market are lined with potions, charms, and formulas used to cast spells and call on spirits.

PERU

ISLA DEL SOL

Ancient Incans believed that this was the birthplace of the sun. It's easy to see why when the Sun rises from the horizon over the world's highest lake.



COPACABANA

Red-roofed Copacabana sits pretty on the banks of Lake Titicaca. It's such a beautiful spot that the Incans set up an observatory on the nearby hill.

APACHETA CHUCHURA PASS

This is the highest point on the El Choro trek, an ancient Inca transport trail and one of Bolivia's most popular hiking paths.



BOLIVIAN DEATH ROAD

No prizes for guessing how this road got its name—one side of the road is solid rock and the other is a sheer 2,000-foot drop straight down.



EL ALTO

LA PAZ

TIWANAKU

This archaeological site was once the capital city of an ancient civilization containing nearly 70,000 people.



COCHABAMBA

ORURO

POTOSÍ

Potosí became the biggest city in the Western world after silver was discovered nearby in 1545.



GUEMBE BIOCENTER

This tropical corner of the country is the perfect place for the world's biggest butterfly sanctuary.



SANTA CRUZ DE LA SIERRA

PAMPAS DEL YACUMA

Anacondas, caimans, and capybaras are just a few of the wonderful creatures in this park.



SUCRE

SUCRE

Sucre is known as the White City because of the whitewash covering the buildings in town.



TRAIN CEMETERY

Have you ever wondered what happens to trains when they stop working? It seems as though they all come here.



CERRO RICO

Colombia's "Rich Mountain" is also known as the "mountain that eats men" because of the deadly conditions miners were forced to work under to extract silver.

SALVADOR DALÍ DESERT

Salvador Dalí was famous for a style of painting called "surrealism," and the bizarre landscapes of this desert drew enough comparison with his works that it was named after him.



ARGENTINA



NOEL KEMPPF MERCADO
1924-1986

A pioneering biologist and environmentalist, Mercado was murdered by drug traffickers. The Noel Kempff Mercado National Park is named in his honor.



LIDIA GUEILER TEJADA
1921-2011

Bolivia's first female president, she was the second woman to hold this position in the Americas.



ARTHUR POSNANSKY
1873-1946

Born in Austria, Posnansky became a Bolivian citizen after his archaeological, scientific, and political efforts were recognized. He introduced the first car to Bolivia!

SAJAMA NATIONAL PARK

Volcanoes, thermal springs, the highest forests in the world, and 10,000 miles of mysterious lines etched into the ground, thought to be ancient pilgrimage routes, can be found here.

SALAR DE UYUNI

The world's biggest salt flat was once an enormous lake before it went dry and created this blindingly white landscape.

LAGUNA HEDIONDA

Its name in English means "stinky lake," but that doesn't seem to bother all the flamingos that use it as a stopover on their migration.



ÁRBOL DE PIEDRA

This bizarre formation known as the Stone Tree, has been formed over centuries of sand being whipped by wind against the rock.



SOL DE MAÑANA

Watch the earth bubble and steam in this colorful geyser field dotted with aqua-hued pools.



FROM DESERT TO RAIN FOREST AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN




Once part of the powerful Incan civilization until defeated by Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century, indigenous Bolivians lived under the rule of the Spanish in what was known as Upper Peru until the country became independent in 1825. Bolivia has struggled through political instability, with revolutions, uprisings, and riots, and even as recently as 2019, President Evo Morales was forced to resign his position. But through it all, Bolivia's rich indigenous history has survived, and you can find examples of ancient civilizations all over the country, from burial towers to city ruins and centuries-old pilgrimage routes. Bolivians speak over 35 different languages and are loyal and proud of their heritage. Bolivia's human history and human-made sights are stunning, but it's the natural wonders that make Bolivia a must-see destination.

Of the overabundance of Bolivia's natural wonders, there are some world-beaters—like the highest lake on Earth, Lake Titicaca, and the largest salt lake on the planet, Salar de Uyuni. There are active volcanoes, geyser fields, snow-capped mountains, mountains full of silver, jungles filled with jaguars and ocelots, desert sands with curious rock formations, and we haven't even begun on the cities with their whitewashed buildings, fascinating markets, and busy cable cars. Get to know South America's jewel of a country.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

- 1st century AD:** The Aymara people found the Tiwanaku civilization and build an enormous city.
- 1400s:** Incans expand their empire to include parts of what is now Bolivia.
- 1538:** Spanish forces conquer the area now known as Bolivia; it was called Upper Peru.
- 1545:** Silver is discovered at Cerro Rico in Potosi—it becomes one of the richest silver mines in history.
- 1824–1825:** Simón Bolívar, the Venezuelan freedom fighter, liberates Bolivia from Peru, and becomes the country's first president.
- 1879–84:** Bolivia loses territory to Chile and becomes landlocked in the process.
- 1932:** Bolivia and Paraguay go to war over an area of land believed to be rich in oil. Both sides suffer huge loss of life, and Bolivia loses the war.
- 1952:** The Bolivian Revolution occurs—power shifts from the white ruling class to indigenous communities.
- 1960–1970s:** Bolivia suffers through a series of military coups; the decades are characterized by corruption and human-rights abuses.
- 1990:** Four million acres of rain forest are allocated to indigenous peoples.
- 2006:** Evo Morales becomes the first indigenous Bolivian to be elected president.
- 2019:** Morales resigns amid allegations that he rigged an election. Jeanine Áñez declares herself president.

KEY FACTS		UNITY IS STRENGTH	
CAPITALS Sucre and La Paz	MONEY Boliviano	NATION CODE BO	
LARGEST CITIES Santa Cruz de la Sierra El Alto La Paz Cochabamba Oruro	NAMED FOR Simón Bolívar—the Venezuelan leader in the war of Spanish American independence	OFFICIAL LANGUAGES Spanish and 36 indigenous languages	
	FLOWER Kantuta	BIRD Andean condor	
POPULATION 11,600,000			
			

PARAGUAY

BOLIVIA





MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

9790 BC: Tibitó, north of Bogotá, is the site of the earliest human occupation in Colombia.

AD 1525–1538: The first permanent Spanish settlement is established at Santa Marta; conquistador Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada discovers emeralds and gold in the Andes.

1700s: Spain joins together Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama, and names the huge colony the Viceroyalty of New Granada.

1819: Following Napoleon's defeat of Spain in 1814 and rebellion in the colonies, Colombia gains independence and Simón Bolívar becomes the first Colombian president.

1903: Panama splits from Colombia with the support of the USA, giving the USA control over the Panama Canal.

1948–1958: A civil war between those on the liberal and those on the conservative side of politics breaks out and over 250,000 people are killed.

1984: The country is plagued by violence between powerful drug cartels (associations) and the government.

2000: Colombia receives nearly \$1 billion in aid to help fight drug trafficking and those groups who benefit from the drug trade.

2007: The Nevado del Huila volcano, the highest in Colombia, erupts after being dormant for 500 years.

2012: The government begins peace talks with rebel leaders responsible for the hugely profitable drug trade.

2014: Colombia makes it to the quarter-finals of the FIFA World Cup—the country's best result in history.

2016: The government signs a historic peace deal with rebel forces, ending more than 50 years of drug-related violence.

PARQUE ARVI

Medellin is Colombia's second-largest city. This huge ecological reserve in town lets you walk in the forest and escape the crowds.

FLOWER FESTIVAL

Each year the city blooms for the annual flower festival with parades, pageants, and music concerts to celebrate.

PLAZA BOTERO

Fernando Botero is Colombia's most famous sculptor. He has filled this park with his wonderful creations.



MARÍA CANO
1887–1967

Colombia's first female political leader, Cano fought for basic civil and workers' rights. She was also a respected writer and poet.



SHAKIRA
B.1977

Singer-songwriter Shakira has sold over 140 million albums worldwide and has won more than 400 awards for her music.



CARLOS VALDERRAMA
B.1961

A member of the Colombian national soccer team for 13 years, Valderrama played in 111 international games, scoring 11 times.

CABO SAN JUAN

To see this tropical beach paradise, you need to catch a bus and then walk for 90 minutes.

BARRANQUILLA

CARTAGENA

EL PEÑÓN DE GUATAPÉ, ANTIOQUIA

This rock rises 700 feet out of the ground. It once took five days to climb, before a criss-crossing walkway was added.

MEDELLÍN

LA CUEVA DEL ESPLENDO

Walk inside this mountain cave and be awed by the waterfall cascading from the 30-foot-wide hole in the cave roof.

THE COCORA VALLEY

From the lush green countryside rise the tallest palm trees in the world.

TATACOA DESERT

There are two distinct landscapes in the Tatacoa—jagged peaks of the red desert and the moonscape of the gray desert.

CALI

SAN AGUSTÍN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

Statues of gods and mythical creatures are dotted around this park, making up the largest group of religious monuments in South America.

CAJONA CANYON, LAS DALIAS NATURAL RESERVE

This is a narrow canyon, lined on both sides with tropical rain forest.

COLOMBIA



COLORFUL CITIES AND NATURAL WONDERS

Sitting right at the top of South America, Colombia gets its name from the Italian explorer Christopher Columbus, who led the colonization of the Americas. Before Columbus, the country we know as Colombia was a Spanish colony called New Granada, but before it was any of these things, it was home to the ancient civilizations of the Quimbaya, the Chibcha, and the Kalina. Evidence of these civilizations can still be seen across the country in the form of religious monuments and city ruins.

The human history of Colombia is a fascinating one, but it's fair to say that the country tells its most exciting story through its stunning scenery. Colombia has coastlines along the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, which makes for some beautiful beaches. Away from the coast, you'll find everything from tropical rain forests to snow-capped mountains. You'll encounter enormous rocks (believed to be the oldest on the planet), ancient canyons, rainbow-colored rivers, sky-high palm trees, and waterfalls that flow into underground caves. With topography like this, it won't surprise you that there's some pretty wondrous wildlife here too, like the pint-sized poison dart frog and the stately flamingo. Colombia really does have it all!

TAROA DUNES, GUAJIRA

At the most northerly part of South America, steep sand dunes plunge into the Caribbean waters.

LOS FLAMENCOS SANCTUARY, GUAJIRA

This area has been a wildlife sanctuary for over 40 years. The flocks of flamingos who visit have made it a place to feed and roost.

CIUDAD PERDIDA OF THE TAIRONA PEOPLE

High in the mountains are the thousand-year-old city ruins of the Tairona people. Once lost and abandoned, the site was rediscovered by hunters in 1972.

THE POISON DART FROG, EL CHOCÓ

Deep in the rain forest is where you'll find this colorful little guy. Just remember to look, not touch—his skin is so poisonous it can kill you.

CHICAMOCHA CANYON, SANTANDER

Formed over 30 million years ago, this is the second-largest canyon in the world.

LAS GACHAS, SANTANDER

A clearwater stream runs along this red stone riverbed, filling dozens of circular pools in its path.

BOGOTÁ

LAGUNA NEGRA, GUAVIARE

On a still and clear day, this jungle lake creates a crystal-clear reflection of the sky and surroundings.

NUEVO TOLIMA, GUAVIARE

Created thousands of years ago, these rock paintings are the work of indigenous Indians.

CAÑO CRISTALES

At a certain time of year, there's a species of plant that blooms under the water, making the river bright red with spots of green and yellow.

MAIPURES RAPIDS OF THE ORINOCO RIVER

The Orinoco River tumbles over rocks that have been around since before the continents of Africa and America split.

MAVECURE HILLS, GUAINÍA

These three rock mountains are some of the oldest on the planet and indigenous tribes believed they were houses for the gods.

BOLÍVAR SQUARE

At the heart of the city, this public square has been used as a circus ground and even a bullfighting ring.

MONSERRATE

The mountain of Monserrate is topped with a whitewashed church that towers over Colombia's capital city.

GOLD MUSEUM

Inside Bogotá's Gold Museum you'll find the world's largest collection of gold artifacts, sacred to Colombia's indigenous cultures.

BRAZIL



GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ
1927–2014

A novelist, screenwriter, and journalist, Márquez is Colombia's most famous author. He won the Nobel Prize in 1982 and created the writing style known as magic realism.



ADRIANA OCAMPO
B.1955

Planetary geologist and a science program manager at NASA in the USA, Ocampo studies the impact (craters) created by asteroids.

KEY FACTS

CAPITAL
Bogotá

LARGEST CITIES
Bogotá
Medellín
Cali
Barranquilla
Cartagena

POPULATION
50,340,000

LIBERTY AND ORDER

MONEY
Colombian peso

NAMED FOR
Christopher Columbus—the explorer who began the colonization of the Americas

FLOWER
Cattleya trianae orchid



NATION CODE
CO

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
Spanish and English

BIRD
Andean condor



AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND



WELCOME TO THE GREAT LANDS DOWN UNDER

Australia is an enormous island nation, but did you know it's the smallest continent on Earth? It's home to the oldest continuous culture in the world—the Aboriginal people. You can see some of their stories in the ancient rock paintings. In New Zealand, the history of the Māori is proudly brought to life at Wellington's Te Papa Tongarewa museum.

Australia and New Zealand have plenty going on—museums, striking buildings, and beautiful parks, but it's the unique wildlife, like kiwis and kangaroos, and the extraordinary wilderness that wows the world. From beaches and mountain ranges, deserts to glaciers, rain forests to wetlands—you name it, they've got it!



NELLIE MELBA
1861–1931

In the early 20th century, there was no singer more famous than Nellie, who was an amazing operatic soprano.



EDITH COWAN
1861–1932

A tireless campaigner for women's and children's rights, Cowan was the first Australian woman to serve as a member of parliament.



ALBERT NAMATIIRA
1902–1959

An activist for Indigenous rights, Namatjira was a gifted artist and the first Indigenous person to receive Australian citizenship.

KAKADU NATIONAL PARK

This huge park is home to more than 10,000 crocodiles and incredible ancient rock art!

DAINTREE NATIONAL PARK

This tropical rain forest is very hot, but don't be tempted to swim in the Daintree River—it's full of crocodiles!

GREAT BARRIER REEF

This amazing reef is about the same size as Italy! Lots of room for the 1,500 different species of fish!

KANGAROO ISLAND

This island off South Australia is serious about wildlife conservation. You'll see wombats, koalas, kangaroos, possums, sea lions, and penguins.

MELBOURNE

In Australia's second-largest city, you'll find its biggest sports stadium—the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). It can fit over 100,000 cheering fans!

BRISBANE

SYDNEY

CANBERRA

WELLINGTON

New Zealand's capital shows off the awesomely enormous Te Papa Tongarewa museum which walks visitors through NZ's rich history.

KEY FACTS

AUSTRALIA: ADVANCE AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND: ONWARD

CAPITALS

Australia: Canberra
New Zealand: Wellington

MONEY

Australian dollar
New Zealand dollar

NATION CODE

AU
NZ

LARGEST CITIES

Australia:
Sydney,
Melbourne
New Zealand:
Auckland,
Christchurch

NAMED FOR

Australia: The Latin Terra Australis ("south land")
New Zealand: The Dutch province of Zeeland—Dutch called it Nova Zeelandia

POPULATION

Australia: 24,600,000
New Zealand: 4,800,000



OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Australia:
English
New Zealand:
English
and Māori

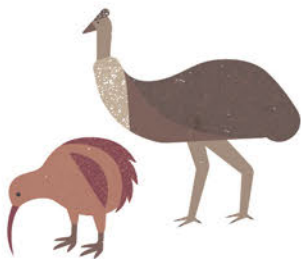
FLOWER

Australia: Golden wattle
New Zealand: Silver fern



BIRD

Australia: Emu
New Zealand: Kiwi



GREAT OCEAN ROAD

Along this coastal road, you'll see dramatic rock formations rising out of the sea.



TASMANIAN DEVILS

These furry creatures are the world's largest carnivorous marsupials, with powerful jaws and a strong bite.

FRANZ JOSEF GLACIER

One of thousands of glaciers in NZ, the Franz Josef has a steep incline that creates beautiful ice caves and crevasses.



MILFORD SOUND

Early Europeans were wrong to call this a sound—it's actually a fjord. The mountains have been split by ancient glaciers.



SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Perched on the edge of Sydney Harbor, the Opera House looks like it could sail away!

BLUE MOUNTAINS

Droplets of eucalyptus oil and water vapor creates the blue haze that gives these mountains their name.

BONDI BEACH

Australia is famous for beautiful beaches, but few are more famous than this stretch of sand in the city's east.



JACINDA ARDERN
B.1980

When Ardern became the New Zealand prime minister in 2017, she also became the youngest-ever female head of state.



MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

AUSTRALIA

65,000 years ago: The first people arrive in Australia and establish what is now the oldest-surviving culture in the world.

AD 1400–1500: Aboriginal people experience their first contact with the outside world and set up trade relations with people from Indonesia.

1768–88: Captain James Cook claims to have discovered Australia, and colonization on behalf of Great Britain begins.

1851: Gold is discovered in Victoria, which attracts thousands of migrants and creates thriving cities.

1901: Australia is proclaimed a commonwealth; parliament is formed, and the first prime minister is voted in.

2000: Sydney hosts the Olympic Games and Cathy Freeman becomes the first Australian Aboriginal to win an individual gold medal.

NEW ZEALAND

1200–1300: Polynesian people discover and begin to settle in New Zealand; they became known as Māori.

1642: Dutch explorer Abel Tasman is the first European to see New Zealand. The coastline is charted by Dutch cartographers.

1700–1800: Captain James Cook becomes the first European to circumnavigate New Zealand—he is followed by other explorers, missionaries, and traders.

1840: Māori chiefs sign the Treaty of Waitangi with the British Crown, making New Zealand part of the British Empire and giving Māori people equal rights with British subjects.

1893: New Zealand is the first country in the world to give women the vote.

1947: New Zealand declares its independence from Great Britain.

2011: An earthquake hits Christchurch, destroying much of the city and killing 1840 people.

2015: The All Blacks become the first team to win the Rugby World Cup twice in a row.

FIJI

MAUNGAKIEKIE (ONE TREE HILL)

This ancient volcanic cone overlooking Auckland city was once home to over 5,000 Māori from the Te Wai o Hua tribe.

SKY TOWER

For a bird's-eye view of NZ's biggest city, travel to the top of the 1,000-foot Sky Tower.

PIHA BEACH

Sink your toes into the black sand on this wild beach, bookended by craggy cliffs.



EDMUND HILLARY
1919–2008

In 1953, Hillary and Nepalese mountaineer Tenzing Norgay, became the first climbers to reach the top of Mount Everest.

TE PUKATEA BAY, ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

There's a walking track from the sandy beach that leads up the headland to an ancient Māori fort.

AUCKLAND

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK

The Māori believed that these volcanic mountains were fierce warriors.

ROTORUA

No, that's not rotten eggs you can smell, it's the sulfide gas coming from the bubbling mud pools around town.

WAITOMO CAVES

The blue illumination in these caves is the result of a chemical reaction between oxygen and thousands of glow worms.

NEW ZEALAND

WELLINGTON

CHRISTCHURCH

KAIKOURA

Make underwater friends when you swim with the dolphins near this South Island town or stay dry and spot the sperm whales.

QUEENSTOWN

If you like skiing or snowboarding, then it doesn't get much better than the runs around Queenstown.



SEARCH AND FIND

Take a look at the pictures below and see if you can remember which country they're from. If you didn't spot them on your first trip around the world, then now is your chance to turn back and take a second look!



SHAMROCK



PINK DOLPHIN



CAVE DRAWINGS



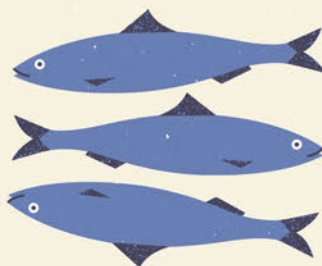
MASK



DAHLIA



HOPOE



ANCHOVIES



ELEPHANT STATUE



PEACE



CLIFF DIVING



POTTERY



DINOSAUR TRACKS



TAPAS



EUCALYPTUS



FROG



BREAD MUSEUM



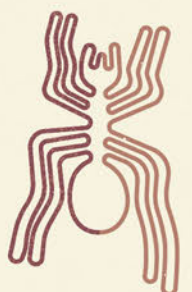
ANCIENT HUT



CAMEMBERT



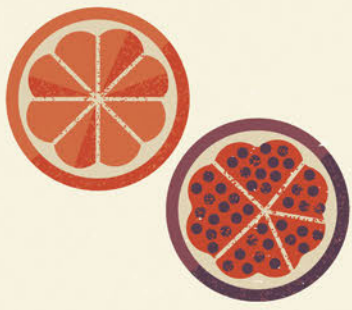
BATHING MONKEY



NAZCA LINES



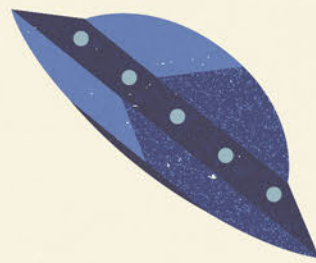
BLOSSOM



FRUIT



ORCHID



UFO



OLIVE OIL



SNAIL



GNOME



ELF SCHOOL



MOSAIC



LEMUR



SAFARI WALK



MOAI



TANNERY



SUNGLASSES



PIRATE CEMETERY



POOPOO LAND



TRAIN CEMETERY



PIZZA



UPSIDE-DOWN HOUSE



GIANT HEAD



PINK BEACH



WINDMILL



RED LAKE



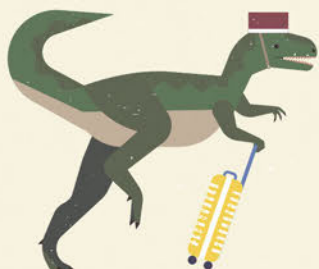
MUMMIFIED HAND



SAPPHIRE MINES



WATERMELON



ROBOT DINOSAUR



FALAFEL



CHOCOLATE CAULDRON



BAMBOO

GLOSSARY

ABHORRENT

Causing disgust or loathing.

AERONAUTICS

The science and design of building and flying aircraft.

AGRICULTURE

Farming.

ALCOVE

Part of a room that is set into the wall.

ALGEBRA

A branch of mathematics that uses letters to represent numbers.

ALGORITHM

A rule or process followed in calculations and problem-solving.

ALPINE

To do with high, mountainous regions.

AMPHITHEATER

A large, open-air theater, especially in the ancient world.

ANNEXE

A small building attached to a larger building.

APARTHEID

A system of separating people, especially along racial lines.

AQUEDUCT

A large, artificial channel used to transport water from one place to another.

ARCHIPELAGO

A group of many islands.

ARCHITECTURE

The study and design of buildings.

ARISTOCRACY

The very upper classes in society.

ARTIFACT

A human-made object, usually with historical significance.

ASTROLOGY

The study of the supposed effect of stars and planets on everyday life.

ASTRONAUT

A person who works on board spacecraft.

ASTRONOMY

The study of stars, planets, space, and the universe.

ATOMIC

To do with atoms, tiny particles that make up everything.

AUDITORIUM

A space for an audience to watch a performance.

AURORA BOREALIS

A natural light-show that occurs in the sky near the North Pole, also called the Northern Lights.

AVALANCHE

Huge amounts of snow and ice falling down a mountainside.

AVANT-GARDE

Art that goes against the mainstream.

BARBARIAN

An uncivilized person, especially in the ancient world.

BARRACKS

A place where soldiers live.

BASILICA

A large, ornate style of church.

BIODIVERSITY

The variety of plant and animal life in a given region.

BIOLOGIST

A person who studies living things.

BIOME

A community of animals and plants living in one area.

BIOSPHERE

A building or human-made area containing an ecosystem.

BLOC

A group of allied countries or political parties.

BOTANY

The study of plants.

BUBONIC

Causing black swellings, called buboes, on the body.

BUREAUCRAT

A person who works in a government department.

CALCIFY

Harden into an element called calcium.

CALDERA

A crater formed in the collapsed mouth of a volcano.

CARTOGRAPHY

The study and making of maps.

CATACOMB

An underground cemetery containing many tombs.

CIRCUMNAVIGATE

Travel around something, especially by boat.

CITADEL

A fortress built on high ground.

CIVIL WAR

A war fought between people from the same country.

COLONY

An area in one country controlled by another.

COMMONWEALTH

An independent country or a group of such countries.

COMPOSER

A person who writes and makes music.

CONQUISTADOR

A Spanish word meaning “conqueror.”

CONSTITUTION

A set of rules for how a country should be governed.

CONVERGE

When several things, especially rivers, meet and become one.

COSMONAUT

Another word for astronaut, used in Eastern Europe.

COUP

A violent uprising against a ruler or government.

CREVASSE

A deep crack in land or ice.

CRUSADES, THE

Christian wars against Muslim lands in the Middle Ages.

CULTIVATE

To grow a crop.

DEFORESTATION

Cutting down trees.

DELTA

A landform at the mouth of a river, caused by a buildup of sand and mud.

DEMOCRACY

A system in which people vote for their preferred leaders or policies.

DERELICT

In poor condition, usually through lack of use.

DICTATORSHIP

A society ruled over by one person with total power.

DOMESTICATE

Tame and train an animal to live with humans.

DROUGHT

A long time without rain, causing a water shortage.

DYKE

A wall built to prevent flooding.

DYNASTY

A series of rulers who each inherited power from the one before, usually a parent.

ENDANGERED

At risk of going extinct.

ENTREPRENEUR

A person who sets up a business.

ENVIRONMENTALISM

Belief that the natural world should be protected and actions taken to do so.

EQUINOX

The date, twice a year, when day and night are of equal length.

ESPLANADE

An open, flat space for walking along a coast.

ESTUARY

A river-mouth that opens into the sea.

EXCAVATION

A dig-site for archaeological remains.

EXTRATERRESTRIAL

Not from Earth.

FAMINE

A severe lack of food.

FEUDALISM

A system in which the upper classes own land that the lower classes work on.

FJORD

An inlet of the sea between tall cliffs.

FREIGHTER

A ship that transports goods.

FRESCO

A painting on a wall or ceiling.

FUMAROLE

Holes near a volcano through which gases escape.

FUNICULAR

A type of lift going up and down a steep hillside.

GENETICIST

A person who studies genes, which are what make each living thing unique.

GENOCIDE

The murder of a very large number of people.

GEODESIC

A building style that uses connected struts to form a dome.

GEOTHERMAL

To do with heat that comes from deep inside the Earth.

GEYSER

A hot spring that, when it boils, sends bursts of water and steam into the air.

GHETTO

A neighborhood mostly occupied by people of one minority group.

GLACIER

A river of ice that moves very slowly.

GORGE

A narrow valley between steep cliffs.

GROTTO

A small cave.

GROVE

A small group of trees.

GUERRILLA

A soldier who fights with a loosely organised group, rather than an army.

GULF
A large area of ocean partially surrounded by land.

GULLY
A ditch made by running water.

HYDRAULIC
To do with movement by a liquid.

INDIGENOUS
Originally from a given place.

KARST
A landscape of jagged rocks, caves, and sinkholes.

KIMONO
A traditional Japanese gown.

LAGOON
An area of saltwater separated from the sea.

MAGMA
Hot, half-fluid, half-solid substance that flows beneath the Earth’s surface.

MARITIME
To do with boats, shipping or the sea in general.

MARSUPIAL
Mammals whose young are carried in the mother’s pouch.

MAUSOLEUM
A grand building that houses a tomb or tombs.

MEDIEVAL
From the Middle Ages, approximately AD 400–1400.

MEGALITH
A large stone that forms part of a monument or structure.

METROPOLIS
A huge city.

MINARET
A tower attached to a mosque, from which Muslims are called to prayer.

MODERNISM
Artistic movement that shunned traditional methods in the beginning of the 20th century.

MONARCHY
A society ruled by a king or queen.

MONASTERY
A place where monks live.

MONSOON
A season of heavy rainfall in parts of Asia.

MOSAIC
Artwork made of tiny pieces of glass or stone.

NATURALIST
A person who studies the natural world.

NEOLITHIC
From the late Stone Age.

NEUROLOGIST
A person who studies nerves and the nervous system.

NOMAD
A person who moves around without settling in one place.

OBELISK
A tall, narrow standing stone with a pointed top.

OBSERVATORY
A building where telescopes are used to study the sky.

OCCUPATION
A period during which one country’s military is stationed in another country’s territory.

ORANGERY
A greenhouse for growing oranges and other fruits.

OUTRIGGER
A style of boat with floats projecting from both sides.

PEDIATRICIAN
A doctor specializing in helping children.

PAGODA
A tower used as a Hindu or Buddhist temple.

PALEOLITHIC
From the early Stone Age.

PARLIAMENT
A group of people in a democracy who make laws and represent the general public.

PAVILION
A large tent or open-sided building in a park or garden.

PENINSULA
A landform jutting out from the mainland, into a sea or lake.

PETRIFY
Turn to stone.

PHARAOH
What ancient Egyptians called their kings.

PHILOSOPHY
The study of knowledge, reality, and existence.

PILGRIM
A person who journeys to a place sacred to their religion.

PLANETARIUM
A dark room for viewing projections of the stars and planets.

PLANTATION
An estate where crops are grown, especially luxuries like sugar, coffee, and tobacco.

PLATEAU
An area of flat land at the top of a cliff or hill.

PREFECTURE
A district run by a governor or prefect.

PREHISTORIC
From a time before written, historical records.

PROMENADE (VERB)
Walk through a public place to be seen by others.

PROTECTORATE
A state or country controlled and protected by another.

PYRAMID
A building with a large base and pointed top, especially in ancient Egypt.

RAVINE
A very deep, narrow gorge.

REHABILITATION
Restoring a person or animal that is ill or injured to a healthy condition.

RELIC
An important object from an earlier time.

RENAISSANCE
The period from the 14th to the 17th century, during which European arts, sciences, and politics made important progress.

REPUBLIC
A society in which people elect other people to represent and govern them, without a king or queen.

REVOLUTIONARY
A person who supports or brings about a drastic change in government.

RICE PADDY
A flooded field where rice is grown.

SAMURAI
A member of a class of warriors in medieval Japan.

SAVANNA
A flat, grassy plain in hot regions.

SCRIPTURE
The sacred writings of a religion.

SEGREGATION
Keeping one group of people away from another.

SHAMAN
A person thought to have special powers and knowledge of spirits.

SLUICE
An artificial channel used to control the flow of water.

SOPRANO
A singer who sings the highest notes.

SOUND
A small area of sea connecting two larger areas of sea.

SPIT
A long beach extending out to sea.

STALACTITES
Cones of rock hanging from a cave ceiling, formed by dripping water over thousands of years.

STALAGMITES
Cones of rock on a cave floor, formed by water droplets building up over thousands of years.

STORM-SURGE
A rise in sea level due to a storm.

STRAIT
A narrow body of water connecting two other bodies of water.

STUPA
A dome-shaped Buddhist shrine.

SUMO
A form of wrestling from Japan.

SUPERSONIC
Faster than the speed of sound.

TAXIDERMY
Preparing and displaying stuffed animals in a lifelike way.

TERRORISM
The use of violence and fear to achieve political aims.

TOPOGRAPHY
The physical features of a given area.

TOR
A hill or peak.

TURRET
A small tower attached to a fort or castle.

UNIFY
Bring and join together.

WAT
A Buddhist monastery or temple in Southeast Asia.

X-RAY
An invisible wave of energy that can pass through and form images of solid objects.

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