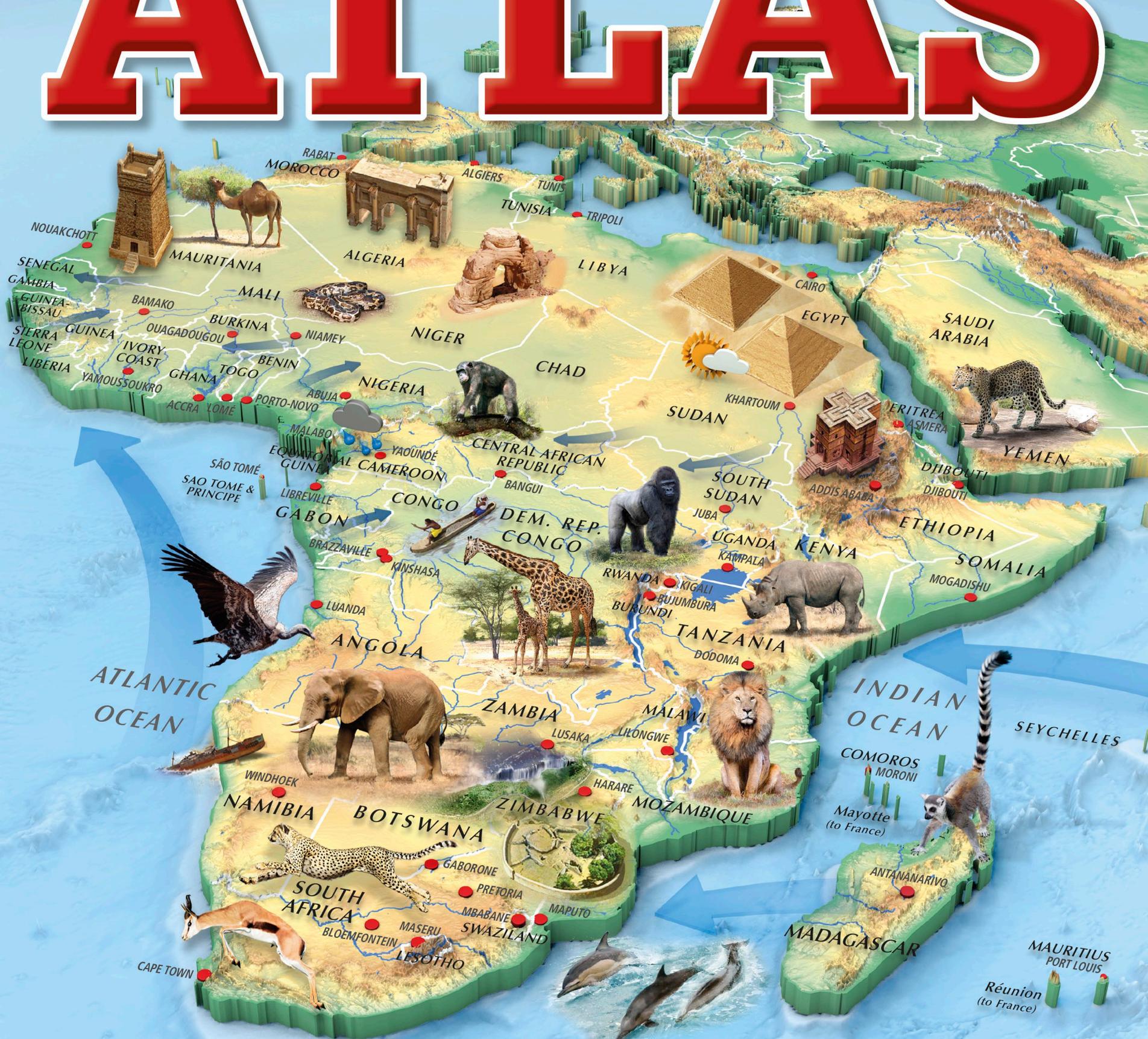




# WHERE ON EARTH?

# ATLAS

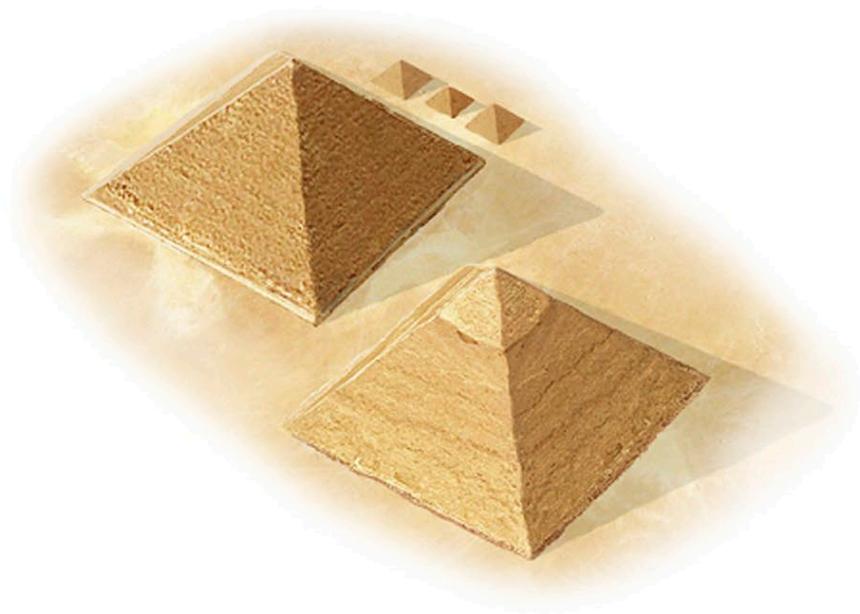


THE WORLD AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE!





 **WHERE ON EARTH?**  
**ATLAS**





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Kangaroo



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The South Pole





# EARLY EARTH

**Under attack**

Rock and debris from space crashed into Earth's surface during its early formation, turning it molten and triggering volcanic activity.

# Early Earth

Earth's formation started shortly after the birth of the Sun, 4.6 billion years ago. A star exploding in nearby space caused a vast amount of interstellar dust to collapse in on itself. This formed our Sun, and over time the rest of the surrounding debris clumped together into planets. As these grew larger, their steadily increasing gravity pulled them into spheres. One of these was our planet, Earth, a rocky ball with a molten metal core, and a thin shell, called a crust, at its surface.

The layered interior structure of Earth emerged early in its evolution. Heat from Earth's molten core forced the crust, which is made up of large slabs of rock called tectonic plates, to move constantly. As these plates shunted around and crashed into each other, they caused earthquakes and fiery volcanoes, formed mountain ranges and entire continents, and helped create the conditions in which life could emerge.

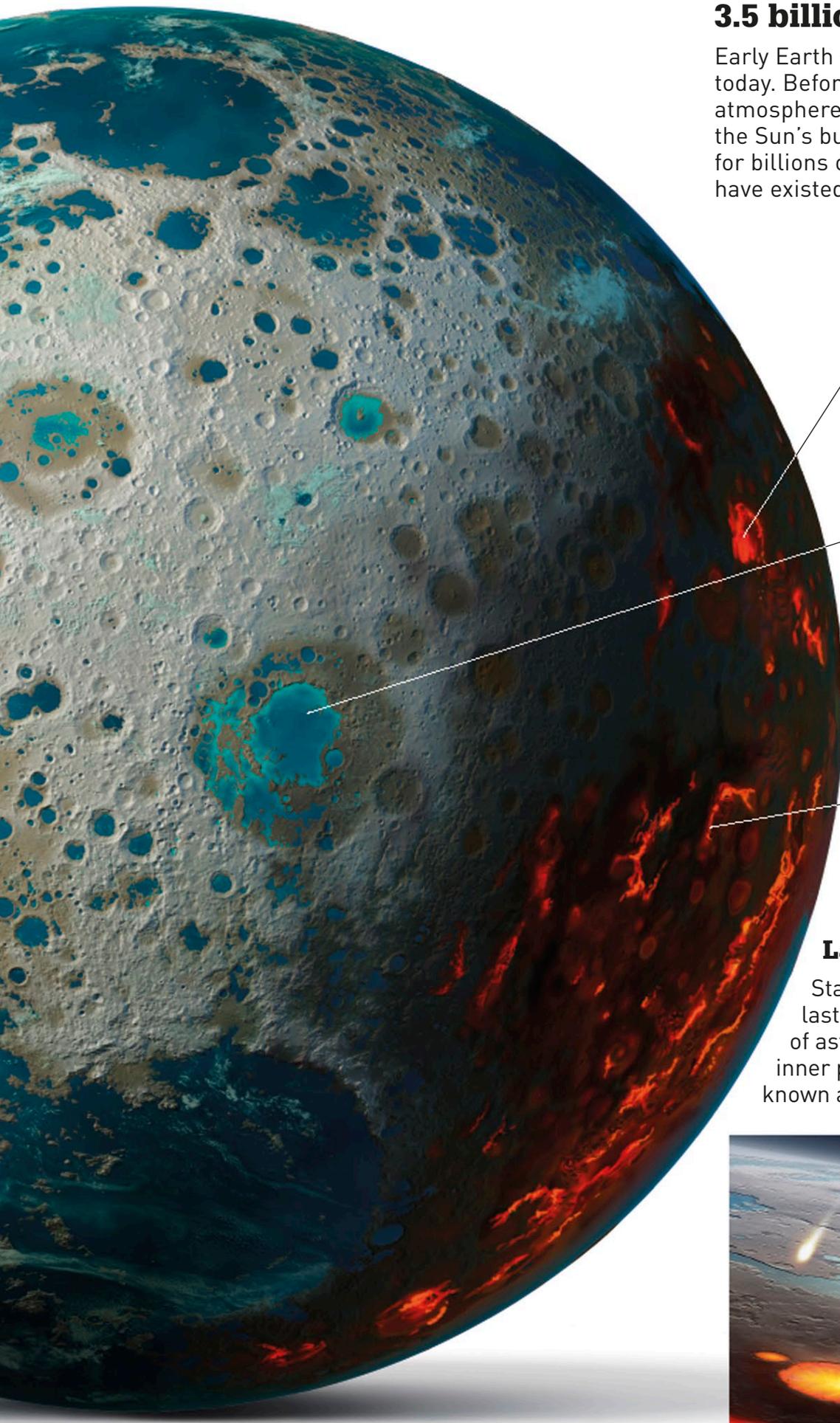


This illustration shows the sequence of Earth's formation—from small fragments of rock and dust sticking together, to a planet with its own atmosphere.

**Atmosphere**  
The air was heavy with carbon dioxide. Atmospheric pressure was higher than it is today, which allowed water to stay liquid at a far higher temperature than its modern boiling point.

**Clouds**  
Clouds of water droplets could be seen in the sky, much as today.

**First oceans**  
Liquid water, in which the first life formed, would have become permanent oceans at some time between 4.4 and 4.2 billion years ago.



## 3.5 billion years ago

Early Earth was quite different from the world we know today. Before the ozone layer developed in the atmosphere, exposed land was unprotected from the Sun's burning radiation, and remained lifeless for billions of years. However, conditions for life may have existed in the deep oceans and the shallow seas.

### Lava flows

As asteroid impacts triggered volcanic activity, lava could fill craters.

### Isolated oceans

Cooling seas, cut off from the violence going on elsewhere on the planet, may have provided the conditions from which the first life forms would emerge.

### Volcanic activity

Volcanoes threw out minerals that, at calmer locations, may have helped produce the ingredients needed to create life.

### Late Heavy Bombardment

Starting around 4.1 billion years ago and lasting for 200 million years, a huge number of asteroids crashed into the Solar System's inner planets, including Earth. This period is known as the Late Heavy Bombardment.

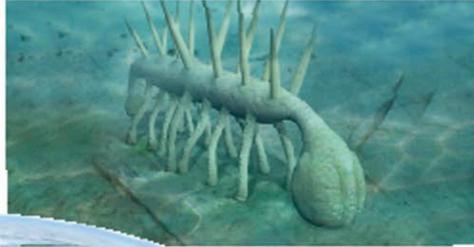


## 500 million years ago

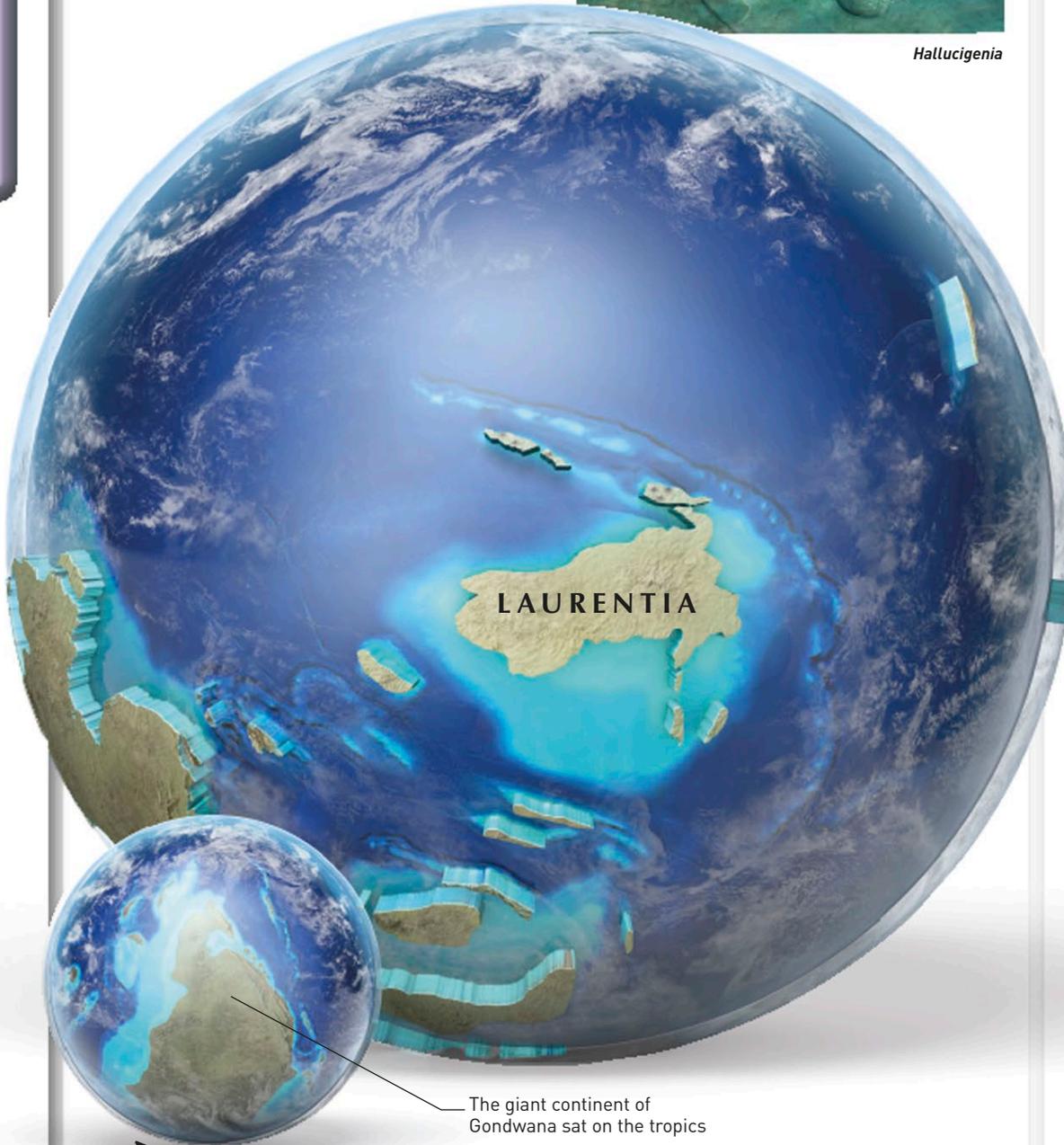
By this stage of Earth's history two major continents had formed. The largest, Gondwana, was mainly tropical. Laurentia (now North America) had also drifted from the polar regions to the tropics and sat on the Equator. Temperatures were mild across the globe, but cooling.

### In the water

Many life forms developed in the warm, shallow seas, including marine invertebrates such as *Hallucigenia*, a worm with limbs.



*Hallucigenia*



The giant continent of Gondwana sat on the tropics

Reverse view



### Lifeless land

Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere were 15 times higher than today, and no animals could survive on land.

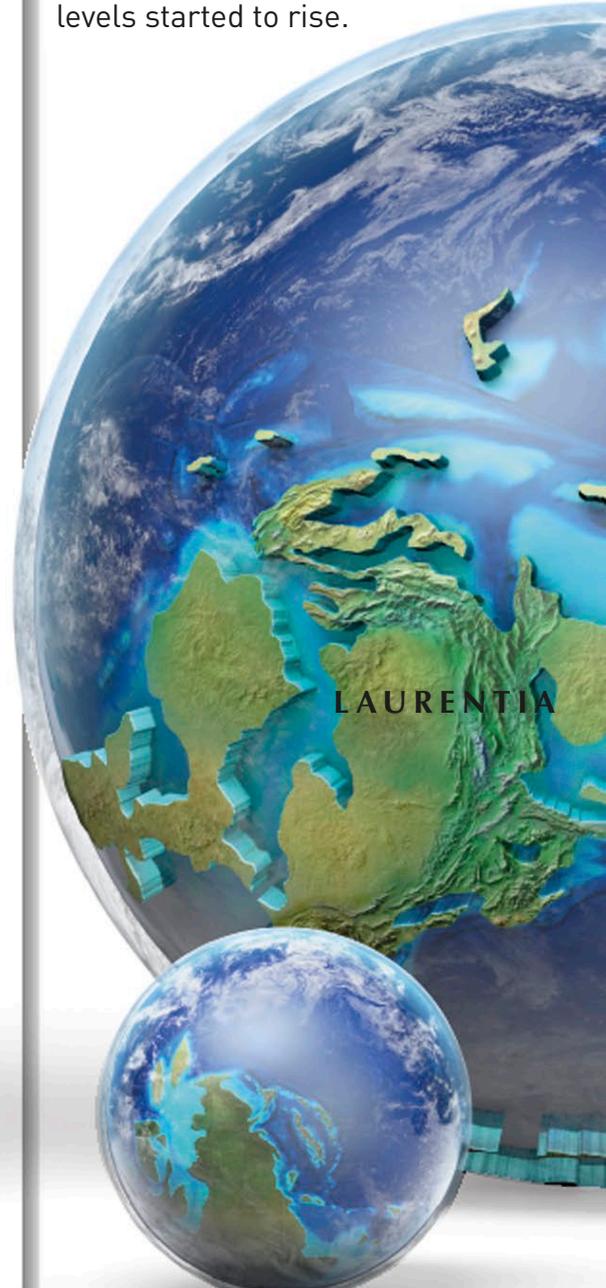


### Early algae

There was no land vegetation, but many types of algae (plant-like organisms that live in the sea) had appeared and diversified.

## 420 million years ago

Continents continued to shift. Avalonia (now split across present-day southern Britain and Canada) moved north to collide with Laurentia. Siberia headed north and Gondwana south, taking most of present-day Australia and Antarctica into the southern hemisphere. Sea levels started to rise.



Reverse view

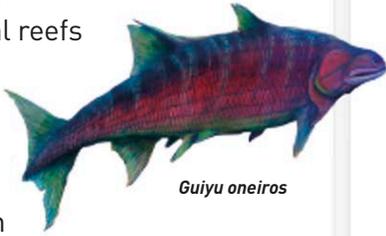
### Animals

Millipedes, such as the one below, were the first known oxygen-breathing animals on land.



### In the water

The first coral reefs and fish appeared. *Guiyu oneiros* remains dating back to 419 million years ago have been found in Yunnan province, China.



*Guiyu oneiros*

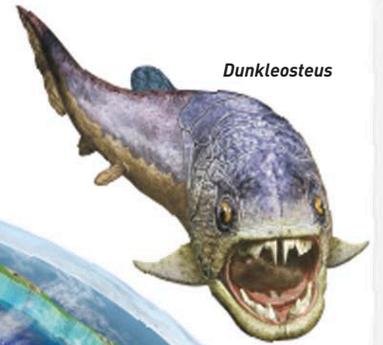


### 380 million years ago

Laurentia and Baltica collided, closing up the Lapetus Ocean and forming the continent of Eurasia. The collision created the Appalachian-Caledonide Mountain Range, which extended from Scandinavia to the Appalachian Mountains in North America. Gondwana rotated clockwise, approaching Eurasia.

### In the water

The "Age of Fish" saw a variety of lobe-finned fish and jawed predators. Placoderms (armored fish) included the mighty *Dunkleosteus*.



*Dunkleosteus*



Reverse view

### Plants

The tiny, but upright, *Cooksonia* was one of the first plants to colonize land. It was short, had branching stems, and lived in damp habitats.



*Cooksonia*

### Fish with legs

The first tetrapods (four-legged animals) developed. The earliest were like fish with legs, such as *Ichthyostega*.

*Ichthyostega*



*Archaeopteris*

### Plants

The landmasses turned green as woody, spore-bearing plants such as *Archaeopteris*, a tree-like plant with ferny leaves, created major forests and swamps.



## 300 million years ago

By 300 million years ago, Eurasia had merged with Gondwana to form the supercontinent Pangea, which extended from high in the northern hemisphere to the South Pole, where ice caps spread. Siberia collided with eastern Europe, creating the Ural Mountains.

### In the water

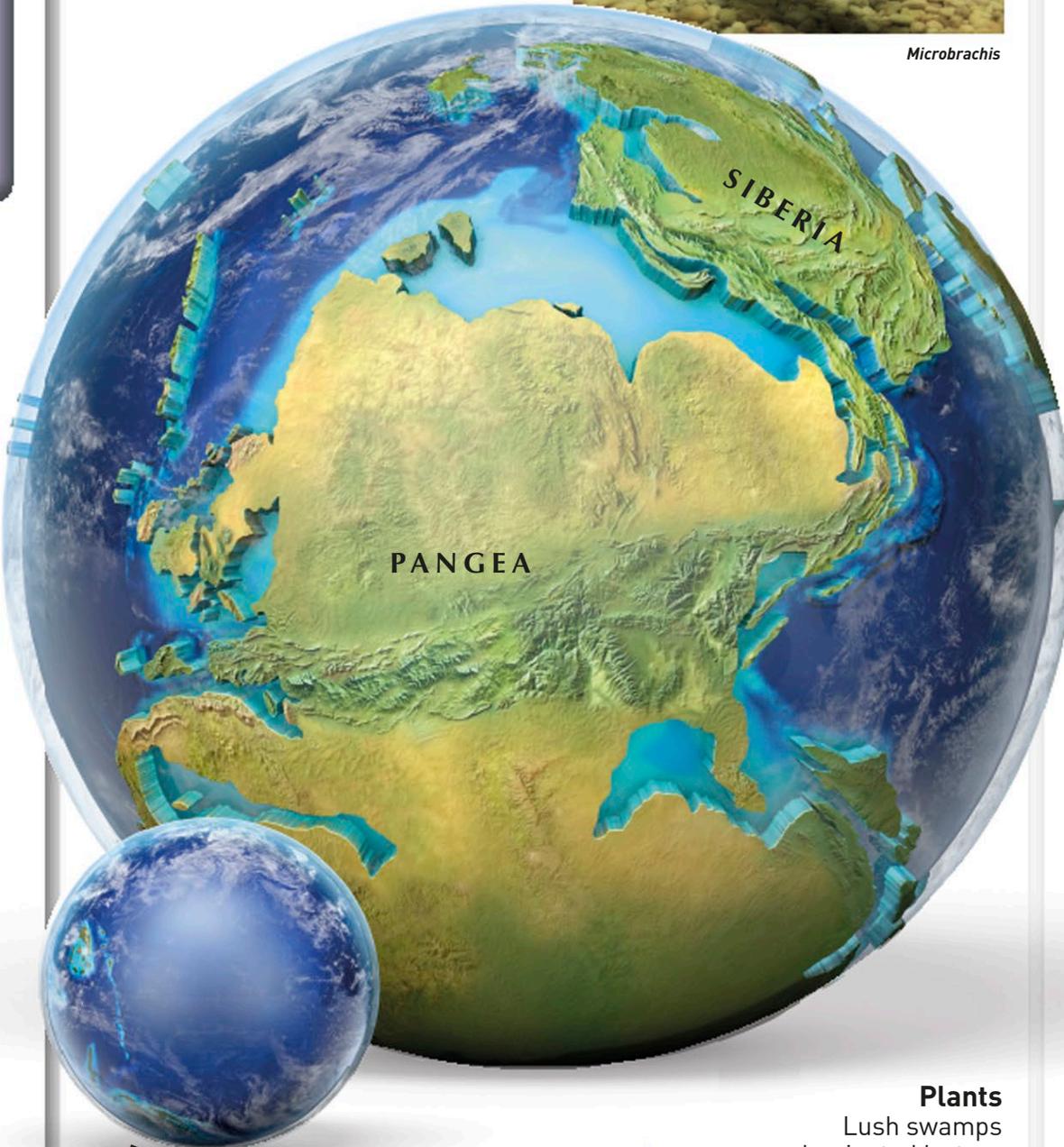
Fish and aquatic tetrapods, such as *Microbrachis* ("tiny limbs"), shared the seas with corals, crinoids (sea lilies), and brachiopods (mollusks).



*Microbrachis*

## 250 million years ago

All the continents were absorbed into the giant supercontinent Pangea. Global sea levels fell, while, in Siberia, massive volcanic eruptions poured out ash and gases, poisoning both the atmosphere and the oceans. Such events led to a global mass extinction.



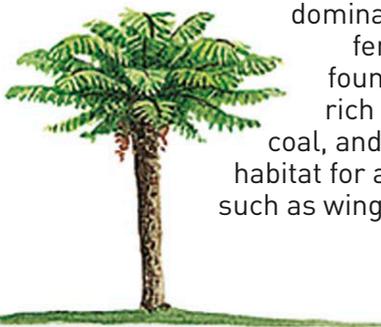
Reverse view

### Animals

The shelled egg evolved, so tetrapods, such as *Ophiacodon*, could lay eggs on land without them drying out.



*Ophiacodon*



### Plants

Lush swamps dominated by tree ferns laid the foundations for rich deposits of coal, and provided a habitat for arthropods, such as winged insects.



Reverse view

### Animals

About 70 percent of land species became extinct, including *Dimetrodon*.



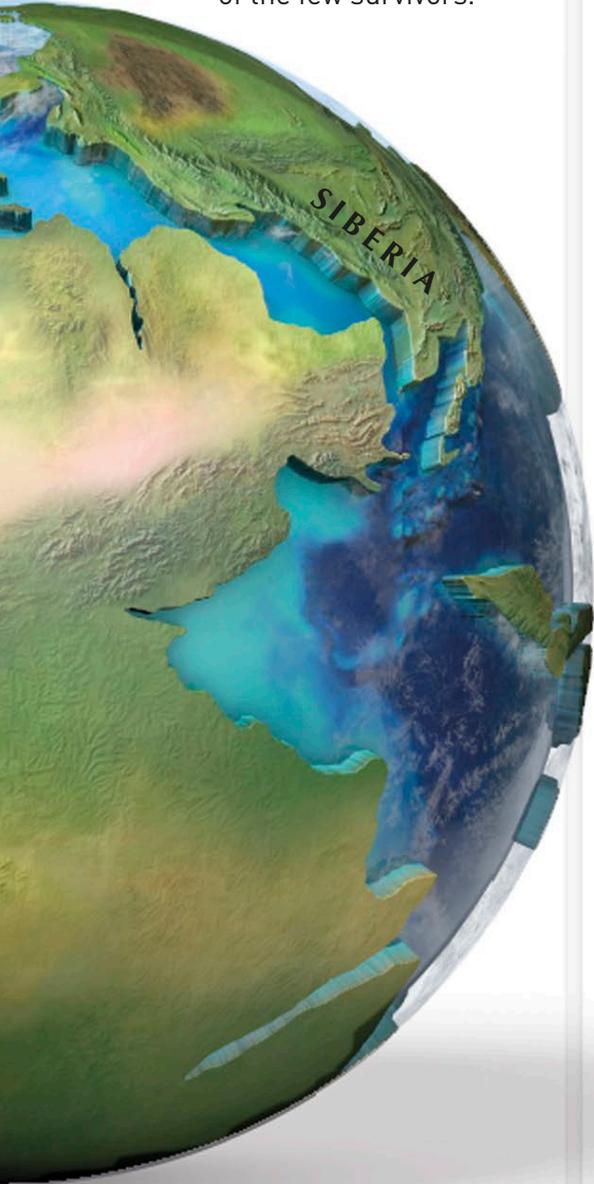
*Dimetrodon*



*Helicoprion*

**In the water**

Falling sea levels exposed reefs. An estimated 95 percent of marine species died out in the mass extinction—*Helicoprion* was one of the few survivors.



**220 million years ago**

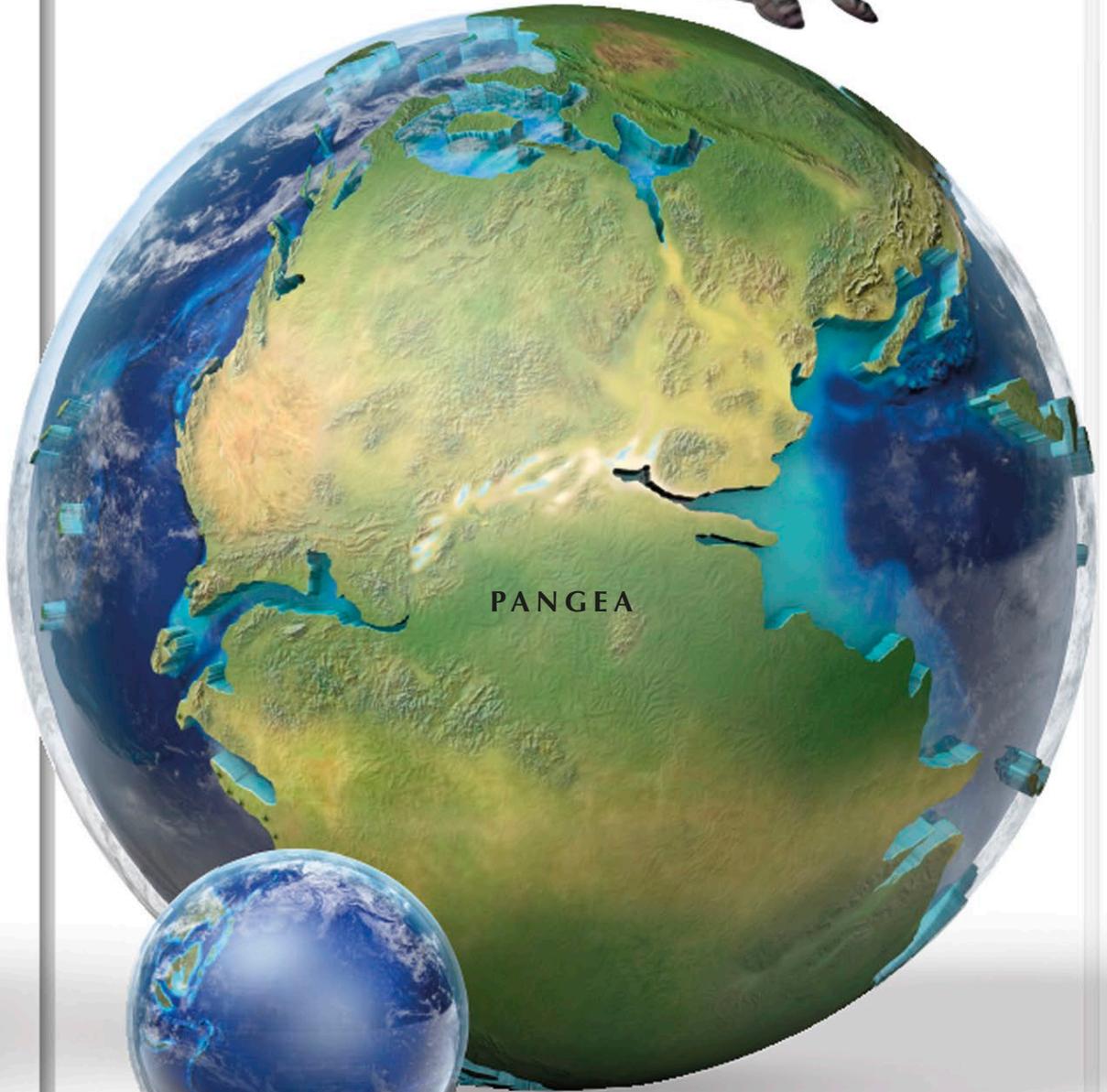
Pangea was at its largest—it extended from pole to pole—and sea levels had lowered. The supercontinent moved north, rotating counterclockwise. New life forms, including dinosaurs, started to evolve on the land.

**In the water**

Marine reptiles included turtles, frogs, crocodiles, and dolphinlike ichthyosaurs, such as *Mixosaurus*. Corals and mollusks also evolved new forms.



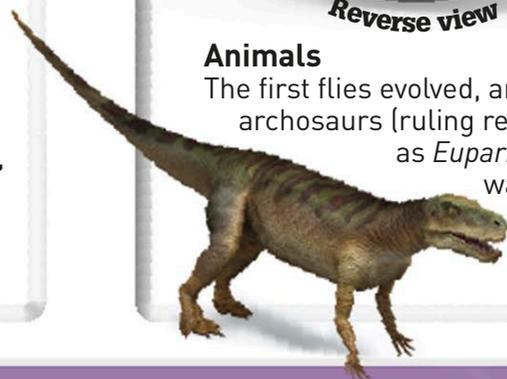
*Mixosaurus*



Reverse view

**Animals**

The first flies evolved, and early archosaurs (ruling reptiles), such as *Euparkeria*, paved the way for dinosaurs.



*Euparkeria*



*Glossopteris*

**Plants**

Half of all plant species died out. *Glossopteris*, widespread for 50 million years, declined, as did conifers, horsetails, and ferns.



*Dicroidium*

**Plants**

Vegetation adapted to the dry climate. Flora included conifers and the seed fern *Dicroidium*, which was distributed throughout Pangea.

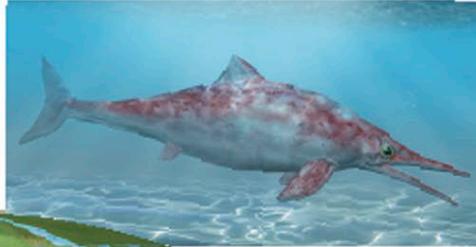
### 180 million years ago

The supercontinent Pangea separated into Laurasia in the north and Gondwana in the south, divided by the ever-growing Tethys Ocean. The climate was warm with no evidence of glaciation.

Tethys Ocean—formed when the supercontinent Pangea split into two.

#### In the water

The oceans were full of fish and marine reptiles, such as *Ichthyosaurus*, as well as bivalves (such as mussels), starfish, and sea urchins.



*Ichthyosaurus*



LAURASIA

GONDWANA



Reverse view



*Barapasaurus*

#### Animals

Dinosaurs dominated the land during this period. Among them was the giant, plant-eating *Barapasaurus*.



Monkey puzzle tree

#### Plants

Conifers, ginkgo, and monkey puzzle trees, dominated Laurasia. There were also ferns and palmlike cycads further south in tropical regions.

### 120 million years ago

Today's oceans began to take shape. The South Atlantic Ocean opened up as Africa and South America split apart, splintering Pangea further. North America was still attached to Europe, but India separated from western Australia and started to move in a northerly direction.



NORTH AMERICA

SOUTH AMERICA



Reverse view



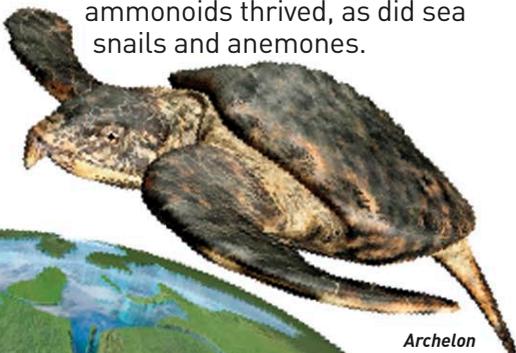
*Psittacosaurus*

#### Animals

Dinosaurs, such as *Psittacosaurus*, ruled the land. The first mammals and marsupials appeared, and birds filled the skies.

### In the water

*Archelon* (giant sea turtles) and other sea reptiles flourished. New species of strangely coiled creatures called ammonoids thrived, as did sea snails and anemones.



*Archelon*



AFRICA

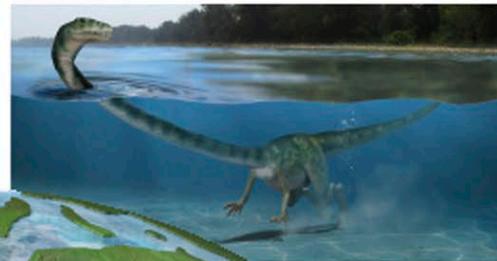
India had split from Africa.

### 80 million years ago

High sea levels flooded much of North America and created a seaway that extended from the Gulf of Mexico to the newly forming Atlantic Ocean. By 65 million years ago, India had collided with Asia, causing volcanic eruptions. An asteroid had hit Mexico, causing a mass extinction.

### In the water

New types of shellfish continued to evolve and peculiar sea reptiles, such as the long-necked *Albertonectes*, came into being.



*Albertonectes*



NORTH AMERICA

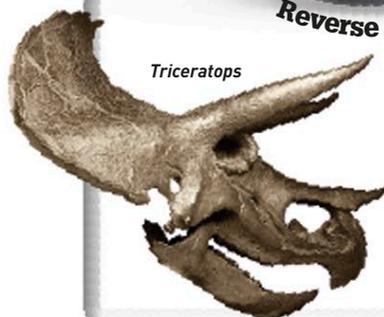
EURASIA

SOUTH AMERICA

AFRICA

INDIA

Reverse view



*Triceratops*



### Plants

The first angiosperms (flowering plants), such as magnolia, colonized the land, evolving alongside pollinating insects, including bees.



### Plants

More flowering plants started to appear on land. Conifers and palmlike cycads spread, thanks to the success of their seed-bearing cones.

### Animals

New dinosaurs evolved, including *Triceratops*. Snakes, ants, and termites also emerged.

**40 million years ago**

North and South America were separate, and Antarctica split away from Australia. These isolated landmasses saw animals and plants develop independently. Mountain ranges, such as the Rocky Mountains and the Himalayas, formed along plate margins, and the closing of the Tethys Ocean forced up the Alps.

**In the water**

Single-celled plankton were at their most diverse and coral reefs grew. At the other end of the size scale, *Basilosaurus* was an early whale.



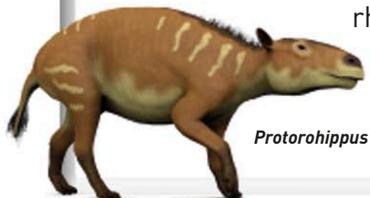
*Basilosaurus*



Reverse view

**Animals**

Moths, butterflies, birds, and bats flew above new mammals, such as rhinos, camels, and early horses, like *Protorohippus*.



*Protorohippus*

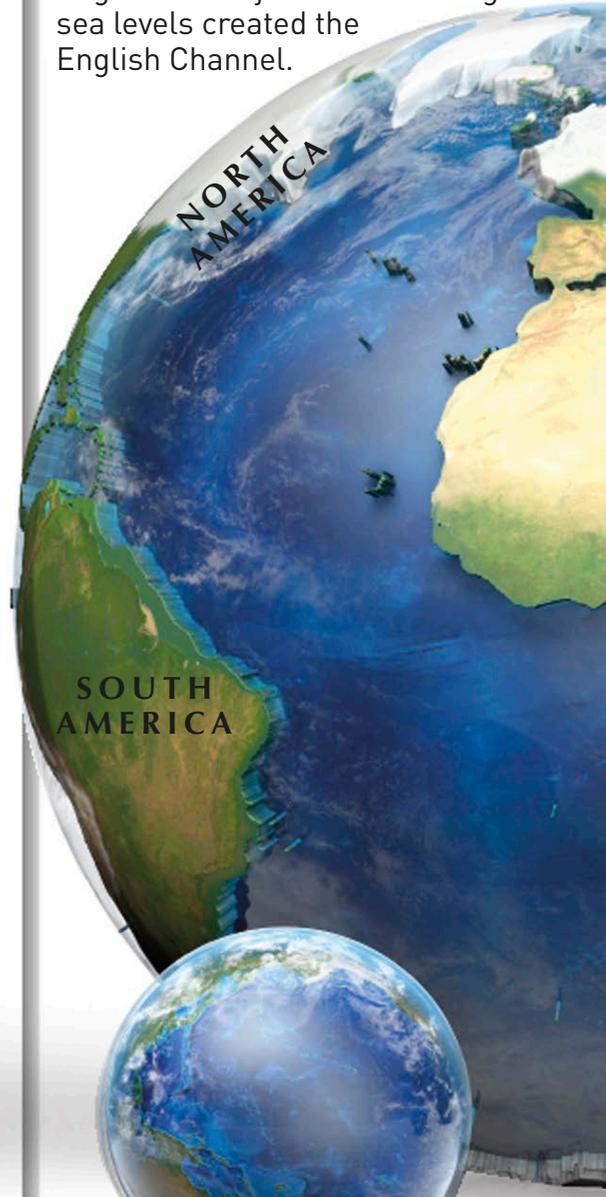


**Plants**

Grasslands expanded across the continents, and flowering plants and conifers were joined by deciduous trees, such as the beech.

**50,000–18,000 years ago**

Part of a cycle of ice ages, ocean levels fell and rose as glaciers advanced and retreated. India nudged further into Asia, Australia into Indonesia, and Africa and the Middle East into Europe and Asia. France and England were joined until rising sea levels created the English Channel.



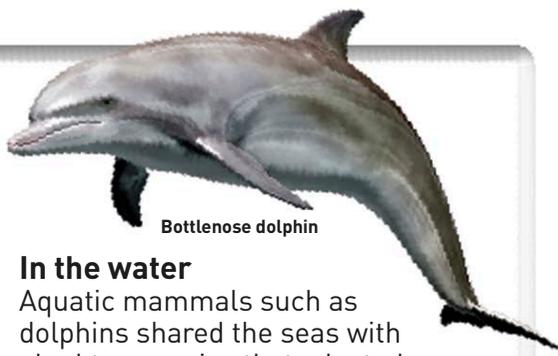
Reverse view

Woolly mammoth



**Animals**

Giant mammals evolved, such as the woolly mammoth, with its thick fur coat for protection.



Bottlenose dolphin

**In the water**

Aquatic mammals such as dolphins shared the seas with plankton species that adapted to successive changes in the water temperature.

**Present day**

The last ice age ended and giant mammals became extinct around 12,000 years ago. By that time, humans had started to make their mark on the world. Human activity has triggered global warming and has affected natural cycles of glaciation. The consequences of this could have a major impact on life on Earth.

**In the water**

Coral reefs provide a habitat for up to a quarter of all marine species. Marine life is still diverse, with an estimated 2 million species living in the oceans.



Fish at coral reef



**Plants**

Steppe (grassland too dry for trees to grow) plant types expanded. Much land was tundra—so cold, dry, and windy, that only the hardest plants grew.

Zebra



**Animals**

The land today is home to an estimated 6 million species of animal, including the zebra.



**Plants**

Tropical rain forests are home to about 40,000 known plant species, from tiny mosses to towering mahogany and kapok trees.





# NORTH AMERICA



**North America from space**  
North America is a huge continent that dominates the northern half of Earth's western hemisphere. From space, the Great Lakes and the Rocky Mountains are clearly visible.

### North American Free Trade Agreement

Established in 1994, the North American Free Trade Association, also known as NAFTA, is an agreement signed by the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Its aim is to increase the flow of trade between the three countries.



### ARCTIC OCEAN

#### Alaska

The United States bought Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million in 1867.

ASIA

ALASKA

Anchorage

Bering Sea

Gulf of Alaska

Queen Charlotte Islands

Vancouver Island

#### United States of America

The United States is a country made up of 50 states.



Honolulu

HAWAII

PACIFIC OCEAN

#### Hawaii

The volcanic Pacific islands became the United States' 50th state in 1959.

#### FAST FACTS

**Total land area:**  
9,358,340 sq miles  
(24,238,000 sq km)

**Total population:**  
576 million

**Number of countries:** 23

**Largest country:**  
Canada—  
3,855,103 sq miles  
(9,984,670 sq km)

**Smallest country:**  
St. Kitts and Nevis—  
101 sq miles (261 sq km)

**Largest country population:**  
United States of America—  
321 million

Greenland  
(to Denmark)

Nuuk

Ellesmere Island

Baffin Bay

Baffin Island

Beaufort Sea

NUNAVUT

Hudson Bay

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MANITOBA

ONTARIO

CANADA

ALBERTA

SASKATCHEWAN

Winnipeg

MINNESOTA

Edmonton

Saskatoon

Regina

NORTH DAKOTA

SOUTH DAKOTA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver

MONTANA

NEBRASKA

WYOMING

NEBRASKA

WASHINGTON

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

KANSAS

Portland

IDAHO

Boise

Denver

OREGON

NEVADA

Salt Lake City

COLORADO

UTAH

Albuquerque

NEW MEXICO

San Francisco

Las Vegas

ARIZONA

El Paso

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Phoenix

San Diego

Chihuahua

Tijuana

PACIFIC OCEAN

# Countries and borders

## Greenland

Although part of Denmark, Greenland has been self-governing since 1979. It is the world's largest island.

Labrador Sea

## Canada

North America's largest country, Canada gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1931 and has 10 provinces.

The continent of North America is dominated by Canada, the second largest country in the world, and the United States of America, the richest. The seven countries of Central America have struggled with the problems of poverty and war in the past, but have experienced peace and economic recovery in recent years.



**1 Denali**

At 20,321 ft (6,194 m), Denali, located in south-central Alaska, is the highest peak in North America. Denali means "tall" or "high" in Kokuyon, the language used by the people who live in the area that surrounds the mountain.



**4 Greenland**

ASIA



**Western Cordillera**  
A system of parallel mountain ranges that extends along the continent's western coast.

# Landscape

North America lies between the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west, and stretches from the Arctic in the north to just short of the equator in the south. The continent is also home to Greenland, the world's largest island.



**FAST FACTS**

**1 Highest point:**  
Denali, Alaska, United States of America—20,321 ft (6,194 m)

**2 Longest river:**  
Mississippi River, United States—3,700 miles (5,960 km)

**3 Largest lake:**  
Lake Superior—32,151 sq miles (83,270 sq km)

**4 Largest island:**  
Greenland— 822,700 sq miles (2,130,800 sq km)



Greenland—a permanent ice sheet covers four-fifths of the island.

**Canadian Shield**  
A raised, flat plateau of land that contains thousands of lakes.

**Appalachian Mountains**  
Formed around 400 million years ago, this is one of the world's oldest mountain ranges.

**Caribbean Islands**  
These are made up of over 7,000 islands, islets, reefs, and cays (low banks of reef, coral, rock, or sand).

**Great Plains**  
A vast, flat, fertile area created by retreating glaciers during the last Ice Age.

**Isthmus of Panama**  
At its narrowest, the Isthmus of Panama—an isthmus is a narrow strip of land with sea on either side—is just 31 miles (50 km) wide.

**KEY**  
The colors on the map represent the height of the land in relation to sea level.

ELEVATION	
Feet	Meters
above 26,247	above 8,000
22,965	7,000
19,685	6,000
16,404	5,000
13,123	4,000
9,842	3,000
6,560	2,000
3,280	1,000
Sea level 0	0 Sea level

**SOUTH AMERICA**

# Fascinating facts

Largest lake: **Lake Superior, United States/Canada**—32,151 sq miles (83,270 sq km)



## Deepest lake

Great Slave Lake, Canada—

**2,014 ft (614 m) deep**

Longest tunnels



### Railroad tunnel

Mount Macdonald Tunnel, British Columbia, Canada—9.1 miles (14.7 km)



### Subway tunnel

Angrignon-Honoré-Beaugrand (Line 1 Green), Montreal Metro, Canada—13.7 miles (22.1 km)



### Road tunnel

Ted Williams Extension, Boston, United States—2.6 miles (4.2 km)

## Number of time zones **10**



## Most active volcano

Kilauea, Hawaii

## Official languages **7**

Amerindian languages ▪ **Creole** ▪ Danish (Greenland) ▪ **Dutch** ▪ English ▪ **French** ▪ Spanish

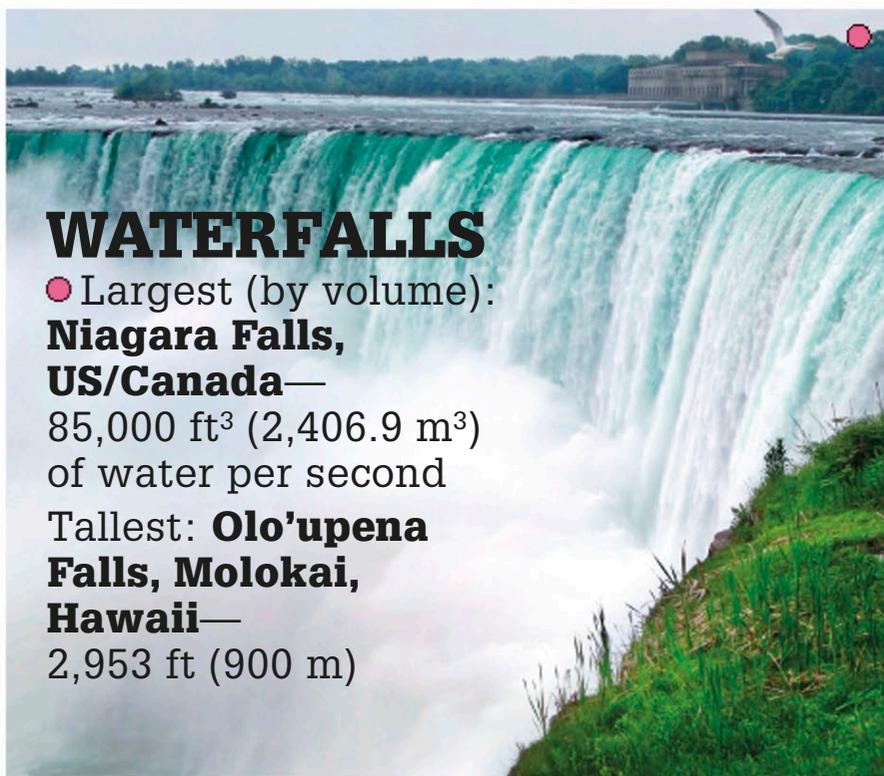


### Busiest airport

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, Atlanta—**101,489,887 passengers per year**

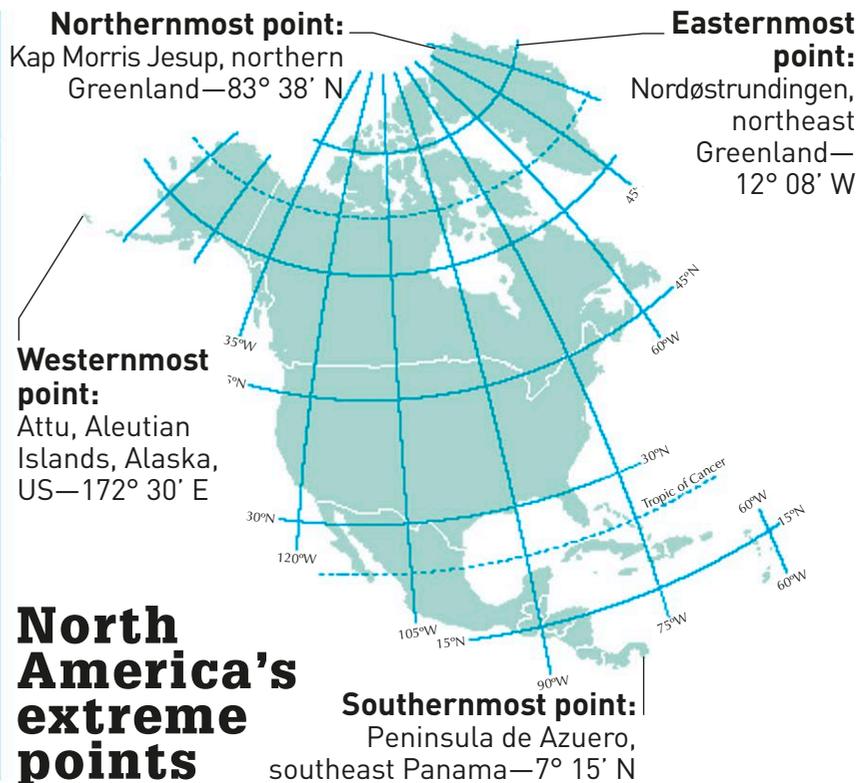
## Fastest train

North America's fastest train is the **Acela Express**, in the US, which can reach speeds of up to **150 mph (240 km/h)**



## WATERFALLS

● Largest (by volume):  
**Niagara Falls, US/Canada**—  
 85,000 ft<sup>3</sup> (2,406.9 m<sup>3</sup>)  
 of water per second  
 Tallest: **Olo'upena Falls, Molokai, Hawaii**—  
 2,953 ft (900 m)



## Longest coastline

Canada—**125,567 miles (202,080 km)**

## Longest bridge

Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, Louisiana  
 — **23.89 miles (38.442 km)**



## Tallest bridge

Royal Gorge Bridge, Colorado  
 — **955 ft (291 m)**



**BIGGEST GLACIER**  
 Bering Glacier, Alaska

## Most visited cities (Visitors per year)

**New York, US**  
 12.27 million

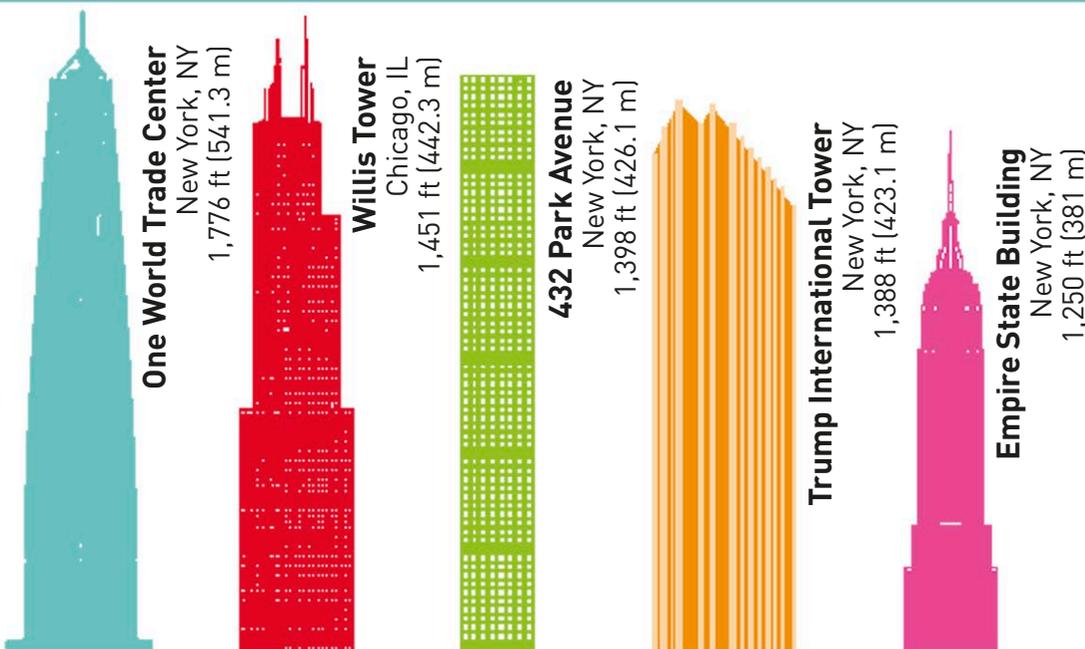
**Los Angeles, US**  
 5.2 million

**Miami, US**  
 4.52 million

**Toronto, Canada**  
 4.18 million

**Vancouver, Canada**  
 3.76 million

## Tallest buildings



**1 Mexico City**

Mexico's capital is located in the Valley of Mexico and sits at an altitude of 7,350 ft (2,240 m). Continuously inhabited since 1325, it is the oldest city in North America and also the most populous, with 8.85 million inhabitants.

**Greenland**

The world's largest island has the lowest population density in the world – 0.03 people per sq km (0.08 people per sq mile).

**Anchorage**

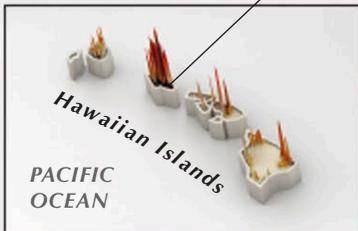
Alaska's most populated city, with 298,695 residents, Anchorage is the 65th largest city in the United States.

**Edmonton**

The capital of Alberta, Edmonton is the most northern city in North America with a metropolitan population of more than 1 million people.

**Honolulu**

The westernmost and southernmost city in the United States, Honolulu has a population of 352,769.

**Vancouver**

The most densely populated city in Canada, with 13,590 inhabitants per sq mile (5,249 per sq km).

# Population

Much of North America's landmass is sparsely populated, particularly in the frozen north. Population densities are highest along the United States' east and west coasts, around the Great Lakes, in the highlands of Mexico, and in the Caribbean islands, where the amount of available land is limited.

3

**Los Angeles**

The second largest city in the United States, it has a population of 3.97 million.

### 7 Havana

Cuba's capital, Havana is the most populous city in the Caribbean region. It has a population of 2.12 million people.



### North America's largest cities

The list below is based on the number of people living within the city's boundary.

- 1 Mexico City, Mexico—8.85 million
- 2 New York, United States—8.55 million
- 3 Los Angeles, United States—3.97 million
- 4 Toronto, Canada—2.83 million
- 5 Chicago, United States—2.72 million
- 6 Houston, United States—2.3 million
- 7 Havana, Cuba—2.12 million
- 8 Ecatepec de Morelos, Mexico—1.76 million
- 9 Montreal, Canada—1.75 million
- 10 Philadelphia, United States—1.57 million



Skyscrapers dominate the New York borough of Manhattan's skyline.

### St. John's

The largest city in Newfoundland, St. John's has a population of 106,000.

### New York

The largest city in the United States, New York has a population of 8.55 million.

### Sint Maarten

The Dutch territory of Sint Maarten has the highest population density of any location in North America— 2,852 people per sq mile (1,101 per sq km).

### Houston

With a population of 2.3 million, it is the largest city in the southern United States.

### Guatemala City

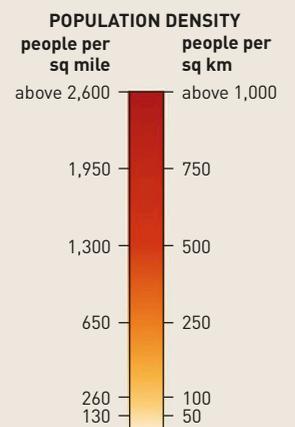
Central America's largest city, with a population of 3.7 million people.

### El Salvador

The most densely populated country in Central America, with 750 people per sq mile (290 per sq km).

### KEY

The colors represent the number of people living per square mile/ square kilometer.



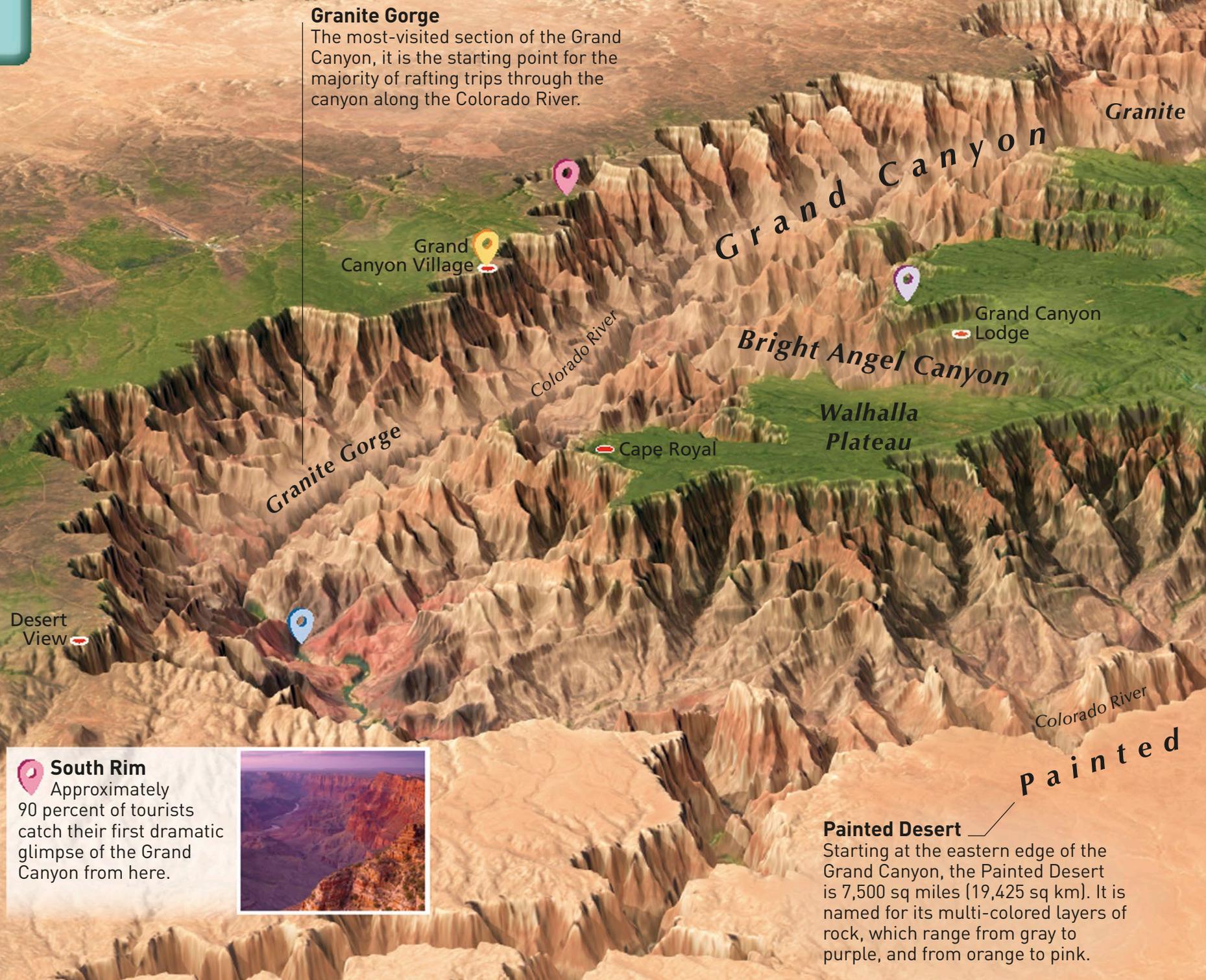
# The Grand Canyon



Formed over millions of years by the flow of the Colorado River, the Grand Canyon is a steep-sided canyon in the state of Arizona. It is 277 miles (446 km) long, 18 miles (29 km) wide at its widest point, and reaches a depth of 6,093 ft (1,857 m).

## Granite Gorge

The most-visited section of the Grand Canyon, it is the starting point for the majority of rafting trips through the canyon along the Colorado River.



Desert View



## South Rim

Approximately 90 percent of tourists catch their first dramatic glimpse of the Grand Canyon from here.



## Painted Desert

Starting at the eastern edge of the Grand Canyon, the Painted Desert is 7,500 sq miles (19,425 sq km). It is named for its multi-colored layers of rock, which range from gray to purple, and from orange to pink.

### Tuckup Canyon

A 100-mile (160-km) long trail route on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.

Tuckup Canyon



### Grand Canyon Village

Occupied since the 1800s, Grand Canyon Village was originally built around the terminus for the Grand Canyon Railroad, which brought tourists to the area.



### North Rim

Temperatures on the North Rim are usually lower than those at the South Rim because it is 1,000 ft (300 m) higher.

### Kanab Plateau

### Kaibab Plateau

Reaching an elevation of 9,200 ft (2,817 m), this heavily forested plateau contrasts sharply with the arid lowlands to its south.

### Kaibab Plateau

Colorado River

Great Thumb Mesa

Powell Plateau

Gorge

Cockscomb

### Cockscomb

A trail area running to the north of the Grand Canyon, its highest point is Cockscomb Rock at 5,009 ft (1,527 m).

Marble Canyon

Desert



### Kaibab National Forest

A 1.6 million-acre (670,000-hectare) forest that borders both the north and south of the Grand Canyon.



### Colorado River

From its source in the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado River flows for 1,450 miles (2,330 km) and passes through Mexico before emptying into the Gulf of California.



### Marble Canyon

This marks the beginning of the Grand Canyon. Despite its name, the canyon contains no marble—it gets its name from the color of its limestone walls, which resemble the color of marble.

**Chichen Itza**

The largest and most famous Mayan site, Chichen Itza, Mexico, was a major urban center between 750 and 1200 CE. The highlight of the site is the El Castillo pyramid, whose four sides are made up of 365 steps (one for each day of the solar year).



**Illulissat Icefjord**

Located 220 miles (350 km) north of the Arctic Circle, the area's many icebergs have made Illulissat a popular tourist destination.

Illulissat Icefjord, Greenland



Mount Shishaldin, Alaska, United States

**Mount Shishaldin**

The highest mountain peak on the Aleutian Islands (9,373 ft/2,857 m), Mount Shishaldin is the most symmetrical cone-shaped volcano on Earth.

Ninstints, British Columbia, Canada

Space Needle, Seattle, United States

The Bow, Calgary, Canada

Mount Rushmore, South Dakota, United States

Old Faithful, Wyoming, United States

Mauna Loa, Hawaii, United States

Redwood National Park, California, United States

**Golden Gate Bridge**

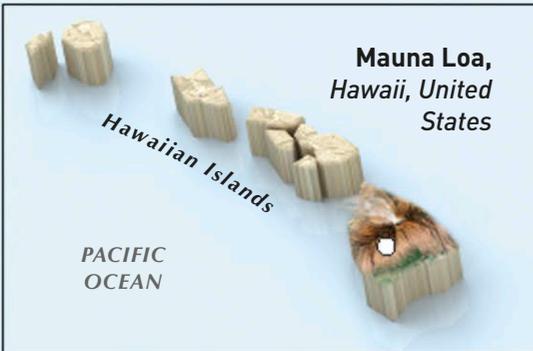
When it opened in 1937, it had the longest main span (4,200 ft/1,280 m) of any suspension bridge in the world.

Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, United States

Hoover Dam, Nevada-Arizona, United States

Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, United States

Hollywood Sign, Los Angeles, United States



The **United States** is the world's **second-most-visited** country.

**KEY**  
 ○ Landmark location

# Famous landmarks

From towering volcanoes, giant redwood forests, and thunderous waterfalls, to spectacular skyscrapers, the ruins of ancient civilizations, and the architectural legacies of the region's colonial past, North America's most famous landmarks are a stunning mix of natural wonders and manmade masterpieces.



**Nuuk Cathedral,**  
Greenland

**L'Anse aux Meadows**

A Viking settlement that dates to 1000 CE — nearly 500 years before Columbus discovered the New World.

**L'Anse aux Meadows,**  
Newfoundland, Canada

**CN Tower,**  
Toronto, Canada

**Chateau Frontenac,**  
Québec City, Canada

**Lunenburg Church,**  
Nova Scotia, Canada

**Statue of Liberty,**  
New York, United States

**The White House,**  
Washington D.C., United States

**Niagara Falls,**  
United States–Canada

**The White House**

Built between 1792 and 1800, it is the official residence of the US president.

**Kennedy Space Center,**  
Florida, United States

**Poverty Point,**  
Louisiana, United States

**The Alamo,**  
Texas, United States



**Gran Teatro,**  
Cuba

**Chichen Itza,**  
Mexico

**Metropolitan Cathedral,**  
Mexico

**Hospicio Cabañas,**  
Mexico

**Copán,**  
Honduras

**Teatro Nacional,**  
Costa Rica

**Panama Canal,**  
Panama

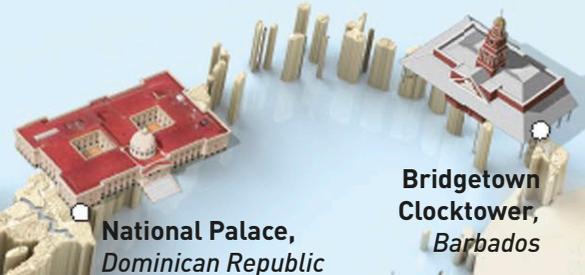
**Panama Canal**

This 48-mile (77-km), manmade waterway connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.



**Niagara Falls**

Niagara Falls is the collective name for three waterfalls that straddle the Canada-United States border. The largest, the Horseshoe Falls, has an average drop of 188 ft (57 m).



**National Palace,**  
Dominican Republic

**Bridgetown Clocktower,**  
Barbados

**Tornado Alley**

Tornado Alley is a nickname given to an area in the southern United States that experiences a high number of tornadoes. A tornado is a column of air that spins at high speed while maintaining contact with both the ground and the storm clouds above.



**Coldest inhabited place**

Prospect Creek Camp, in Alaska, is the coldest inhabited place in North America. On January 23, 1971, the thermometer there tumbled to  $-80^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $-62.2^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

**Lowest**

The lowest temperature ever recorded in North America is  $-81.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $-63^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) at Snag, Yukon, in Canada, on February 3, 1947.

**Wettest**

Henderson Lake, British Columbia, Canada, received an average of 276 in (7 m) of rain and snow when measurements were taken between 1923 to 1935 and 1998 to 2000.

**Highest**

The highest temperature ever recorded in North America is  $134^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $56.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) in Death Valley, California on July 10, 1913.

**Driest**

Batagues in Baja California, Mexico, is the driest place in North America. It receives just 1.2 in (30.5 mm) of rain per year.



# Climate

The climate in North America ranges from freezing Arctic conditions in the far north to desert in the southwest, and tropical conditions in Florida, Central America, and the Caribbean. Central and southern regions are prone to severe storms, including hurricanes and tornadoes.

### Polar nights

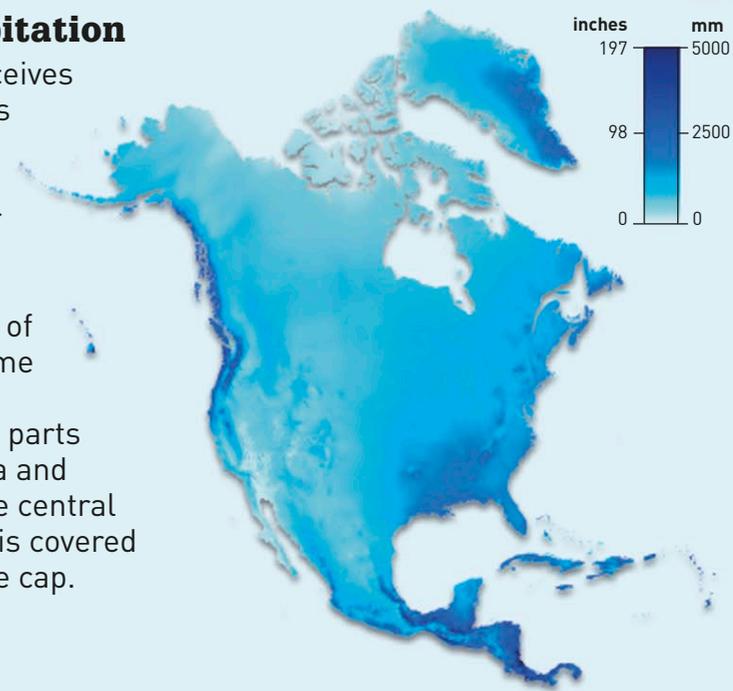
In Greenland, the sun does not rise between early December and mid-January and the days are dark.

### Windiest

Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, United States, is the windiest location in North America. On April 12, 1934, a gust of 372 km/h (231 mph) was recorded there.

### Annual precipitation

North America receives moderate amounts of precipitation (snow and rain) compared to other continents. The wettest areas are the west coast of Canada, the extreme northwest of the United States, and parts of Central America and the Caribbean. The central part of Greenland is covered by a permanent ice cap.



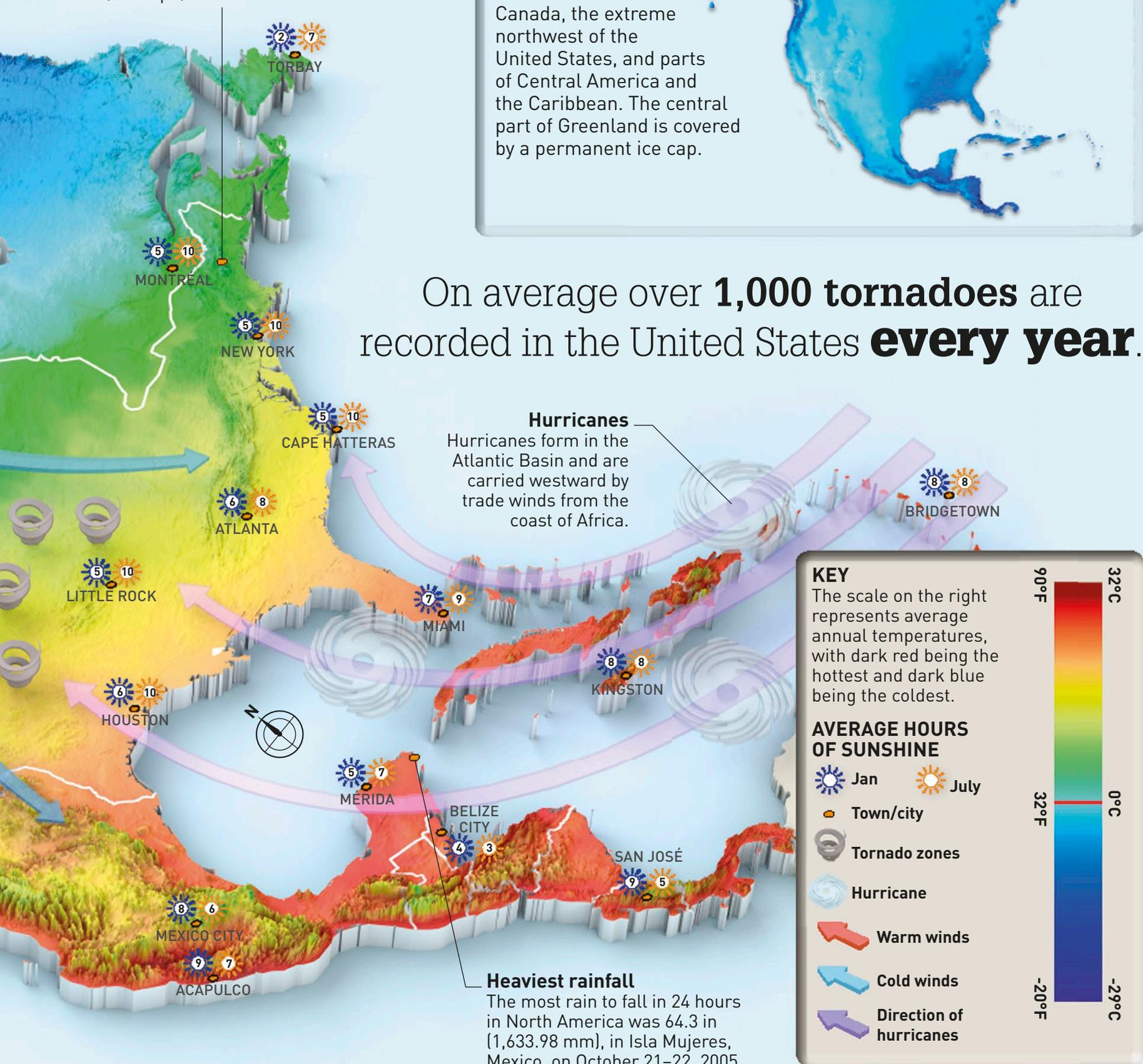
On average over **1,000 tornadoes** are recorded in the United States **every year.**

### Hurricanes

Hurricanes form in the Atlantic Basin and are carried westward by trade winds from the coast of Africa.

### Heaviest rainfall

The most rain to fall in 24 hours in North America was 64.3 in (1,633.98 mm), in Isla Mujeres, Mexico, on October 21–22, 2005.

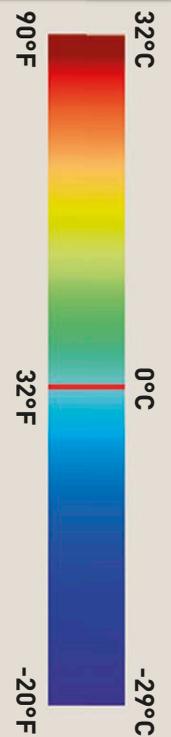


#### KEY

The scale on the right represents average annual temperatures, with dark red being the hottest and dark blue being the coldest.

#### AVERAGE HOURS OF SUNSHINE

- Jan      July
- Town/city
- Tornado zones
- Hurricane
- Warm winds
- Cold winds
- Direction of hurricanes



**BIOMES**

North America has a number of different biomes—large geographical areas of distinctive plant and animal groups—from deciduous forests in the south to tundra in the far north.

- Ice
- Tundra
- Boreal forest/Taiga
- Temperate coniferous forest
- Temperate broadleaf forest
- Temperate grassland
- Mediterranean
- Tropical coniferous forest
- Tropical broadleaf forest
- Tropical dry broadleaf forest
- Tropical, sub-tropical grassland
- Desert
- Flooded grassland
- Mangrove

**Walrus**  
This mammal uses its tusks to haul its enormous 3,000 lb (1,500 kg) body out of the water.

**Harbor seal**  
This common seal slows its heartbeat when swimming underwater.

**Musk ox**  
Gets its name from the strong odor males emit during the rutting season.

**Ringed seal**  
This seal can hold its breath underwater for 45 minutes.

**Snowy owl**  
An unusual owl because it hunts by day.

**American black bear**  
Short, non-retractable claws make it an excellent tree-climber.

**American bison**  
North America's largest land mammal, it can weigh up to 1 ton (907 kg).

**Antelope**  
The fastest land animal in North America, the antelope can reach speeds of 55 mph (88.5 km/h).

**Arctic ground squirrel**  
This squirrel doubles its weight during summer to prepare for a seven-month hibernation.

**Steller sea lion**  
The largest sea lion species. Male bulls can be 2,205 lb (1,000 kg).

**Elk**  
Male elk clash antlers in battle for mating rights.

**Dall sheep**  
This sheep has thick, curled horns that stop growing in the winter.

**Gray wolf**  
Wolf pairs can track prey for up to 50 miles (80 km).

**Coyote**  
A nocturnal canine that will eat whatever it finds.

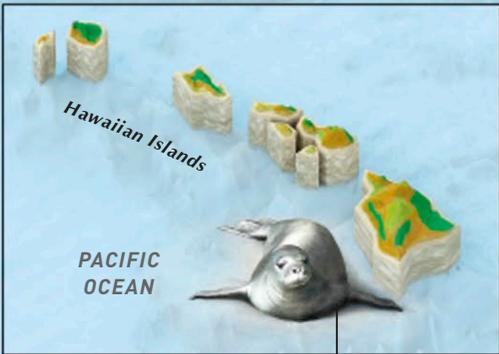
**Striped skunk**  
This mammal's foul-smelling oil can be smelled up to 1 mile (1.6 km) away.

**Golden eagle**  
North America's largest bird of prey can reach speeds of 200 mph (320 km/h) in a vertical dive.

**Bighorn sheep**  
The horns of a male can weigh more than its whole skeleton.

**Hawaiian monk seal**  
The only species of seal native to Hawaii. It is highly endangered.

**Great white shark**  
A streamlined swimmer with powerful jaws that contain seven rows of knifelike teeth.



# Wildlife

A diverse array of animals roams North America's lands and waters. The contrasting biomes—from freezing tundra in the north to tropical rain forest in the south—provide a remarkable range of habitats for countless species to survive and thrive.

## Gray seal

Two fur layers and blubber help this seal keep warm in freezing water.



## Star-nosed mole

Nose tentacles help this mole identify food.



## Raccoon

Dextrous front paws help this mammal snatch fish from rivers and pick snacks from the trash.



## River otter

Webbed feet and sleek body make this playful mammal an excellent swimmer.



## Beaver

Powerful jaws help this rodent fell trees and build dams in deep water.



## Rattlesnake

Highly venomous, this snake grows new "rattle" segments when it sheds its skin.



## Prairie dog

A rodent that lives in underground towns on grasslands.



## American alligator

This extremely territorial and powerful predator can be 13 ft (4 m) long.



## Lemon shark

A stocky shark that lives in groups in tropical coastal waters.



## Magnificent frigatebird

An agile flier with long wings and a forked tail.



## Caribbean reef shark

This shark lives on reefs, and can dive to 1,250 ft (380 m).



## Olive Ridley sea turtle

A solitary, open-ocean dweller; females return to land to lay eggs.



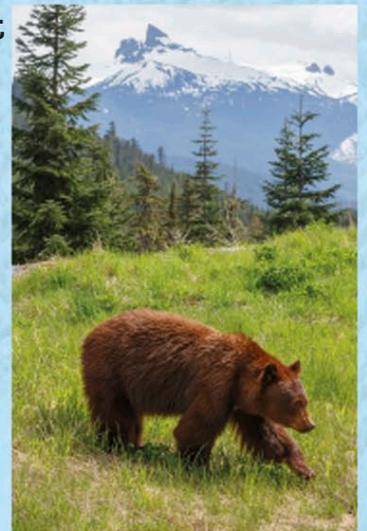
## American crocodile

The largest crocodile species, it lives in brackish (slightly salty) water.



## ● Oldest and largest

Situated above a dormant (inactive) volcano, and boasting more than half of the world's great geysers, Yellowstone, in Wyoming, became the world's first national park in 1872. This has helped preserve the landscape from human exploitation, and protect its animal herds from poachers.



**Canada**

Despite its vast size (only the Russian Federation is larger), almost 90 percent of Canada is uninhabitable. The cold temperatures in the country's frozen north are too extreme for humans to live there.

**Hawaii**

With 953,000 people, O'ahu is the most populous of Hawaii's main islands.

**California**

The Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim area is the most densely populated region in the United States.

# By night

This image of North America at night provides a fascinating insight into where people live. The major urban areas are found in the eastern half of the United States, California, and central Mexico, but much of the northern half of the continent is uninhabited.

### Greenland

This vast island has only 13 towns with a population of more than 1,000 people. The largest is Nuuk, which has a population of 16,500.

### Canada

An estimated 90 percent of Canada's population live within 100 miles (160 km) of the US border.

### Great Lakes

Towns and cities frame the shores of the Great Lakes, which are clearly visible in this image.



### District of Columbia

Over 600,000 people live in an area of just 68 sq miles (177 sq km).

### Mexico

Over half the country's 123.2 million population live in a small band of land in the center of the country.

## Caribbean islands

Although some of North America's most densely populated territories can be found in the Caribbean region, some of the islands are also home to ever-growing rural populations.



**Cayman Islands**—Along with Anguilla, Bermuda, and Sint Maarten, this is one of four North American territories with an entirely urban population.



**Haiti**—A consequence of the devastating 2010 earthquake, the number of people living in towns increased by 3.78 percent between 2010 and 2015.



**Montserrat**—Only 9 percent of this volcanic island's population live in an urban environment.



**Trinidad and Tobago**—Fewer people live in towns here than anywhere else in North America.

### KEY

Illuminated areas on the map reflect urban, built-up areas and roads, in contrast to rural regions.

 Rural area

 Urban area

### Costa Rica

Has an urban population of 76.8 percent—the highest in Central America.



# SOUTH AMERICA



## **Mountains and forests**

The Andes mountain range and the mighty Amazon rain forest dominate South America, which runs from the Caribbean Sea in the north to the Tierra del Fuego in the south.

## ATLANTIC OCEAN



**Venezuela**  
Venezuela has the largest oil reserves in South America, and the oil industry is crucial to the country's economy.

**French Guiana**  
The only remaining colony on the South American mainland, French Guiana is governed by France.

## NORTH AMERICA

**Colombia**  
For 11 years following its independence from Spain in 1819, Colombia also included the territories of Venezuela and Ecuador.

Galápagos Islands  
(to Ecuador)

## PACIFIC OCEAN

**Peru**  
The Inca Empire covered much of the territory of modern Peru. It was overthrown by Spanish soldiers led by Francisco Pizarro in 1533.

# Countries and borders

For centuries, most of South America was under Spanish or Portuguese rule. Although the majority of countries became independent in the early 19th century, the languages and cultures of their past rulers have shaped the lives of people living there today.

## Simón Bolívar

Popularly known as "the Liberator," Simón Bolívar (1783–1830) was a Venezuelan military leader who played a major role in the continent's uprising against the Spanish Empire. His ideas—and dream of creating a united continent—continue to inspire many South Americans even today.





**Brazil**  
 The Treaty of Tordesillas, signed in 1494, divided South America between Spain and Portugal. The Portuguese were given the lands to the east that would one day become Brazil.

**FAST FACTS**

**Total land area:**  
 6,890,000 sq miles  
 (17,840,000 sq km)

**Total population:**  
 410 million

**Number of countries:** 12

**Largest country:**  
 Brazil—3,287,957 sq miles  
 (8,515,770 sq km)

**Smallest country:**  
 Suriname—63,251 sq miles  
 (163,820 sq km)

**Largest country population:**  
 Brazil—204.3 million



The Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro is home to the world's biggest carnival.

**Bolivia**  
 Named after Simón Bolívar, Bolivia became an independent republic in 1825.

**Chile**  
 Bernardo O'Higgins and José de San Martín were the revolutionaries who led Chile to independence in 1818. Today, they are two of the country's greatest national heroes.

ATLANTIC OCEAN

**Falkland Islands**  
 The islands are a self-governing British colony. In 1982, Argentina invaded, leading to a brief, but bloody, war.



**KEY**

- Capital city
- Major city

COUNTRIES THAT DO NOT SHARE A BORDER WITH BRAZIL.



**The Orinoco**  
This river flows in a vast arc through Venezuela, passing through the flat Llanos, where it creates vast floodplains during the rainy season.

**Guiana Highlands**  
The tablelike mountains of the Guiana Highlands are surrounded by cliffs that rise up to 1,300 ft (400 m).

Gulf of Darien

Gulf of Panama

**The Colombian Andes**  
The Andes separate into three ranges in Colombia. Two of the country's great rivers, the Río Magdalena and the Río Cauca, have their sources here.

**Galápagos Islands**

**Galápagos Islands**  
This isolated group of volcanic islands is home to a number of unique animal species.

PACIFIC OCEAN

# Landscape

South America boasts an extraordinary range of landscapes, from the tropical forests on the northern coast to the icy fjords of Tierra del Fuego. The Andes mountains extend along the west coast, while the Amazon Basin dominates the heart of the continent. To the south lie the grasslands of the Pampas.

**The Altiplano**  
The second highest plain in the world, the Altiplano, in Bolivia, has an average altitude of 12,303 ft (3,750 m).



## 3 Lake Titicaca

South America's largest lake, Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable body of water in the world, with an elevation of 12,500 ft (3,800 m). It is home to the Uros people, who live on floating islands made from reeds. One island even houses a meeting hall and a school.

Cabo de São Roque



**Brazilian Highlands**  
These hilly uplands dominate eastern Brazil. They reach the coast of the Atlantic Ocean at Rio de Janeiro.

**Lagoa dos Patos**  
The world's largest coastal lagoon is an important fishing ground.

**FAST FACTS**

- 1 Highest point:**  
Aconcagua, Argentina—22,831 ft (6,959 m)
- 2 Longest river:**  
Amazon, Brazil/Colombia/Peru—4,049 miles (6,516 km)
- 3 Largest lake:**  
Lake Titicaca, Peru/Bolivia—3,232 sq miles (8,372 sq km)
- 4 Largest island:**  
Tierra del Fuego, Argentina/Chile—18,530 sq miles (47,992 sq km)



Aconcagua, in Argentina, is the highest peak in South America.

**KEY**

The colors on the map represent the height of the land in relation to sea level.

ELEVATION	
Feet	Meters
above 26,247	above 8,000
22,965	7,000
19,685	6,000
16,404	5,000
13,123	4,000
9,842	3,000
6,560	2,000
3,280	1,000
Sea level 0	0 Sea level



**Patagonia**  
The southernmost part of South America, Patagonia is a region of barren plains, towering mountains, and rugged coastline.

**Strait of Magellan**  
This strait, separating Tierra del Fuego from mainland South America, is notoriously difficult to sail through.

Falkland Islands

Strait of Magellan

Bahía Grande

Tierra del Fuego

Cape Horn

Península Valdés

Gulf of San Jorge

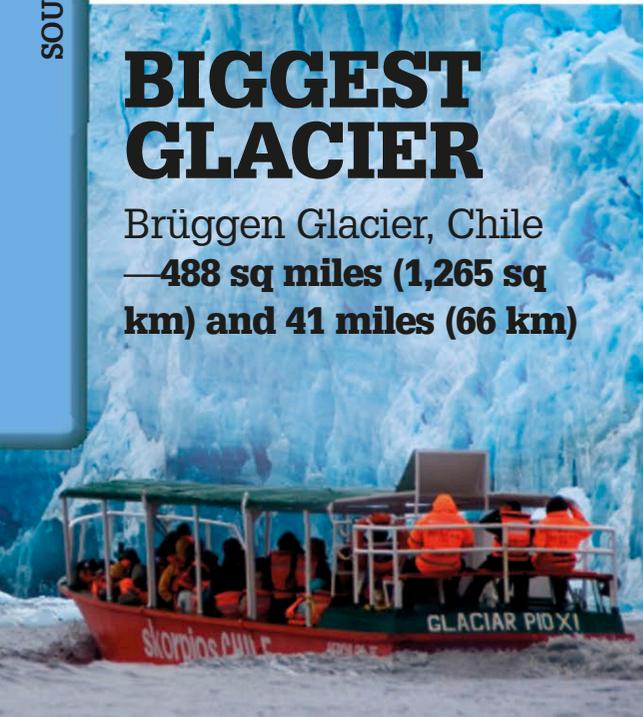
Isla de Chiloé

Golfo de Penas

# Fascinating facts

## BIGGEST GLACIER

Brüggen Glacier, Chile  
—488 sq miles (1,265 sq km) and 41 miles (66 km)



Number of time zones

# 4



The world is split into 39 time zones. Most are set whole hours ahead or behind Coordinated Universal Time (UCT)—the time at the Greenwich Meridian in London, UK. Some, however, are whole hours plus 30 or 45 minutes ahead or behind UCT. Therefore, on this map, if it was 12:00 in London, it would be 09:00 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (3 hours behind UCT).

## COUNTRY WITH THE MOST NEIGHBORS



### Brazil (10)

French Guiana, Suriname, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay

## Longest tunnels



**Railroad tunnel**  
Cuajone–El Sargento tunnel, Peru—9.1 miles (14.72 km)



**Road tunnel**  
Fernando Gomez Martinez tunnel, Colombia—2.86 miles (4.6 km)

Number of official languages

# 5

Portuguese ■ Spanish ■ English ■ Dutch ■ French

## Longest coastline



Brazil—4,655 miles (7,491 km)

## Most active volcano

Villarrica, Chile



**Busiest airport**

Biggest airport São Paulo-Guarulhos Airport, Brazil—passengers in 2015: **35.96 million**

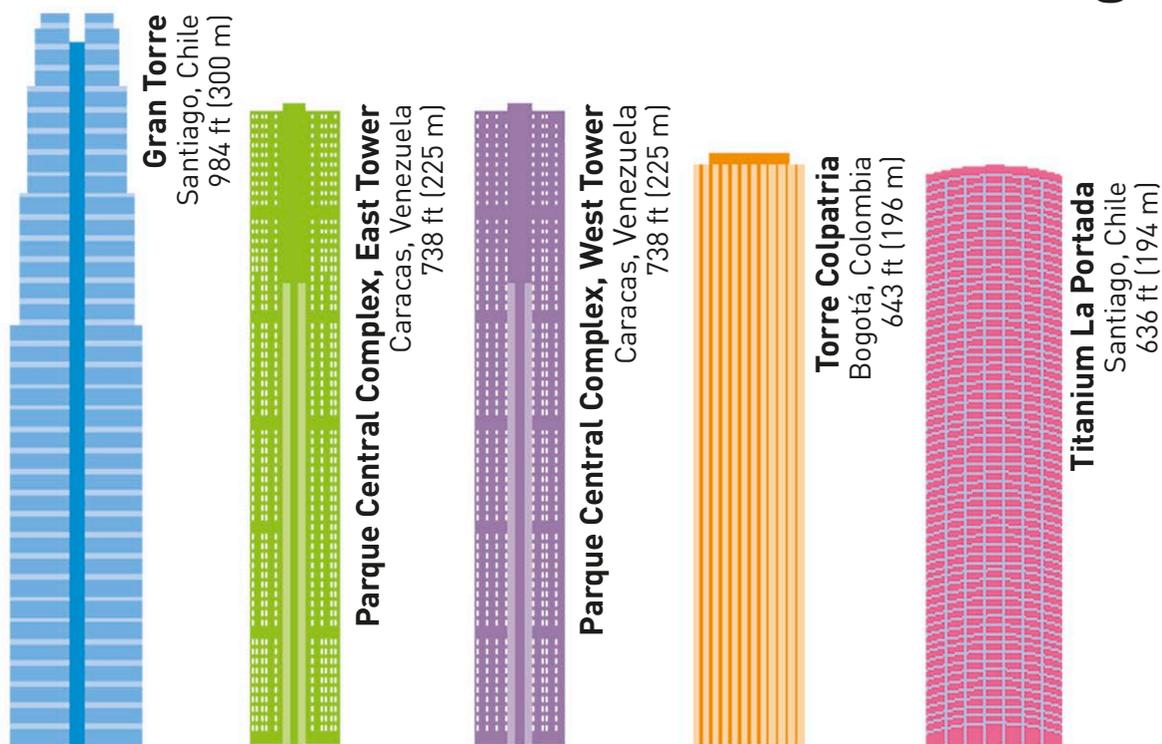
Tallest:

**Angel Falls, Venezuela**  
—3,212 ft (979 m)



Largest (by volume):  
**Iguazú Falls, Brazil—Argentina**— 62,012 ft<sup>3</sup> (1,756 m<sup>3</sup>) of water per second

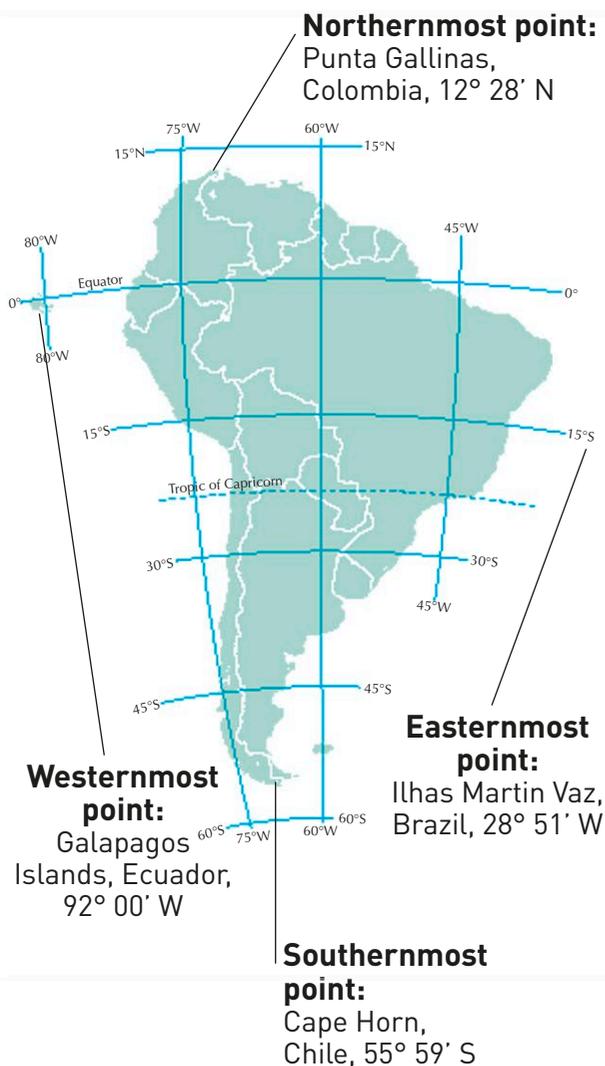
## Tallest buildings



## Most visited cities (Visitors per year)



## South America's extreme points



## Longest bridge

Rio Niterói Bridge, Guanabara Bay, Brazil—**8.25 miles (13.29 km)**



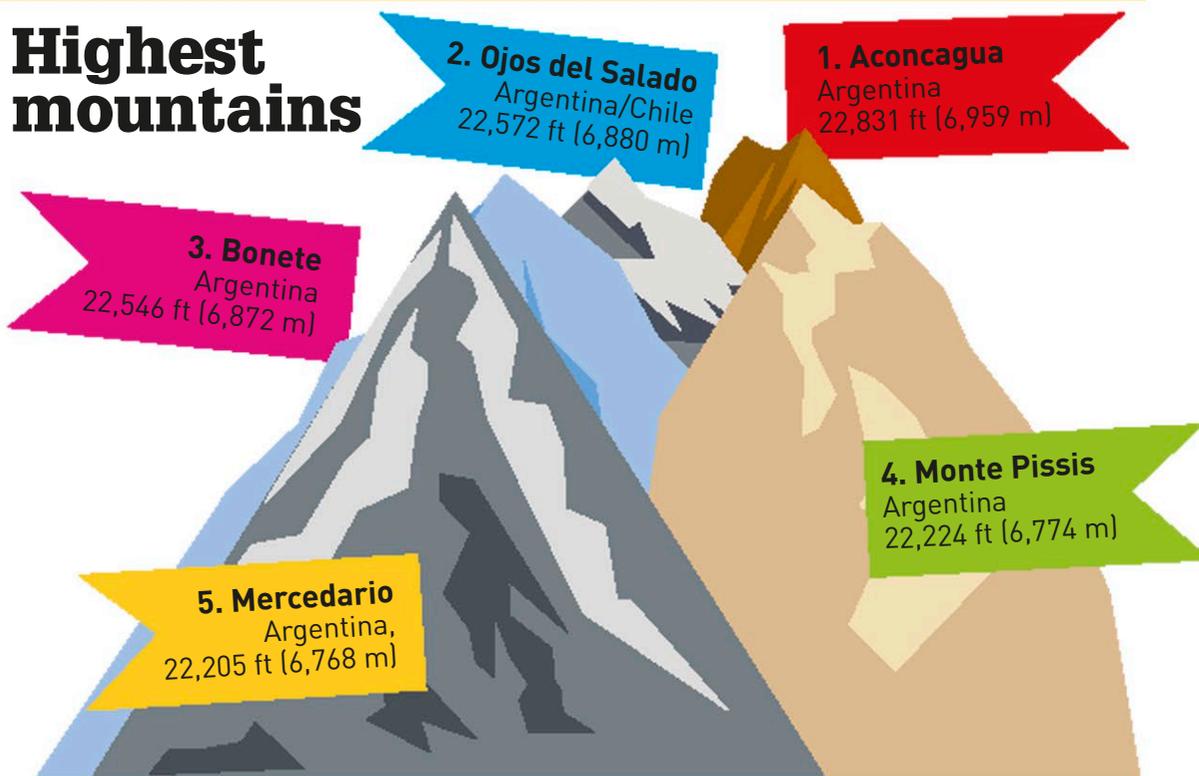
## Lowest point

Laguna del Carbón, Santa Cruz, Argentina—**-344 ft (-104.9 m)**

This is the seventh-lowest point on Earth's surface.

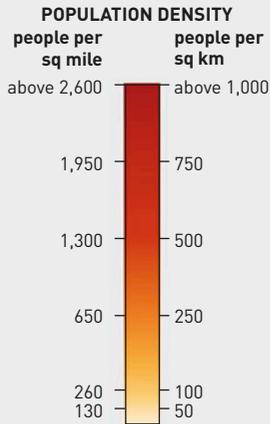
## Landlocked countries 2—Bolivia and Paraguay

### Highest mountains



**KEY**

The colors represent the number of people living per square mile/ square kilometer.

**Colombia**

South America's second-most densely populated country is Colombia, with 41 people per sq km (106 people per sq mile).

**Paramaribo**

240,000 people live in the capital of Suriname, about half the country's population.

**French Guiana**

This French overseas department is home to 244,118 people.

**The Amazon**

The river provides the only means of transport here, and many towns and villages are found on its riverbanks.

**Ecuador**

15.9 million people live in Ecuador. It is the most densely populated country in South America, with 145 people per sq mile (56 people per sq km).

**Iquitos**

More than 400,000 people live in the largest city on the Peruvian section of the Amazon River. Iquitos can only be reached by boat or plane.

**Lima**

8.9 million people live in Lima, the capital of Peru. Its population has almost doubled since 1980.

**São Paulo**

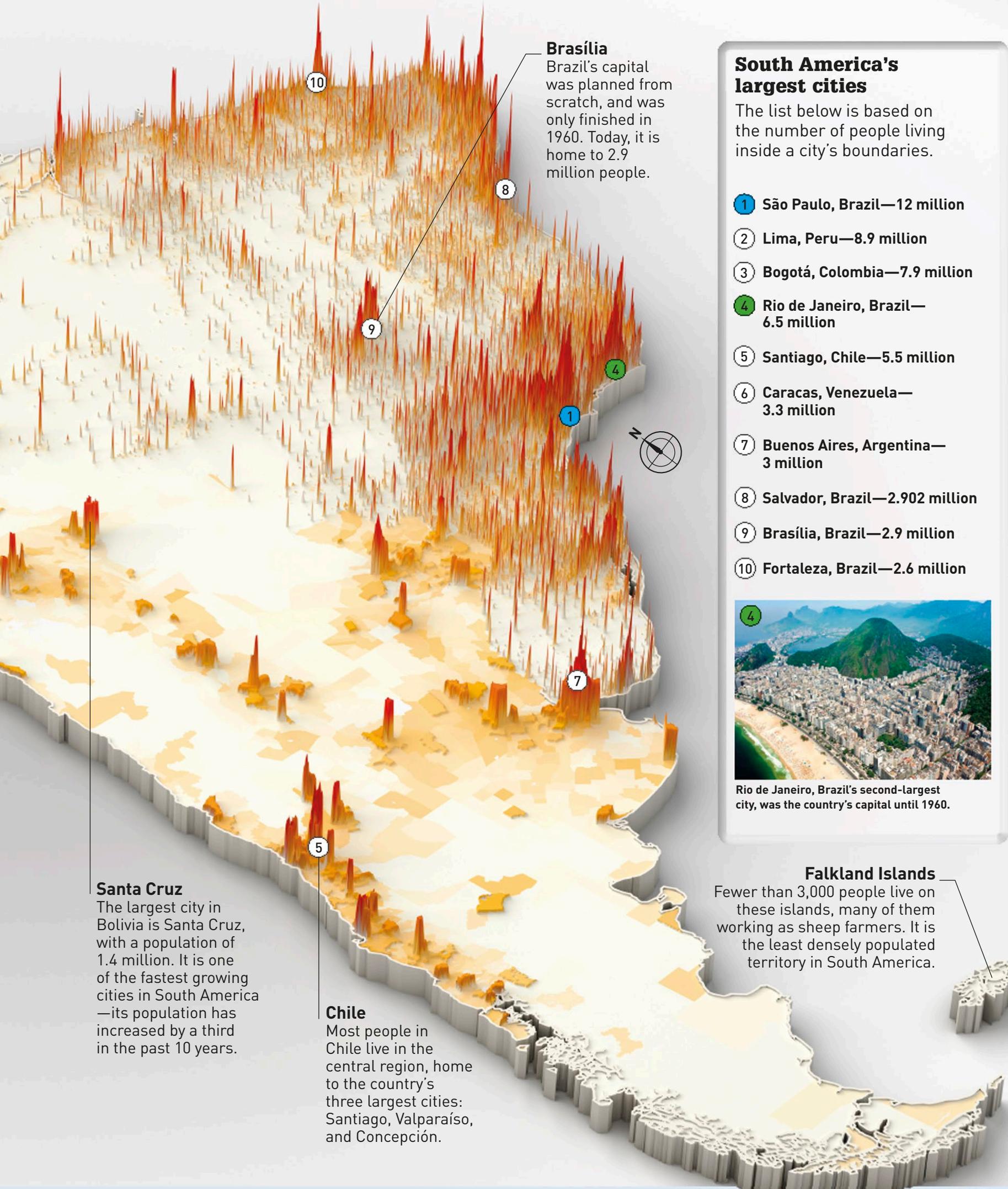
The discovery of gold near São Paulo in the 1690s attracted settlers from around the world. Today, South America's largest city is a bustling business center, with a population of 12 million.



Tower blocks and modern architecture dominate downtown São Paulo.

# Population

South America is highly urbanized, with the majority of its population living in cities such as Lima and Bogotá in the northwest, or São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro on the east coast of Brazil. By contrast, Amazonia, the Altiplano plateau, and Patagonia remain sparsely populated.



**Brasília**  
 Brazil's capital was planned from scratch, and was only finished in 1960. Today, it is home to 2.9 million people.

**South America's largest cities**

The list below is based on the number of people living inside a city's boundaries.

- 1 São Paulo, Brazil—12 million
- 2 Lima, Peru—8.9 million
- 3 Bogotá, Colombia—7.9 million
- 4 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil—6.5 million
- 5 Santiago, Chile—5.5 million
- 6 Caracas, Venezuela—3.3 million
- 7 Buenos Aires, Argentina—3 million
- 8 Salvador, Brazil—2.902 million
- 9 Brasília, Brazil—2.9 million
- 10 Fortaleza, Brazil—2.6 million



Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's second-largest city, was the country's capital until 1960.

**Santa Cruz**  
 The largest city in Bolivia is Santa Cruz, with a population of 1.4 million. It is one of the fastest growing cities in South America—its population has increased by a third in the past 10 years.

**Chile**  
 Most people in Chile live in the central region, home to the country's three largest cities: Santiago, Valparaíso, and Concepción.

**Falkland Islands**  
 Fewer than 3,000 people live on these islands, many of them working as sheep farmers. It is the least densely populated territory in South America.



### The Trans-Amazonian Highway

Running from João Pessoa in the east to the Amazonian city of Lábrea, the Trans-Amazonian Highway is about 2,485 miles (4,000 km) long.

**Meeting of waters**  
The Rio Negro's dark water meets the muddy Amazon near Manaus in Brazil. Their waters do not immediately mix, creating a two-tone river.

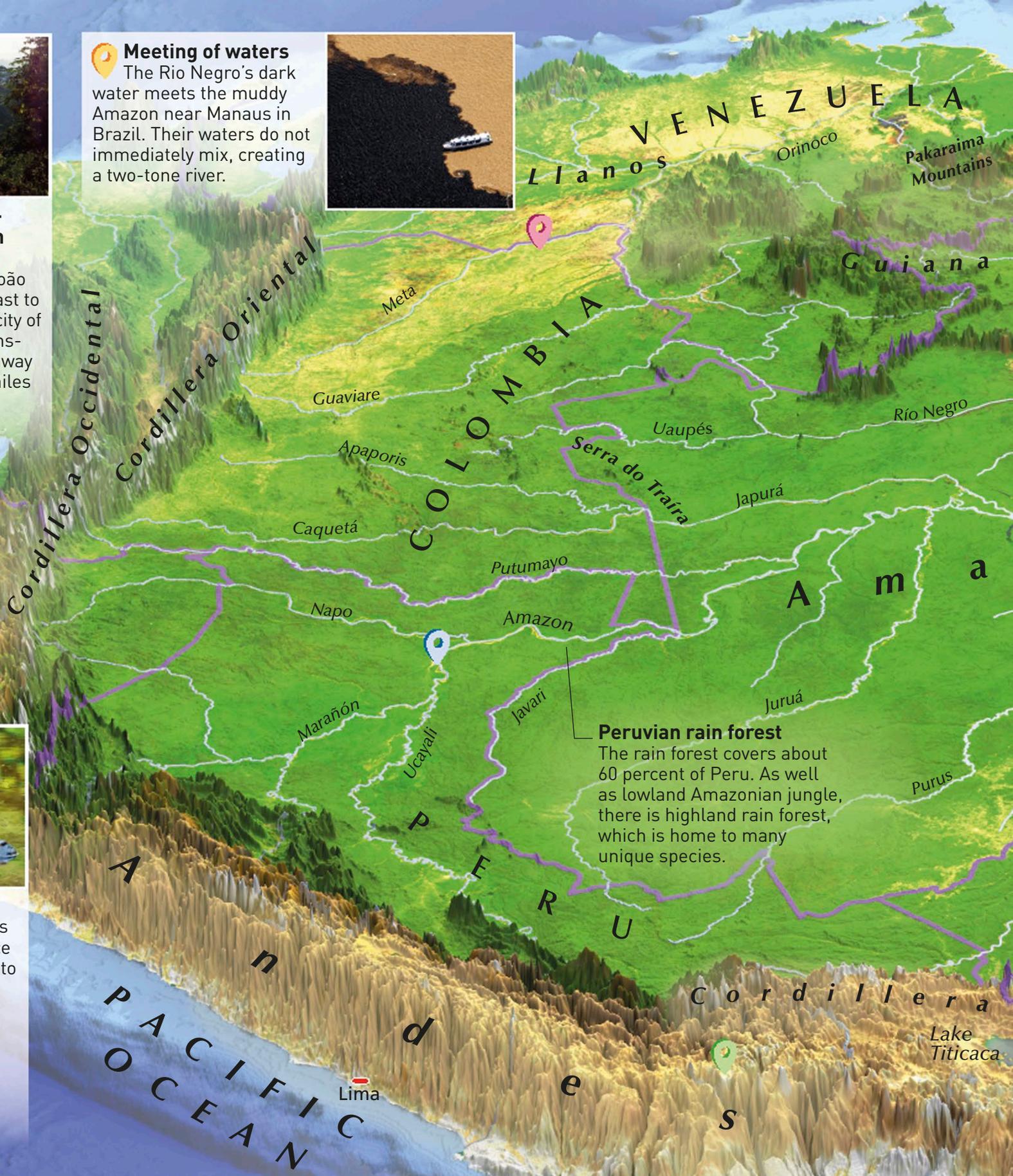


**Los Llanos**  
Rains flood this vast grassland once a year, turning it into a huge temporary marshland. It is home to many species of water birds, and the rare Orinoco crocodile.

**Belén**  
Buildings are attached to stilts in the Peruvian village of Belén. The houses float on the river itself, rising and falling with its waters.



**Nevado Mismi**  
The source of the Amazon river lies at the foot of a cliff face on Nevado Mismi, a mountain in the Peruvian Andes. It is marked by a cross.



**Kaieteur Falls**  
Waterfalls are rare in the Amazon Basin, but Kaieteur Falls, in Guyana, is 226 m (741 ft) high—four times taller than Niagara Falls.



**Ilha de Marajó**  
The largest river island in the world, Marajó is about the size of Switzerland.

**The Amazon River**  
The Nile might be longer, but the Amazon carries more water than any other river on Earth—approximately 20 percent of all the water that reaches the ocean from the world's rivers.



**Pororoca**  
The Amazon river's tidal bore, the Pororoca, is a large wave that occurs when there's a new or full moon. It can reach up to 26 ft (8 m) high, and is popular with surfers.

**Lábrea**  
The Trans-Amazonian Highway ends its 2,485-mile (4,000-km) journey from João Pessoa to Lábrea here.

**Planalto de Mato Grosso**

# Amazon Basin

Home to the world's largest rain forest, the Amazon Basin covers an area almost as large as Australia. It is Earth's most dynamic ecosystem; 3 million different types of plant and animal live in its lush jungle, and new species are still being discovered there every year.





### Angel Falls

At 3,212 ft (979 m), Angel Falls is the world's tallest waterfall—more than twice the height of the Empire State Building.

Presidential  
Palace,  
Suriname

Coro historic town,  
Venezuela

Teatro  
Amazonas,  
Brazil

Castillo San  
Felipe de  
Barajas,  
Colombia

Santa Barbara  
Church,  
Colombia

Angel Falls,  
Venezuela

San Agustín  
Archaeological Park,  
Colombia

### Giant tortoise

11 species of giant tortoise live on the Galápagos Islands. Many live for more than 100 years.

El Panecillo  
Statue,  
Ecuador



Giant tortoise,  
Galápagos

# Famous landmarks

South America is home to an incredible wealth of cultural sites, ranging from the Inca ruins of Machu Picchu to the modern architecture of Brasília. It also boasts awe-inspiring natural wonders, such as Venezuela's Angel Falls and the glaciers of Chile and Argentina.

Chan Chan,  
Peru

### Chan Chan

The largest pre-Columbian city in the Americas, Chan Chan was built by the Chimu people in around 850 CE. Many of the city's walls have crumbled over time, but several statues have survived.

Sacred city of  
Caral-Supe,  
Peru

Wak'a Wallamarka,  
Peru

Machu Picchu,  
Peru

Jesuit  
missions,  
Bolivia

Tiwanaku,  
Bolivia

### Christ the Redeemer

Looking down from the summit of Mount Corcovado onto Rio de Janeiro, Christ the Redeemer is one of the continent's best-loved landmarks. Finished in 1931, the 128-ft (39-m) tall statue took five years to build.



The giant statue of Jesus Christ towers over Brazil's second city, Rio de Janeiro.



São Luis historic center, Brazil

Convent of São Francisco, Brazil

Rock paintings, Serra da Capivara National Park, Brazil

Cathedral of Salvador, Brazil

Cathedral of Brasília, Brazil

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi, Brazil

Christ the Redeemer, Brazil

Pantanal National Park, Brazil

Sucre Cathedral, Bolivia

Iguazú National Park waterfalls, Argentina

Jesuit Missions of La Santísima Trinidad, Paraguay

Quebrada de Humahuaca rock formation, Argentina

Iglesia Matriz, Uruguay

Qhapaq Nan, Andean Road System, Andes region

Santa Catalina, Argentina

Floralis Generica giant flower, Argentina

VLT Observatory, Chile

Port elevators, Chile

**Floralis Generica giant flower**

This sculpture of a flower in Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires, is 76 ft (23 m) high. It opens each morning and closes at night.

**Port elevators**

The port city of Valparaíso is built on a series of steep hillsides. These elevators carry passengers up and down the hills.

Churches of Chiloé, Chile

Cueva de las Manos, Argentina

**Los Glaciares National Park**

This beautiful park in southern Argentina is popular with trekkers. It is home to 47 major glaciers, as well as many smaller ones.

Los Glaciares National Park, Argentina

**Buildings**

South America's buildings reflect the continent's rich history. They vary from the stunning ruins left behind by the Inca Empire to the many churches and monasteries built when the region was ruled by Spain and Portugal.

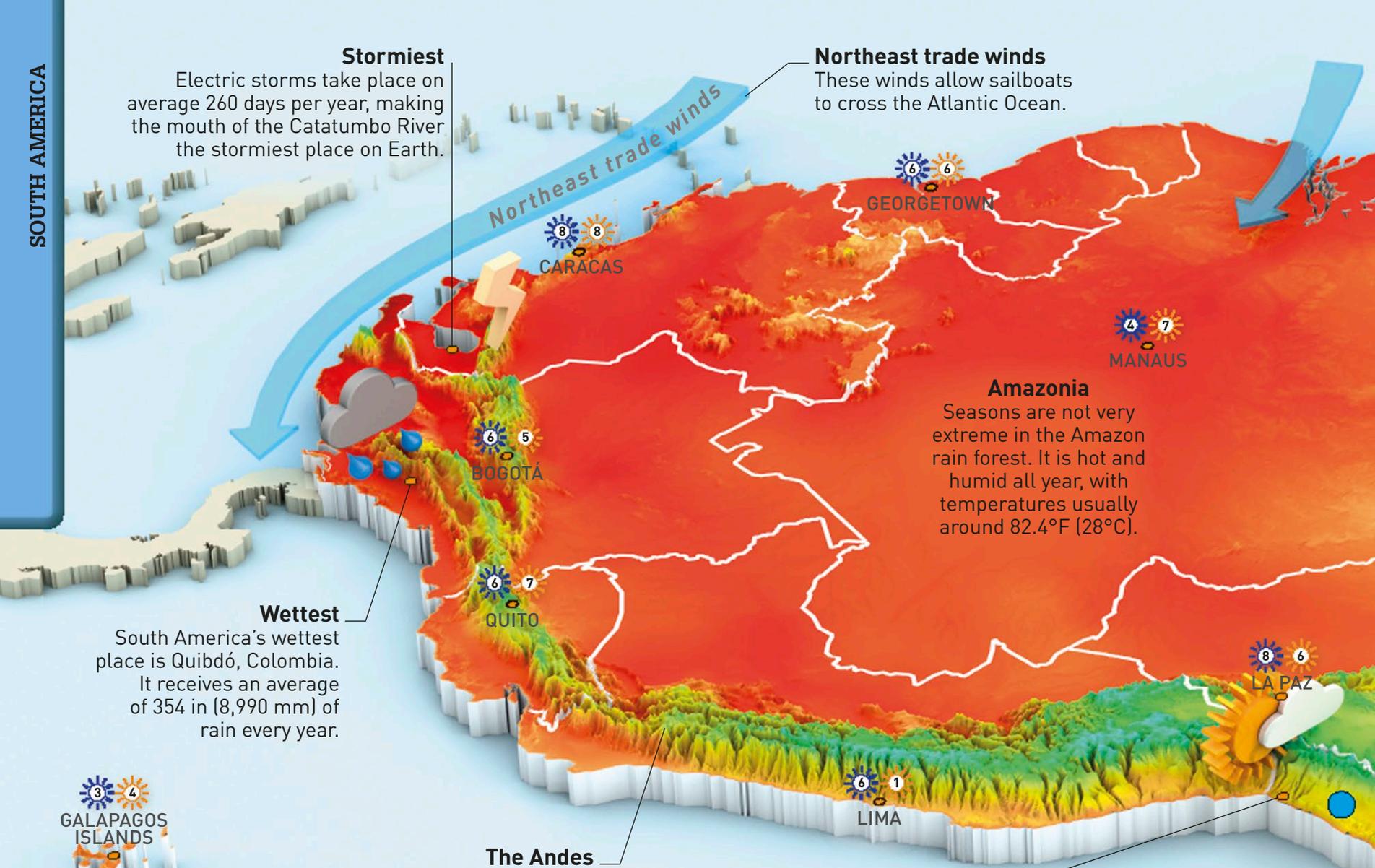


The Inca citadel of Machu Picchu is located high in the Peruvian Andes. The site's purpose remains a mystery, but it may have had a religious role.



The Church of Saint Francis of Assisi in Ouro Preto, Brazil, is just one of the beautiful churches built during the time Brazil was a Portuguese colony.

**KEY**  
 ○ Landmark location



**Stormiest**

Electric storms take place on average 260 days per year, making the mouth of the Catatumbo River the stormiest place on Earth.

**Northeast trade winds**

These winds allow sailboats to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

**Amazonia**

Seasons are not very extreme in the Amazon rain forest. It is hot and humid all year, with temperatures usually around 82.4°F (28°C).

**Wettest**

South America's wettest place is Quibdó, Colombia. It receives an average of 354 in (8,990 mm) of rain every year.

**The Andes**

The climate in the Andes varies greatly. The mountains of Colombia are usually warm and rainy, while northern Chile receives little rain. The far south is much colder and wetter, and is home to many glaciers.

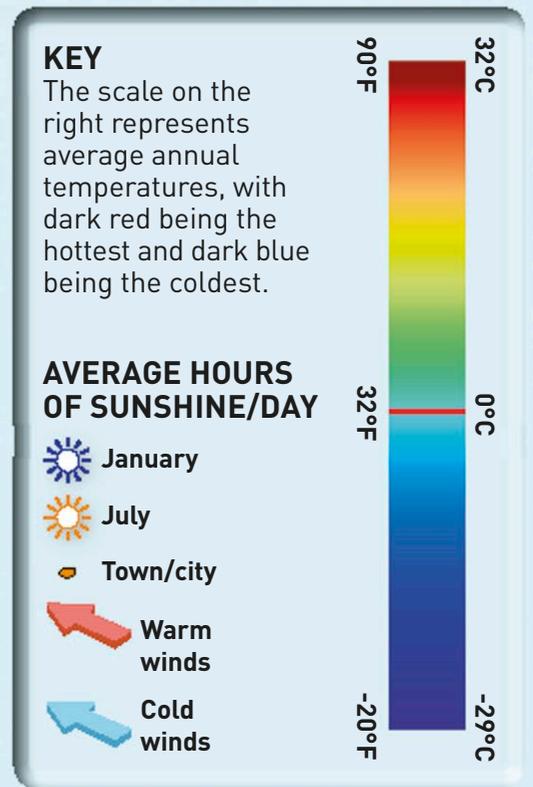
**Driest**

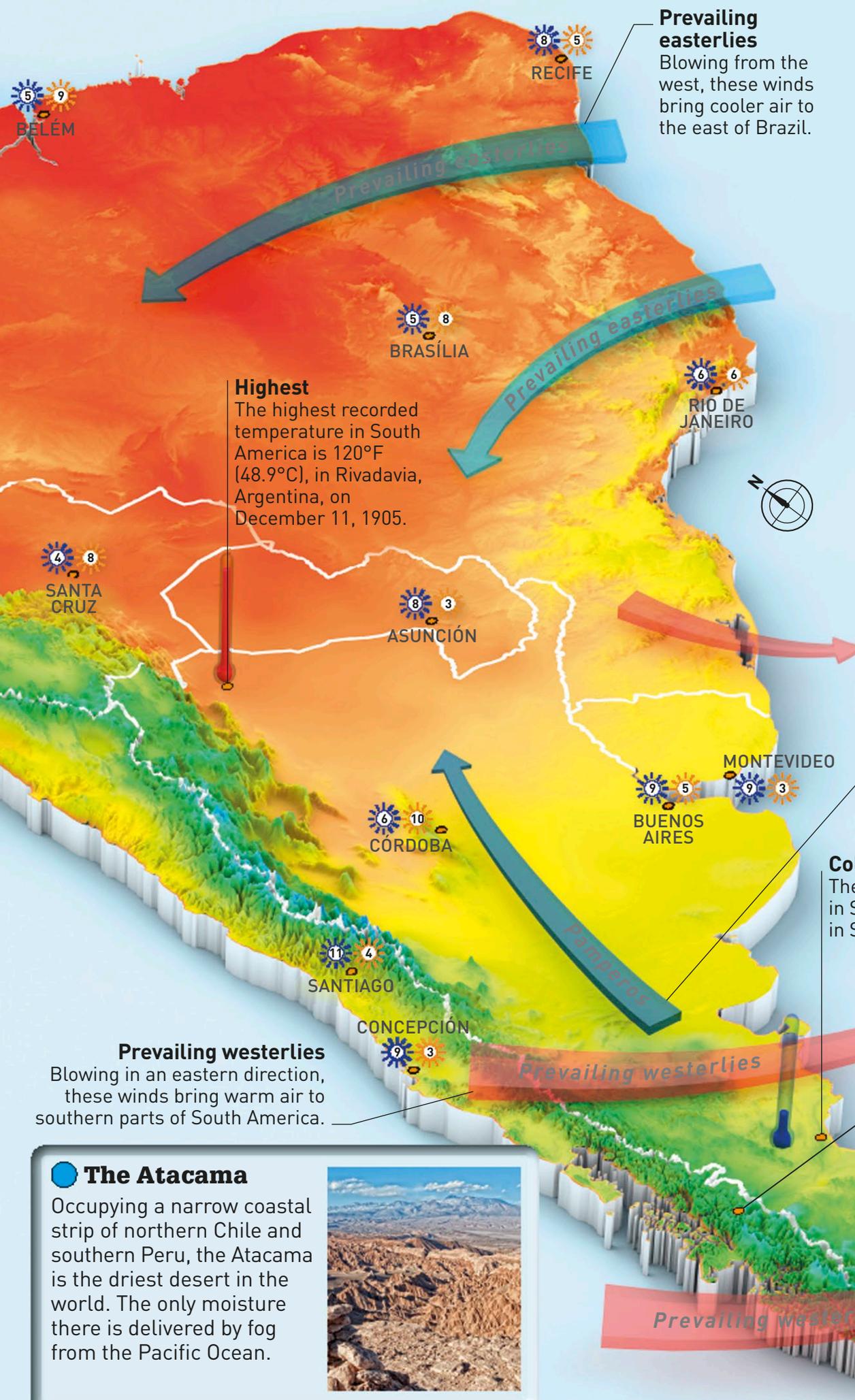
With just over 0.03 in (0.76 mm) of rain falling on average every year, Arica, in Chile, is the driest town on Earth.



# Climate

South America's climate ranges from the tropical heat of the Caribbean coastline in the north to the icy winters and damp summers of Tierra del Fuego in the far south. The Andes mountains and the Amazon rain forest create their own climate systems that affect the rest of the continent.

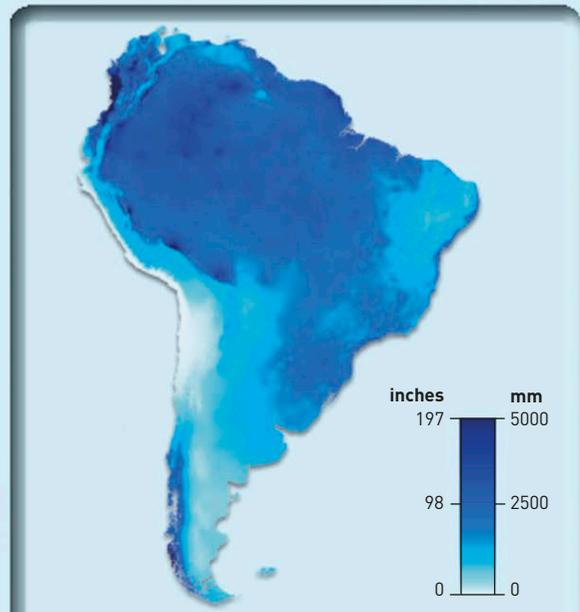




**Prevailing easterlies**  
Blowing from the west, these winds bring cooler air to the east of Brazil.

**Highest**  
The highest recorded temperature in South America is 120°F (48.9°C), in Rivadavia, Argentina, on December 11, 1905.

**Average precipitation**  
This map shows the difference in the average amounts of precipitation (snow and rain) that falls across South America. The wettest areas of the continent are the rain forests of the north and west. The Atacama Desert in the west and the Patagonian Steppe in the south receive the smallest amounts of rain.



**Pamperos**  
These icy winds from the south can cause a sudden drop in temperature. They are most common in the summer months.

**Coldest**  
The lowest temperature ever recorded in South America was -27°F (-32.8°C) in Sarmiento, Argentina, on June 1, 1907.

**Prevailing westerlies**  
Blowing in an eastern direction, these winds bring warm air to southern parts of South America.

**Most rainy days**  
Bahia, Chile, experiences more rainy days than anywhere else in the world. On average, it rains 325 days a year.

**The Atacama**  
Occupying a narrow coastal strip of northern Chile and southern Peru, the Atacama is the driest desert in the world. The only moisture there is delivered by fog from the Pacific Ocean.



HAVE NEVER RECORDED A SINGLE DROP OF RAIN.

**Common vampire bat**

This bat drinks the blood of tapirs and cattle.

**Goliath bird-eating spider**

Despite its name, the world's largest spider prefers eating small rodents or toads.

**Bull shark**

This formidable hunter thrives in both freshwater and saltwater.

**Hoatzin**

Also known as the stinkbird. Its chicks have "wing claws" for climbing through branches.

**Capuchin monkey**

Intelligent and sociable, this monkey forages for food in the treetops.

**Jaguar**

The rain forest's largest killer is a lone, nocturnal hunter.

**Bald uakari**

This monkey's bright red face is seen as highly attractive in a mate.

**Spectacled caiman**

A good swimmer, it hunts fish such as piranhas.

**Harpy eagle**

This large raptor can snatch sloths and monkeys from trees.

**Tiger shark**

Coastal waters and estuaries are home to this dangerous shark.

**Spectacled bear**

The continent's only bear lives in mountain forests and eats fruit and nuts.

**Ocelot**

A nocturnal hunter, this small cat preys on rodents. It is also an excellent swimmer.

**Puma**

Found throughout the Americas, the puma thrives in deserts, prairies, and forests.

**Great white shark**

This dangerous predator can live for up to 70 years.

**Darwin's finches**

This group of small birds helped Charles Darwin to develop his theory of evolution.

# Wildlife

The grasslands, mountains, and rain forests of South America are home to an incredible variety of plant and animal species. This vast range of habitats contain many species of birds, mammals, and amphibians that are found nowhere else on Earth.

**BIOMES**

Tropical broadleaf forest is widespread in the north, before it gives way to temperate grasslands and temperate broadleaf forest in the south.

-  Ice
-  Temperate broadleaf forest
-  Temperate grassland
-  Mediterranean
-  Tropical broadleaf forest
-  Tropical dry broadleaf forest
-  Mountain
-  Desert
-  Flooded grassland
-  Mangrove

### Amazonian river dolphin

Its long snout is used to explore the river bed and get between tree roots.



### Toucan

This bird rests its beak on its back while sleeping.



### Capybara

Riverbanks and wetland areas are home to this giant rodent.



### Poison-dart frog

Has a brightly colored skin to warn predators that it is poisonous.



### Peccary

These piglike creatures form groups to fend off enemies.



### Red-bellied piranha

A school of these fish can strip its prey to bare bones in minutes.



### Guanaco

The wild ancestor of the llama is adapted to high-altitude life.



### Armadillo

The only mammal to have body armor, the armadillo rolls itself into a ball when threatened.



### Yellow anaconda

Rarely seen out of water, this snake can grow up to 14.4 ft (4.4 m) in length.



### Golden lion tamarin

This elegant monkey has a beautiful mane and lives in large family groups.



### Humpback whale

These ocean giants sing in order to attract a mate.



### Giant anteater

Huge front claws and a long snout help the anteater to raid termite nests.



### Geoffroy's cat

This tiny feline is an excellent climber and preys on birds.



### Darwin's rhea

When threatened, this flightless bird flees in a zigzag pattern.



### Andean condor

With a wingspan of more than 10 ft (3 m), this bird can glide for vast distances.



### Patagonian mara

This rodent rears its young in communal burrows on the grassland.



### Southern sea lion

Squid and octopus form much of this agile hunter's diet.



### Southern right whale

Following years of exploitation by whalers, numbers are steadily increasing.



### Magellanic penguin

Only 26 in (65 cm) tall, this penguin hunts small fish.



## Amazonian wildlife

The Amazon rain forest is home to an incredible range of wildlife. Around 130 species of monkey, 400 species of frog, 500 species of reptile, and at least 1,500 different species of bird live in the world's largest rain forest.



The brightly colored macaw is the largest of all the parrots. It eats a varied diet of fruit, nuts, and seeds.

**Caracas**  
89 percent of Venezuela's population live in towns or cities, with 5.3 million people living in the country's capital, Caracas.

**Guyana**  
Less than 30 percent of Guyana's population of 735,900 live in towns or cities.

**Ecuador**  
Many people in Ecuador live in the Andean highland region known as La Sierra. Important cities here include Cuenca and the capital, Quito.

**Guayaquil**  
More than 5 million people live in and around Ecuador's most populous city. It is an important port and business centre.

**Lima**  
Nearly 10 million people live in the area in and around the Peruvian capital.

**Manaus**  
Located at the heart of the Amazon rain forest, Manaus, with a population of 2 million, is the largest city in Amazonia. This lively port made its wealth in the 19th century through the rubber trade.



The opera house in Manaus is one of the grandest buildings in Amazonia.

Almost **one half** of South America's population lives **in Brazil**.

## By night

The brightly lit urban areas of Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela dominate the northwest of the continent. The cities of southeast Brazil, meanwhile, contrast sharply with the dark expanses of Amazonia, in which only occasional dots of light mark the rain forest's few settlements.







# AFRICA



**Africa from space**

The Equator splits Africa between the northern and southern hemispheres. It is bordered by the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

**Algeria**  
Algeria is Africa's largest country, and more than 80 percent of it is made up of the Sahara Desert. Its main cities are all in the north.



**KEY**  
● Capital city  
● Major city

**Sierra Leone**  
**Liberia**  
 Claiming independence as early as 1847, it became a new home to many African-American former slaves.

**Nigeria**  
 It is known as the "Giant of Africa" for its large population (186 million) and booming economy (the 20th largest in the world).

**FAST FACTS**

- Total land area:** 11,712,409 sq miles (30,335,000 sq km)
- Total population:** 1.1 billion
- Number of countries:** 53
- Largest country:** Algeria—919,595 sq miles (2,381,741 sq km)
- Smallest country:** Seychelles—176 sq miles (455 sq km)
- Largest country population:** Nigeria—186 million

# Countries and borders

Africa's different kingdoms were brutally split up between European nations in the 19th century. After World War Two, struggle for independence, as well as civil wars, created new nations, re-drawn borders, and disputed territories.



**Egypt**  
The northeastern corner of Egypt, Sinai, is geographically part of Asia. It is split from the rest of Egypt by the Red Sea and the manmade Suez Canal.

**Independence!**  
With a few early or late exceptions, most African nations managed to gain their independence from various European countries between 1951 and 1975.



**Black Star Gate, Accra, honors Ghana's independence (1957).**

**Lake Victoria**  
Three countries have borders that pass through Africa's biggest lake: Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

VICTORIA

SEYCHELLES

COMOROS

MORONI  
Mayotte (to France)  
Mahajanga

MADAGASCAR

ANTANANARIVO

Fianarantsoa

INDIAN OCEAN

**Smallest country**  
Spread across 115 islands and atolls (islands formed of coral), the Seychelles is Africa's smallest nation. Independent since 1976, it has a population of 93,180.



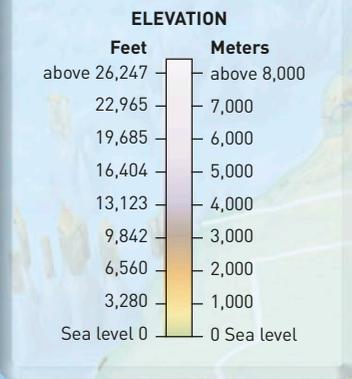
**Namibia**  
After years of conflict, Namibia gained independence from South Africa in 1990.

**South Africa**  
South Africa is the only country in the world that borders both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

NEVER BEEN COLONIZED (RULED BY ANOTHER COUNTRY).

**KEY**

The colors on the map represent the height of the land in relation to sea level.



**Niger River**  
From its source in the Guinea Highlands, the Niger flows north, into the desert, and then back south, before flowing into the Gulf of Guinea.

**Low-lying coasts**  
Mangroves, swamps, and sandy beaches line much of West Africa's coast.

**Sahel**  
The dry grasslands of the Sahel are slowly turning into desert due to drought and human activity.

# Landscape

Africa has many extreme landscapes. Deserts spread across the north and south, while rain forests dominate the continent's tropical central and western parts. The land rises toward the east, culminating in the Ethiopian Highlands and the Great Rift Valley region, home to Africa's largest lakes and mountains.



**FAST FACTS**

**1 Highest point:**  
Kilimanjaro—19,341 ft (5,895 m)

**2 Longest river:**  
Nile—4,160 miles (6,695 km)

**3 Largest lake:**  
Lake Victoria—26,828 sq miles (69,484 sq km)

**4 Largest island:**  
Madagascar—229,345 sq miles (594,000 sq km)



**Ethiopian Highlands**

This high plateau contains peaks of over 14,764 ft (4,500 m) and is home to Lake Tana, source of the Blue Nile.

**Sahara Desert**

The world's largest hot desert, the Sahara spreads over 3,600,000 sq miles (9,200,000 sq km). It features huge dunes, arid gravel plains, craggy mountains, and old volcanoes, as well as a few oases.



**Kilimanjaro**

Africa's highest mountain is a long-extinct volcano. Its famous ice and snow cap is getting smaller every year.

Kilimanjaro  
5,895 m /  
19,341 ft

**Congo Basin**

**Kalahari Basin**

**Nile River**

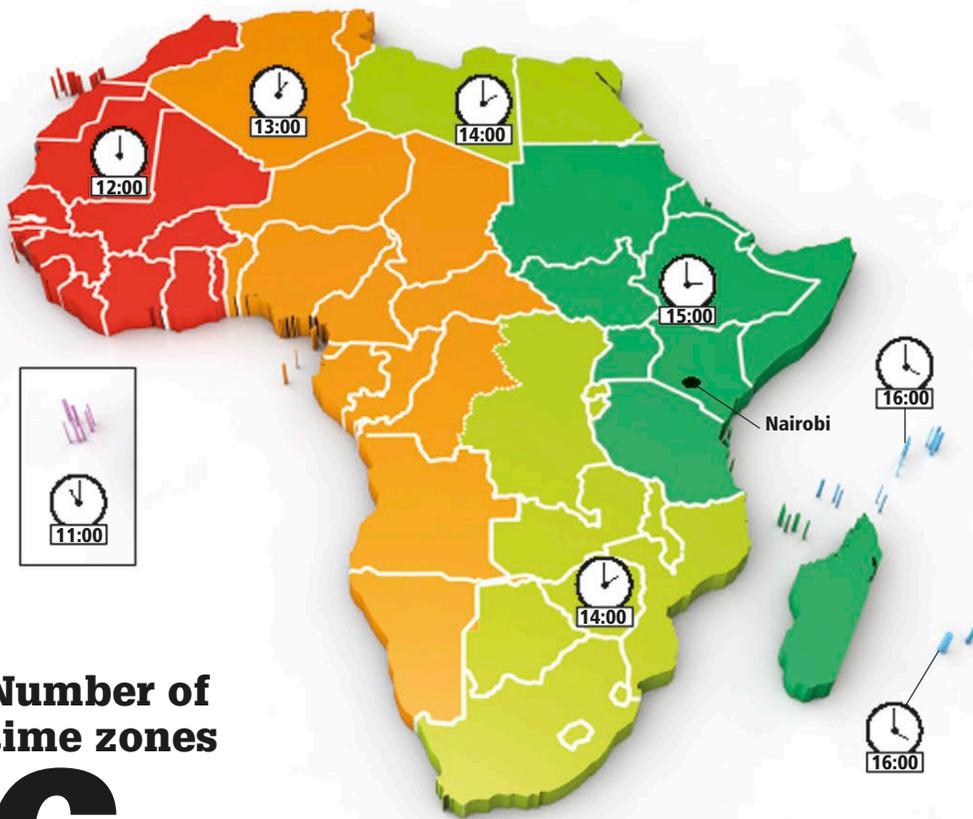
At 4,160 miles (6,695 km), the Nile is the world's longest river. It has two main tributaries, the Blue and White Niles, which join in Khartoum, Sudan, before the river flows through Egypt.



**Namib Desert**

The extremely dry Namib Desert includes the Namib Sand Sea—giant coastal dunes up to 985 ft (300 m) high, that are often swept in dense fogs.

# Fascinating facts



Number of  
time zones

# 6



12:00

The world is split into 39 time zones. Most are set whole hours ahead or behind Coordinated Universal Time (UCT)—the time at the Greenwich Meridian in London, UK. Some, however, are whole hours plus 30 or 45 minutes ahead or behind UCT. Therefore, on this map, if it was 12:00 in London, it would be 15:00 in Nairobi, Kenya (3 hours ahead of UCT).

## COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST NEIGHBORS



**Tanzania (8)**

Burundi, **Democratic Republic of Congo**, Kenya, **Malawi**, Mozambique, **Rwanda**, Uganda, **Zambia**

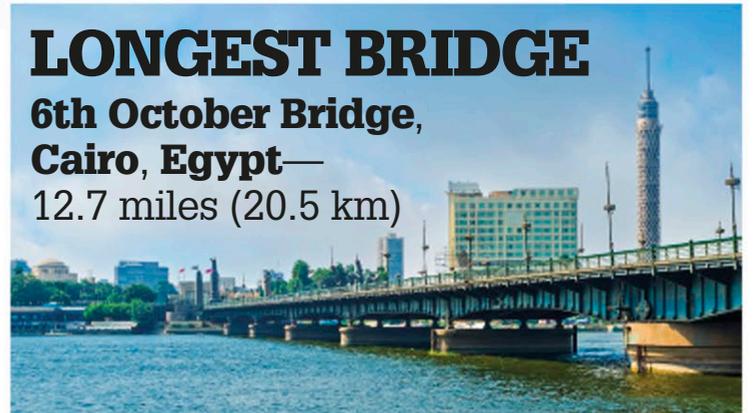


**Zambia (8)**

Angola, **Botswana**, Democratic Republic of Congo, **Malawi**, Mozambique, **Namibia**, Tanzania, **Zimbabwe**

## LONGEST BRIDGE

**6th October Bridge**,  
**Cairo, Egypt**—  
12.7 miles (20.5 km)

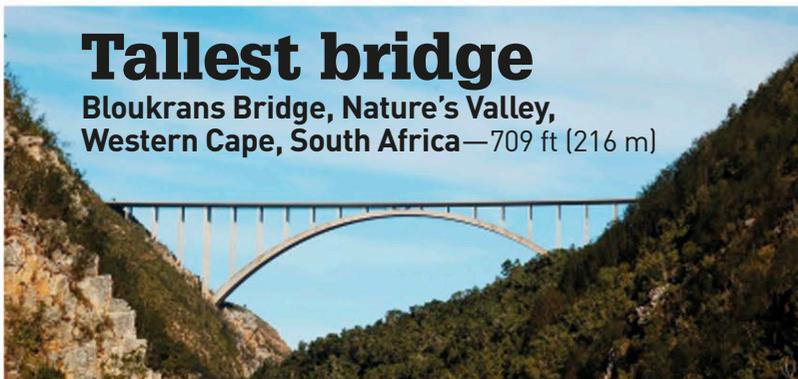


# 16 LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES

Botswana ▪ **Burkina Faso** ▪ Burundi ▪ **Central African Republic** ▪  
Chad ▪ **Ethiopia** ▪ Lesotho ▪ **Malawi** ▪ Mali ▪ **Niger** ▪ Rwanda ▪  
**South Sudan** ▪ Swaziland ▪ **Uganda** ▪ Zambia ▪ **Zimbabwe**

## Tallest bridge

**Bloukrans Bridge**, Nature's Valley,  
Western Cape, South Africa—709 ft (216 m)



Number of  
languages  
spoken

more than

# 2,000

## LAKES

● Largest: **Lake Victoria**,  
Uganda / Tanzania / Kenya—  
26,828 sq miles (69,484 sq km)

Deepest: **Lake Tanganyika**,  
Burundi / Democratic Republic of Congo /  
Tanzania / Zambia—4,823 ft (1,470 m) deep



## WATERFALLS

Tallest: **Tugela Falls**,  
South Africa— 3,110 ft  
(948 m)

● Largest (by volume):  
**Victoria Falls**,  
Zimbabwe / Zaire—  
38,422 ft<sup>3</sup> (1,088 m<sup>3</sup>)  
of water per second



**LONGEST COASTLINE** Madagascar—3,000 miles (4,828 km)

✈️ **Busiest airport** O.R. Tambo International, Johannesburg, South Africa— **19.164 million passengers per year**



**Longest railroad line**  
The Blue Train,  
Pretoria–Cape Town,  
South Africa—  
994 miles (1,600 km)



**Longest subway system**  
Cairo Metro, Egypt—  
48 miles (78 km)

## Most visited cities (Visitors per year)

**Johannesburg, S. Africa**  
3.6 million

**Cairo, Egypt**  
1.5 million

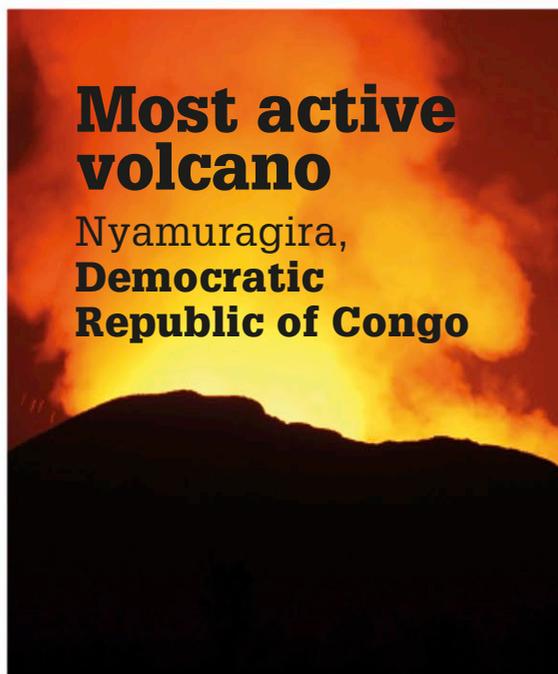
**Cape Town, S. Africa**  
1.4 million

**Casablanca, Morocco**  
1.1 million

**Durban, S. Africa**  
0.8 million

## Most active volcano

Nyamuragira,  
**Democratic Republic of Congo**

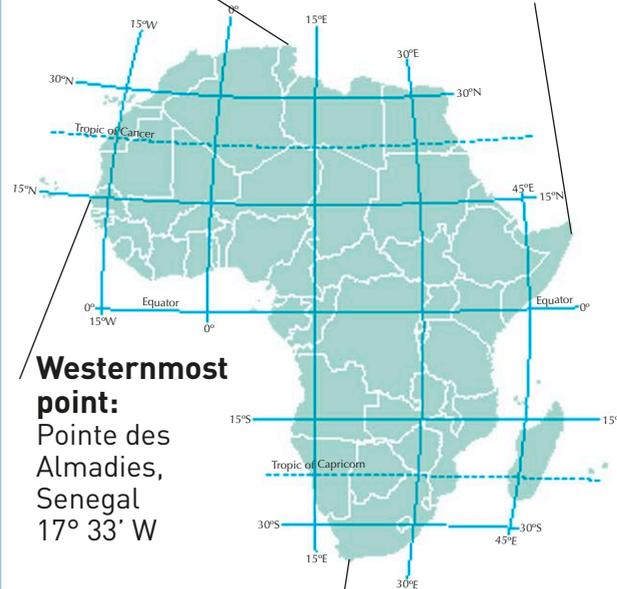


**LOWEST POINT**  
**Lake 'Assal, Djibouti**—  
512 ft (156 m) below sea level

## AFRICA'S EXTREME POINTS

**Northernmost point:**  
Jalta, Tunisia  
37° 31' N

**Easternmost point:**  
Raas Xaafuun,  
Somalia  
51° 24' E



**Algiers**  
Algeria's capital and largest city, it has a population of 3.1 million.

**Tunis**  
Almost 2 million people live in Tunisia's capital.

**Casablanca**  
Morocco's largest city and busiest port has 3.4 million inhabitants.

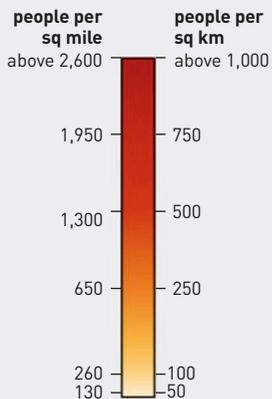
Niger has the **highest birth rate** in the world; **women** here have an average of **7.6 children**.

**Mauritania**  
As 90 percent of this country lies in the Sahara Desert, its population density is very low, with only 10 per sq mile (4 people per sq km).

**Dakar**  
Senegal's capital has a population density of 35,800 per sq mile (13,800 people per sq km).

**Lagos**  
Nigeria's largest city has a population of 13.1 million. A further 8 million live in the area surrounding the city.

#### POPULATION DENSITY



#### KEY

The colours represent the number of people living per square kilometre/ square mile.

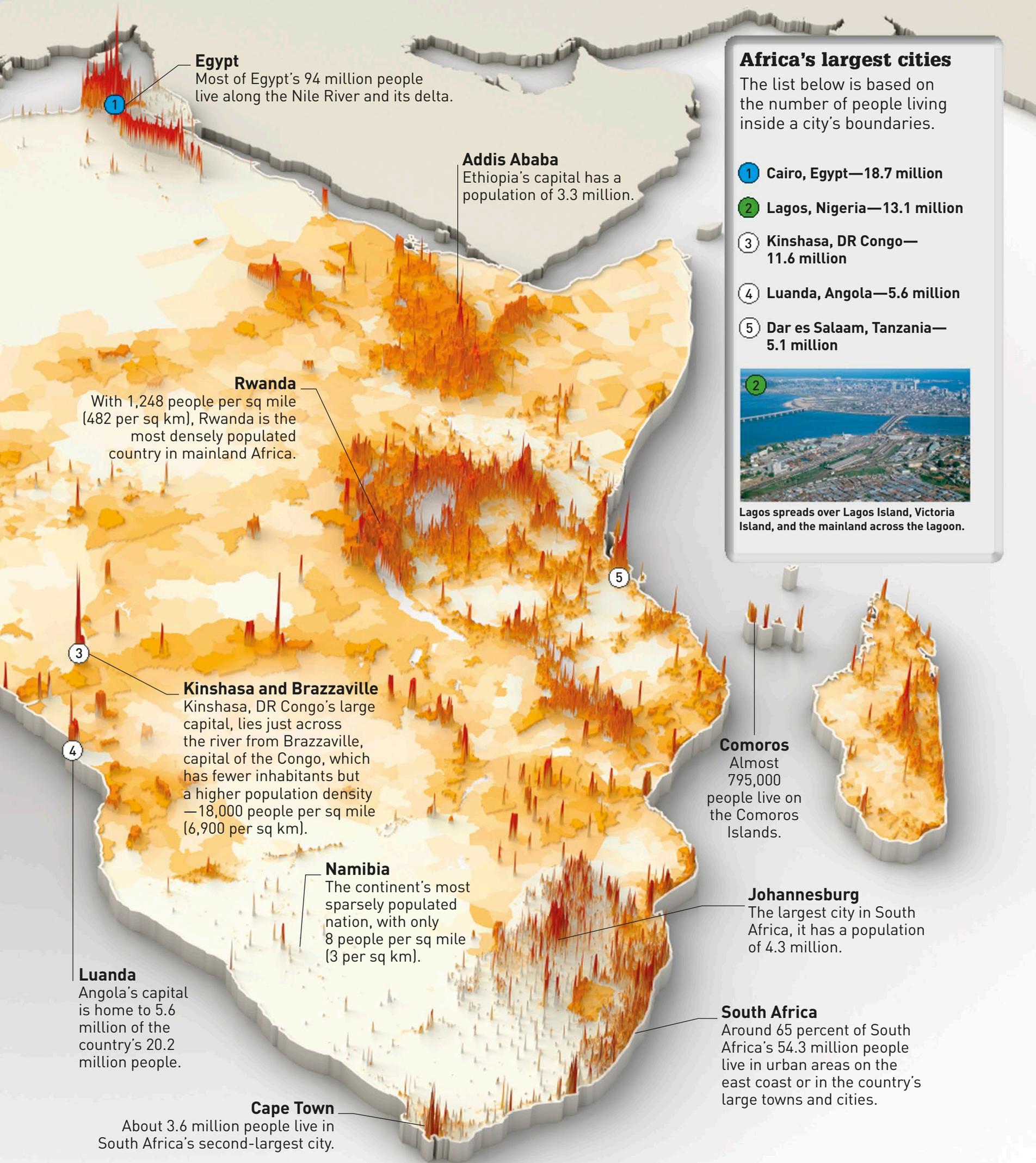
# Population

Africa, the birthplace of our earliest human ancestors, is the second-most populous continent in the world (after Asia). But because the continent is so large, its average population density is low—only half that of Europe. In reality, some regions are very crowded, while others, like the Sahara, are almost deserted.



#### 1 Cairo, Egypt

Founded in ancient times and Egypt's capital since 1168, Cairo is Africa's largest city, with 18.7 million inhabitants. Greater Cairo sprawls in all directions, and includes the famous pyramids at Giza.



**Egypt**

Most of Egypt's 94 million people live along the Nile River and its delta.

1

**Addis Ababa**

Ethiopia's capital has a population of 3.3 million.

**Rwanda**

With 1,248 people per sq mile (482 per sq km), Rwanda is the most densely populated country in mainland Africa.

**Kinshasa and Brazzaville**

Kinshasa, DR Congo's large capital, lies just across the river from Brazzaville, capital of the Congo, which has fewer inhabitants but a higher population density—18,000 people per sq mile (6,900 per sq km).

**Namibia**

The continent's most sparsely populated nation, with only 8 people per sq mile (3 per sq km).

**Luanda**

Angola's capital is home to 5.6 million of the country's 20.2 million people.

**Cape Town**

About 3.6 million people live in South Africa's second-largest city.

**Africa's largest cities**

The list below is based on the number of people living inside a city's boundaries.

- 1 **Cairo, Egypt—18.7 million**
- 2 **Lagos, Nigeria—13.1 million**
- 3 **Kinshasa, DR Congo—11.6 million**
- 4 **Luanda, Angola—5.6 million**
- 5 **Dar es Salaam, Tanzania—5.1 million**



Lagos spreads over Lagos Island, Victoria Island, and the mainland across the lagoon.

**Comoros**

Almost 795,000 people live on the Comoros Islands.

**Johannesburg**

The largest city in South Africa, it has a population of 4.3 million.

**South Africa**

Around 65 percent of South Africa's 54.3 million people live in urban areas on the east coast or in the country's large towns and cities.



### Rwenzori Mountains

The snow-capped peaks of this range in the Western Rift Valley include Mount Stanley, Africa's third highest mountain at 16,762 ft (5,109 m).



### Red Sea

Formed when the African and Arabian plates split apart, and still widening, this salty sea can reach over 30°C (86°F). Its coral reefs are teeming with fish.



## Ethiopian Highlands

Ahmar Mountains  
ETHIOPIA  
Mēga Escarpment

SOUTH  
SUDAN

Lake Turkana

Cherangany Hills

Victoria Nile

Lake Kyoga

Lake Albert

UGANDA

Sese Islands

Lake  
Victoria

Ukerewe Island

Lake Edward

Rubondo Island

### Lake Victoria

Africa's largest lake lies on the plateau located between the Great Rift Valley's eastern and western branch. At its widest, it measures 209 miles (337 km) across.

RWANDA

### Western Rift Valley

The western branch of the Great Rift Valley is characterized by deep lakes and high mountain ranges.

Lake Kivu

BURUNDI

G r e a t  
V a l l e y  
L a k e T a n g a n y i k a  
R i f t

### Lake Tanganyika

The longest of the Rift Valley's many lakes, Tanganyika is also the world's second deepest lake, at 4,710 ft (1,436 m).



# The Great Rift Valley

## Afar Triangle

This extremely hot, low-lying, molten-rock desert is where the rifts between the Arabian, African, and Somali plates meet.



Horn of Africa

The Great Rift Valley is a growing rift between three of Earth's plates.



This split, causing earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and a changing landscape, began around 25 million years ago. It runs for approximately 3,700 miles (6,000 km) from the Middle East to Mozambique, but its most famous section is found in northeast Africa.

## Kirinaga

At 17,057 ft (5,199 m), this is Africa's second-highest peak.

K E N Y A

Ngorogoro Crater

Serengeti Plain

Lake Eyasi

## Ngorogoro Crater

The Ngorogoro is an old volcanic crater, home to wildebeests, zebras, rhinos, and lions.

Combe

## Kilimanjaro

Africa's highest mountain reaches 19,341 ft (5,895 m).

Masai Steppe

Usambara Mountains

Pemba

Zanzibar

G r e a t  
R i f t  
V a l l e y

T A N Z A N I A

Shama

Lake Rukwa

Livingstone Mountains

Z A M B I A



## Lake Natron

Like most of the Eastern Rift Valley lakes, the shallow water at Lake Natron is very salty and full of algae—making it a perfect breeding spot for flamingoes.

## Lake Nyasa

Southernmost of the Rift Valley's lakes, Nyasa contains around 1,000 types of cichlid, a small, colorful fish.

**Desert stop-offs**

Trading centers that served travelers crossing the Sahara Desert in the 11th and 12th centuries.

**Roman towns**  
Timgad is one of North Africa's many ancient Roman settlements.

**Koutoubia Mosque, Marrakesh, Morocco**

**Timgad, Algeria**

**Leptis Magna ancient Roman site, Libya**

**Great pyramid**  
The oldest of Giza's three pyramids was built over 4,500 years ago.

**Guelta d'Archei, Chad**

**Koutammakou**  
The mud-tower houses (takieta) of the Batammariba tribe have become a symbol of Togo.

**Afzejare Arch, Acacus Mountains, Libya**

**Ancient Ksour of Ouadane, Mauritania**

**Agadez Mosque, Niger**

**Guelta d'Archei**  
The most famous desert pool in the Sahara, it has been a resting place for travelers and their camels for thousands of years.

**Island of Gorée, Senegal**

**Great Mosque, Djenné, Mali**

**Koutammakou, Togo**

**Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, Nigeria**

**Dzanga-Sangha Special Reserve, Central African Republic**



**Stone circles of Senegambia, Senegal and Gambia**

**Greater Accra forts, Ghana**

**Grim reminder**

Gorée, an island off the coast of Senegal's capital, Dakar, was the largest slave-trading center in Africa between the 15th and 19th centuries.

**Sacred Grove**

The Yoruba people of Nigeria once prayed to their many gods in sacred places in the forest. This grove, honoring the river goddess Osun, is one of the last left.

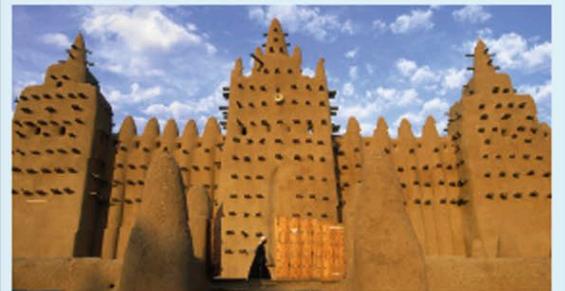
**Kisantu Cathedral, Democratic Rep. of Congo**

# Famous landmarks

Africa boasts breathtaking natural beauty and ancient archeological wonders. It is home to the rich wildlife of the Serengeti and the thunderous waters of Victoria Falls. Towering minarets, ancient pyramids, and monumental mud-brick architecture reflect the continent's rich cultural history.

## ● Great Mosque, Djenné

Djenné was one of the great cities of the rich Mali Empire, one of Africa's medieval kingdoms, and its mosque was a famous center of learning. Built of sun-baked bricks made of sand and earth, it was reconstructed in 1907.





**Royal graves**

Nubian kings and queens were buried in these slender pyramids.

**Pyramids, Giza, Egypt**

**Gebel Barkal, Sudan**

**Lalibela Churches, Ethiopia**

**Cut from the rock**

These cross-shaped churches were carved straight from the rock in the 13th century.

**World's deepest river**

The mighty Congo reaches depths of over 220 m (720 ft).

**Fasil Ghebbi fortress, Gondar, Ethiopia**

**Fort Jesus, Mombasa Island, Kenya**

**Congo River, Congo/Democratic Rep. of Congo**

**Serengeti National Park, Tanzania**

**Victoria Falls**

Two national parks protect the rich wildlife around this spectacular waterfall. The river then flows through six dramatic gorges.

**Ships' graveyard**

Many ships have been wrecked on the foggy Skeleton Coast, which is dotted with shipwrecks.

**Victoria Falls, Zambia**

**St. Michaels and All Angels Church, Blantyre, Malawi**

**Royal city**

The ruined capital of the Kingdom of Zimbabwe (c. 1100–1450) was once a prosperous, gold-exporting land.

**Okavango Delta, Botswana**

**Great Zimbabwe Monument, Zimbabwe**

**Skeleton Coast, Namibia**

**Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria, South Africa**

**Fish River Canyon, Namibia**

**Table Mountain, Cape Town, South Africa**

**KEY**  
○ Landmark location

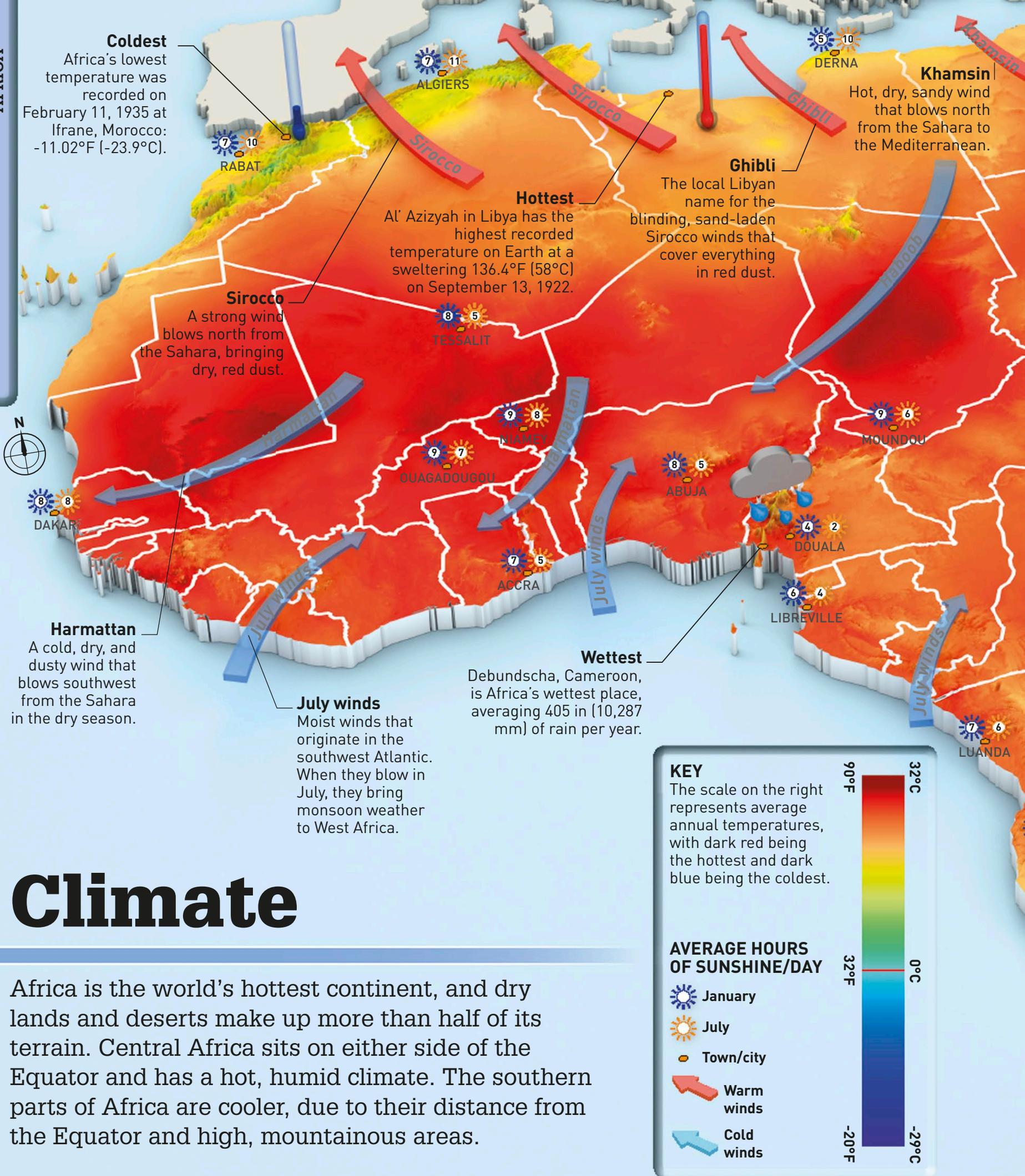
**Table Mountain**

Cape Town's much-photographed, flat-topped mountain is a part of a large national park, in which over 2,000 species of plant grow. A cable car takes visitors up to the top of the plateau, and it is popular for hiking, caving, and rock-climbing.



**Andringita National Park, Madagascar**

**Egypt** is Africa's *most visited country* with **9.5 million** visitors in 2013.



**Coldest**  
Africa's lowest temperature was recorded on February 11, 1935 at Ifrane, Morocco: -11.02°F (-23.9°C).

**Hottest**  
Al' Azizyah in Libya has the highest recorded temperature on Earth at a sweltering 136.4°F (58°C) on September 13, 1922.

**Sirocco**  
A strong wind blows north from the Sahara, bringing dry, red dust.

**Ghibli**  
The local Libyan name for the blinding, sand-laden Sirocco winds that cover everything in red dust.

**Khamsin**  
Hot, dry, sandy wind that blows north from the Sahara to the Mediterranean.



**Harmattan**  
A cold, dry, and dusty wind that blows southwest from the Sahara in the dry season.

**July winds**  
Moist winds that originate in the southwest Atlantic. When they blow in July, they bring monsoon weather to West Africa.

**Wettest**  
Debundscha, Cameroon, is Africa's wettest place, averaging 405 in (10,287 mm) of rain per year.

# Climate

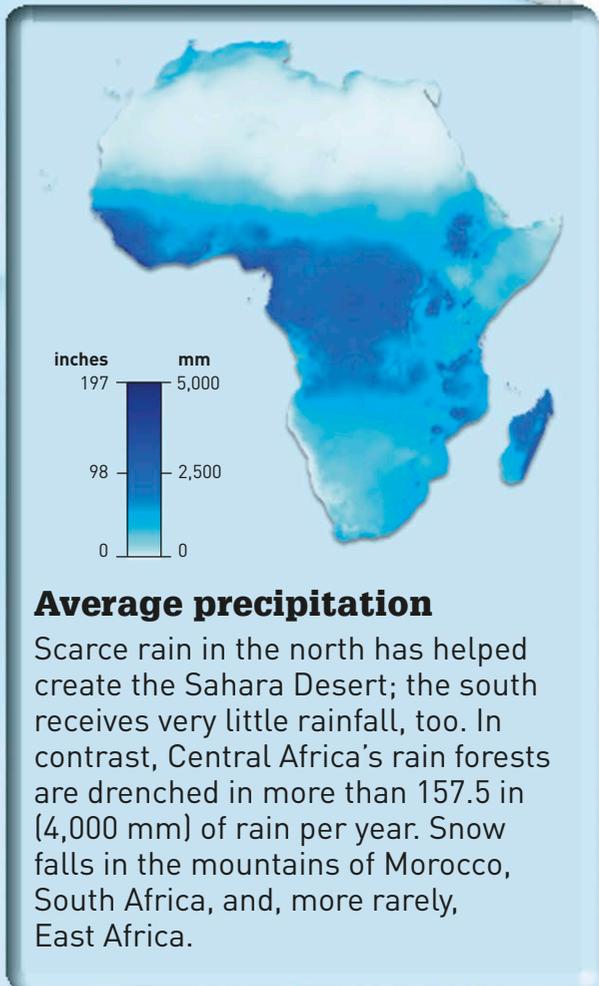
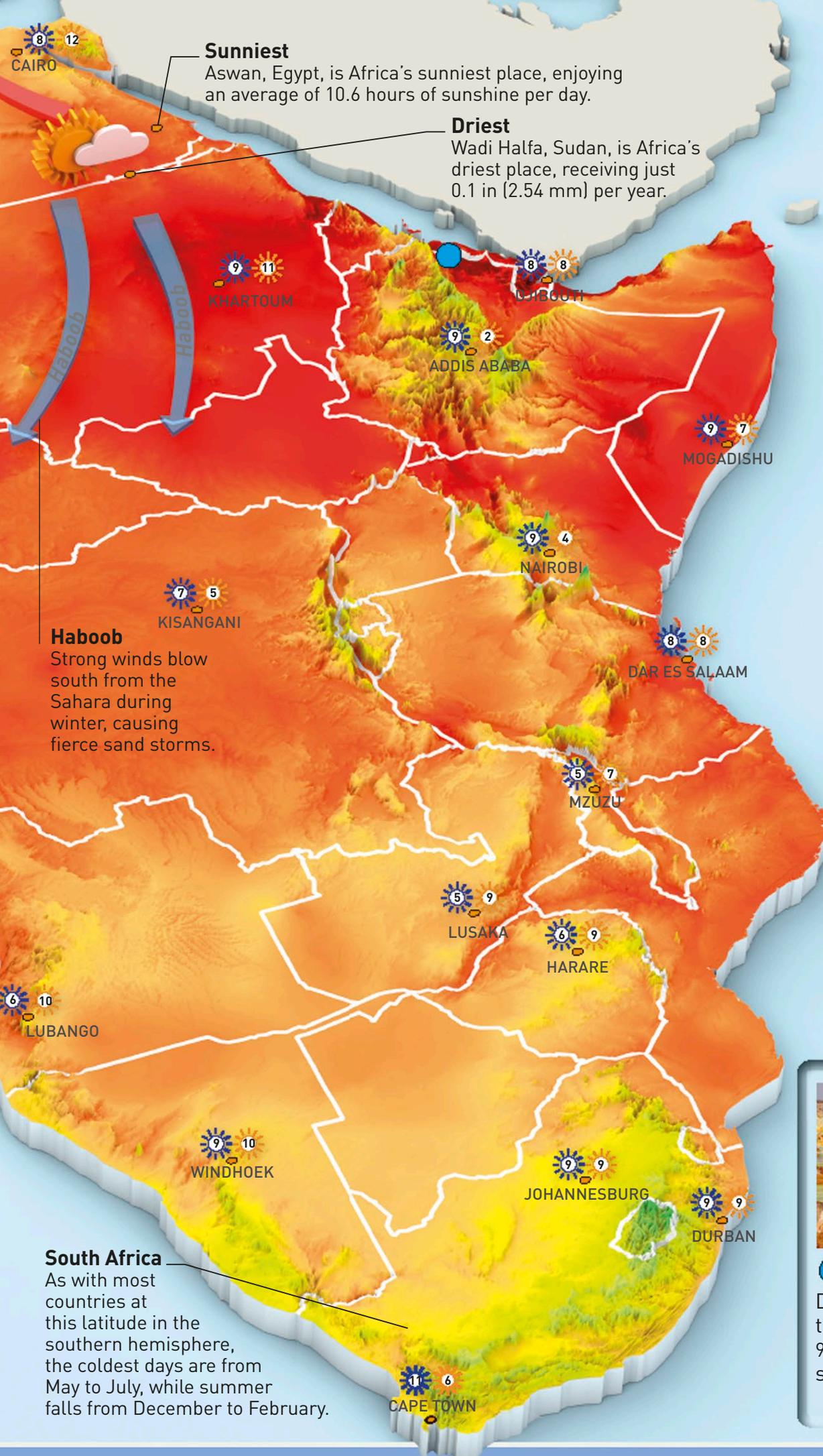
Africa is the world's hottest continent, and dry lands and deserts make up more than half of its terrain. Central Africa sits on either side of the Equator and has a hot, humid climate. The southern parts of Africa are cooler, due to their distance from the Equator and high, mountainous areas.

**KEY**  
The scale on the right represents average annual temperatures, with dark red being the hottest and dark blue being the coldest.

**AVERAGE HOURS OF SUNSHINE/DAY**

- January
- July
- Town/city
- Warm winds
- Cold winds

Temperature scale: 90°F (32°C) at the top, 0°C (32°F) in the middle, -20°C (-20°F) at the bottom.



**Dromedary camel**

The Arabian camel has a single hump, which stores fat that the body converts into energy and water.

**Deathstalker scorpion**

This venomous arachnid feeds at night and lives in cool, shady burrows.

**Nile crocodile**

An aggressive reptile that surprise-attacks from submerged hiding places.

**Ruppell's vulture**

Has a powerful, hooked bill for ripping flesh and crushing bone from animal carcasses.

**Spotted hyena**

Can see in the dark and lives, hunts, and scavenges in female-led groups.

**African rock python**

Non-venomous but highly aggressive, this is one of the largest snake species, growing up to 23 ft (7 m) in length.

**Chimpanzee**

Lives in a community and eats mainly fruit and leaves.

**African bush elephant**

The largest land animal, this elephant lives in grasslands, tropical forests, and semideserts.

**Lemon shark**

This shark favors warm, shallow waters, and uses sensors (called electroreceptors) to detect hidden prey on the ocean floor.

**Hippopotamus**

This grass-eater is a fast runner, and spends much of its day in the water to cool off.

**Whale shark**

The largest fish in the world, this shark grows up to 65.6 ft (20 m) and feeds on tiny organisms, such as plankton and krill.

# Wildlife

No safari of Africa is complete without seeing the big five—elephant, lion, buffalo, rhino, and leopard—but the African continent is also home to an incredible variety of other animals. Many of these are exclusive to their region, such as the lemur, which can only be found in Madagascar.

**BIOMES**

Africa is dominated by tropical and subtropical grasslands, jungles of tropical broadleaf forest, and dry desert regions.

- Mediterranean
- Tropical broadleaf forest
- Tropical dry broadleaf forest
- Tropical/subtropical grassland
- Mountain
- Desert
- Flooded grassland
- Mangrove

**Giraffe**

Its long legs and neck make it easy to reach leaves at the tops of trees, but hard to bend down to drink.



**African wild dog**

Hunts in packs to bring down large prey, such as wildebeest.



**Serval**

Long back legs help this cat jump to snatch birds in flight.



**Eastern gorilla**

The largest of the primates, it eats mainly fruit and leaves.



**African buffalo**

Formidably strong with curled horns, females and young live in herds for safety.



**Ostrich**

The largest bird and fastest two-legged runner in the world.



**Aye aye**

One of around 50 species of lemur in Madagascar, it uses its long, thin middle finger to scrape out grubs from trees.



**Leopard**

An incredibly strong cat that can drag large prey up trees to eat.



**Lion**

The only big cat that lives in groups, its roar can be heard up to 5 miles (8 km) away.



**Black rhinoceros**

A two-horned rhino with a pointed upper lip that plucks leaves and fruit from bushes.



**Warthog**

A long-legged pig with four sharp tusks used for defense and foraging.



**Cheetah**

The fastest animal on Earth, it can run at speeds of up to 60 mph (100 km/h).



**Tiger shark**

A savage scavenger of immense bulk that eats anything it can find in the ocean.



**Meerkat**

Groups work together to look out for predators while foraging for food.



**Black mamba**

A highly venomous snake that reveals the black inside its mouth when threatened.



**Great white shark**

This shark is a fierce predator that surprises prey by attacking it from below.



**Springbok**

Small, speedy antelope that springs high into the air when startled.



**Algeria**

Around 70 percent of Algeria's 39.5 million inhabitants live in urban areas, mainly in the north.

**Bamako**

Mali's capital, home to 2.5 million people, is the largest city in the westernmost part of West Africa.

**Ghana**

In Ghana, 54 percent of the population of 26.9 million live in urban areas, such as Accra and Kumasi.

**Lagos**

With millions living in poorly lit slums, this bright spot does not reflect the true size of Nigeria's largest city.

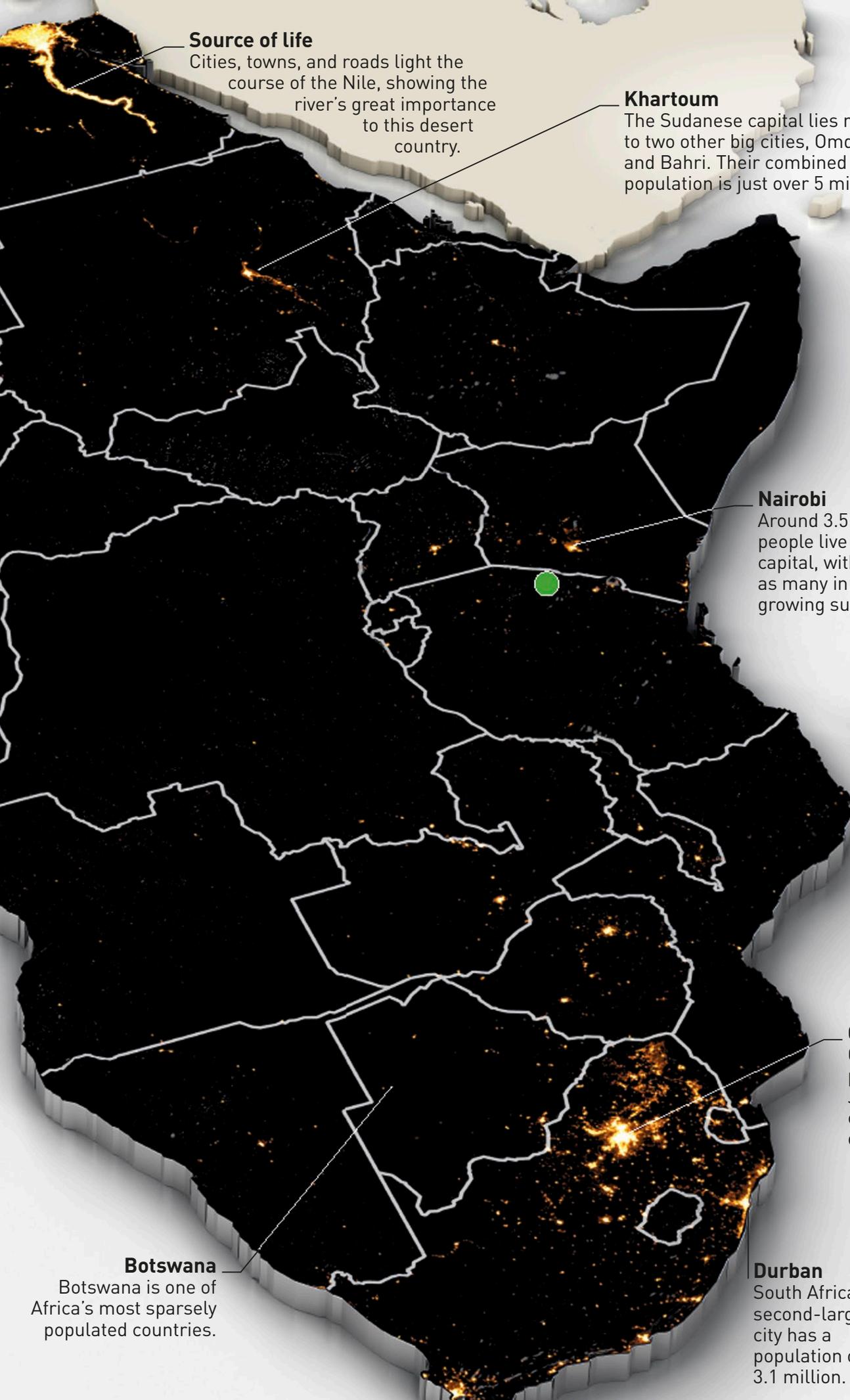
# By night

The speed at which cities grow in population is very high in Africa. But here, not all densely populated places show up at night—poorer areas do not have street lights, lit-up store windows, or even electric indoor lights. Most dark areas, however, are desert, jungle, or savanna.



**● Niger Delta oil fields**

Much of the strong glow in Nigeria's Niger Delta comes from the many oil fields, with their open gas flares, big refineries, and busy ports.



**Source of life**

Cities, towns, and roads light the course of the Nile, showing the river's great importance to this desert country.

**Khartoum**

The Sudanese capital lies next to two other big cities, Omdurman and Bahri. Their combined population is just over 5 million.

**Nairobi**

Around 3.5 million people live in Kenya's capital, with nearly as many in its fast-growing suburbs.

**Antananarivo**

Madagascar's capital houses 2.6 million of the island's 24.4 million inhabitants.

**Gauteng Province**

Gauteng is South Africa's most populous province and home to Johannesburg, the country's largest city. Also here is the huge township of Soweto and the capital, Pretoria.

**Botswana**

Botswana is one of Africa's most sparsely populated countries.

**Durban**

South Africa's second-largest city has a population of 3.1 million.

**Night in the wild**

Only the moon illuminates Africa's great wildernesses at night, be it the Sahara and Kalahari deserts, the jungles of central Africa, or the vast grasslands of the Serengeti in Tanzania.



Giraffes on the plains of the Serengeti, Tanzania, at night.

**KEY**

Less developed infrastructure in parts of Africa means that not all urban areas are lit up.

- Rural area
- Urban area





# EUROPE



## **Europe from space**

The European continent lies in the northern hemisphere and has an eastern land border with Asia. The distinctive "boot" of Italy is clearly visible in this image.



Approximately **25 percent** of the **Russian Federation** lies **within Europe**; the rest is in Asia.

**The Russian Federation**  
Russia is a vast federation (union) of states that crosses two continents, Europe and Asia. Until 1991, it was a bigger nation, called the Soviet Union, which then split into 15 new states. Of these, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova are now independent countries in Europe.



**KEY**

- Capital city
- Major city

**Turkey**  
Geographically, 3 percent of Turkey lies within Europe. The majority of the country is in Asia.

**EUROPEAN UNION**  
The formation of the European Economic Community (now the European Union) in 1957 saw many European countries move toward a closer political and economic union.

**KEY**

- 6 original members, 1957
- 9 further members, 1973-95
- 10 further members, 2004
- 2 further members, 2007
- 1 further member, 2013

**Balkan countries**  
Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia used to be in a country called Yugoslavia. They became separate countries between 1991 and 2006 following years of conflict.

# Landscape



Novaya  
Zemlya

Despite its small size, the continent of Europe has an incredibly diverse landscape. To the northwest, east, and south, it is enclosed by mountains. In between, lies the North European Plain, which stretches 2,485 miles (4,000 km) from eastern England to the Ural Mountains in Russia.

Iceland



ATLANTIC  
OCEAN

Norwegian  
Sea

Barents Sea

Kola  
Peninsula

Faroe Islands

Shetland  
Islands

## FAST FACTS

### 1 Highest point:

Mount Elbrus, Russia—  
18,510 ft (5,642 m)

### 2 Longest river:

Volga, Russia—2,291  
miles (3,688 km)

### 3 Largest lake:

Lake Ladoga, Russia—  
7,100 sq miles  
(18,390 sq km)

### 4 Largest island:

Britain (England, Wales,  
and Scotland)—  
88,745 sq miles  
(229,848 sq km)

3



Europe's largest lake, Ladoga lies close to the city of St. Petersburg, in Russia.

Outer Hebrides

Orkney Islands

Ireland

Britain

British  
Isles

English Channel

North  
Sea

North

Loire

Seine

Rhône

Mont Blanc  
15,780 ft /  
4,808 m

Alps

Appennines

Bay of  
Biscay

Pyrenees

Corsica

Sardinia

Iberian  
Peninsula

Douro

Ebro

Balearic Islands

Mediterranean

AFRICA

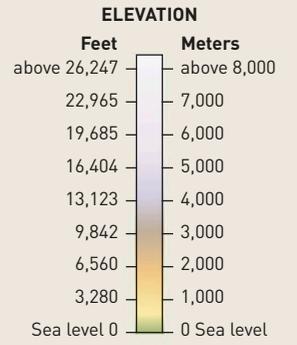


**Ural Mountains**

This 1,553-mile (2,500-km) long mountain range was formed over 280 million years ago and separates eastern Europe from Asia.

**KEY**

The colors on the map represent the height of the land in relation to sea level.



**Central Russian Upland**

**Mount Elbrus**  
18,510 ft / 5,642 m

**Danube River**

Measuring 1,777 miles (2,860 km), the Danube is Europe's second longest river. It rises in Germany and passes through nine countries before flowing into the Black Sea.



**1 Mount Elbrus**

At 18,510 ft (5,642 m), Mount Elbrus is Europe's highest mountain. A snow-covered, dormant volcano, it lies in the Caucasus Mountains in southern Russia, on the geographical dividing line between Europe and Asia.

**Greek islands**

This region of Greece is made up of thousands of islands of varying sizes, from Crete (the largest at 3,219 sq miles/8,336 sq km) to tiny, uninhabited rocks.

**Mount Etna**

Europe's highest and most active volcano, Etna lies in Sicily, Italy.

**Vesuvius**  
3,842 ft / 1,171 m

**Etna**  
10,705 ft / 3,263 m

# Fascinating facts

## Landlocked countries—14

**Andorra** ▪ Austria ▪ **Belarus** ▪ Czech Republic ▪ **Hungary** ▪ Liechtenstein ▪ **Luxembourg** ▪ Macedonia ▪ **Moldova** ▪ San Marino ▪ **Serbia** ▪ Slovakia ▪ **Switzerland** ▪ Vatican City

## Number of languages

# 39

There are 39 official European languages and many more regional languages and dialects.



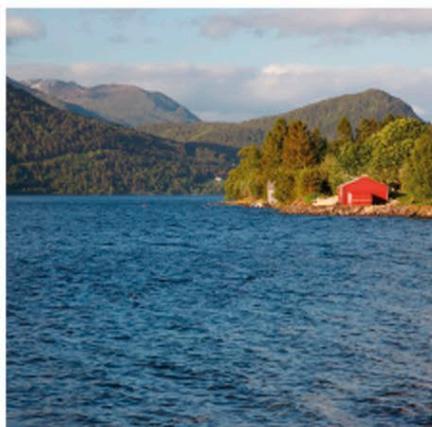
Number of time zones

# 6

The world is split into 39 time zones. Most are set whole hours ahead or behind Coordinated Universal Time (UCT)—the time at the Greenwich Meridian in London, UK. Some, however, are whole hours plus 30 or 45 minutes ahead or behind UCT. Therefore, on this map, if it was 12:00 in London, it would be 14:00 in Helsinki, Finland (2 hours ahead of UCT).

## Deepest lake

Hornindalsvattnet, Norway—  
**1,686 ft (514 m)**



## Fastest train

Europe's fastest train is the **Frecciarossa 1000** in **Italy**, which can reach speeds of up to **249 mph (400 km/h)**

## Tallest buildings



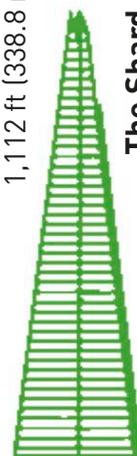
**Federation Tower**  
Moscow, Russia  
1,226 ft (373.7 m)



**OKO: South Tower**  
Moscow, Russia  
1,162 ft (354.1 m)



**Mercury City Tower**  
Moscow, Russia  
1,112 ft (338.8 m)



**The Shard**  
London, United Kingdom  
1,016 ft (309.6 m)



**Eurasia**  
Moscow, Russia  
1,013 ft (308.9 m)



## WATERFALLS

● **Tallest:**  
**Vinnufossen, Norway**  
 —2,821 ft (860 m)

Largest (by volume):  
**Dettifoss, Iceland**—  
 7,063 ft<sup>3</sup> (200 m<sup>3</sup>) of water  
 per second

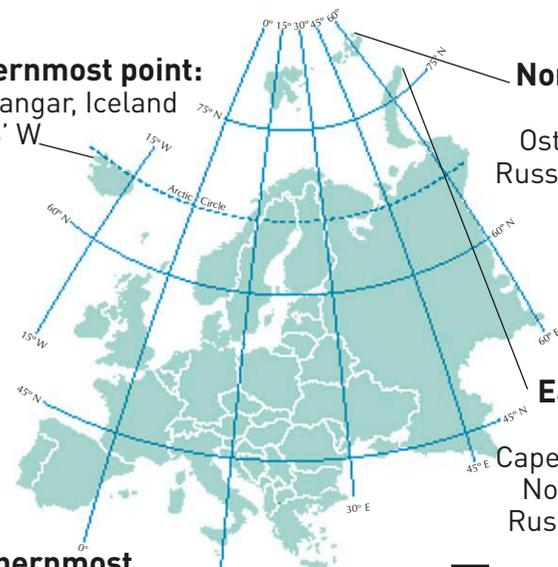
The falls are 328 ft (100 m) wide

## Westernmost point:

Bjargtangar, Iceland  
24° 33' W

## Northernmost point:

Ostrov Rudol'fa,  
Russia, 81° 47' N



## Easternmost point:

Cape Flissingskiy,  
Novaya Zemlya,  
Russia, 69° 03' E

## Southernmost point:

Gávdos, Greece,  
34° 51' N

## Europe's extreme points

✈ **Busiest airport** Heathrow Airport, London, UK: **74,985 million passengers per year**

## Longest tunnels



**Railroad tunnel**  
 Gotthard Base Tunnel,  
 Switzerland—  
 35.5 miles (57.09 km)



**Subway line**  
 Serpukhovsko line,  
 Moscow, Russia—  
 25.8 miles (41.5 km)



**Road tunnel**  
 Laerdal, Norway  
 —15.2 miles  
 (24.53 km)

## Longest bridge

Vasco da Gama,  
Lisbon, Portugal

**10.68 miles (17.185 km)**

## Biggest glacier

**Severny Island** ice cap—  
 northern island of the Novaya  
 Zemlya archipelago in Russia  
 —**7,915 sq miles (20,500 sq km)**

## Longest coastline



## Norway

15,626 miles (25,148 km)

## Highest mountains

2. Dychtau  
Russia

17,073 ft (5,204 m)

1. Mount Elbrus  
Russia  
18,510 ft (5,642 m)

3. Mont Blanc  
France  
15,774 ft (4,808 m)

4. Dufourspitze  
Switzerland  
15,203 ft (4,634 m)

5. Zumsteinspitze  
Switzerland  
14,970 ft (4,563 m)

## Most active volcano

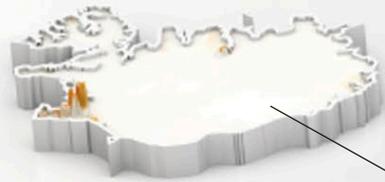
Mount Etna, Italy

## Tallest bridge

Millau Viaduct, France—  
 bridge deck is **886 ft**  
**(270 m)** above the ground

# Population

Europe is the world's second-most densely populated continent (after Asia), with an average of 188 per sq mile (73 people per sq km). The majority of Europe's population live in the northern half of the continent.



## Iceland

This island of volcanoes and icy wilderness has the lowest population density in Europe—8 people per sq mile (3 people per sq km).

## Norway

Scandinavia's most sparsely populated country, with 42 people per sq mile (16 people per sq km).

## Netherlands

With a population of 17 million, this is one of Europe's most densely populated nations, at 1,060 per sq mile (409 people per sq km).

## Europe's largest cities

The list below is based on the number of people living inside a city's boundaries.

- 1 Istanbul, Turkey—14.7 million
- 2 Moscow, Russia—12.3 million
- 3 London, United Kingdom—8.7 million
- 4 St. Petersburg, Russia—5.2 million
- 5 Berlin, Germany—3.6 million
- 6 Madrid, Spain—3.1 million
- 7 Kiev, Ukraine—2.9 million
- 8 Rome, Italy—2.87 million
- 9 Paris, France—2.2 million
- 10 Minsk, Belarus—1.9 million



The Eiffel Tower dominates the skyline of Paris, France's most populous city.

## Madrid

Population density in Spain's capital is 14,000 per sq mile (5,390 people per sq km), almost as high as that of London.

## Monaco

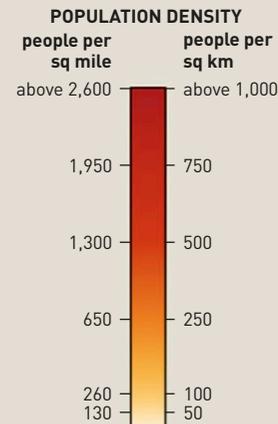
The small principality is the world's most densely populated nation, with 39,602 per sq mile (15,291 people per sq km).



**St. Petersburg**  
Only founded in 1703, today this is Russia's second largest city. It has a population of 5.2 million people.

**Moscow**  
Around 12.3 million people live within the city limits of Russia's capital city.

**KEY**  
The colors represent the number of people living per square mile/ square kilometer.



4

2

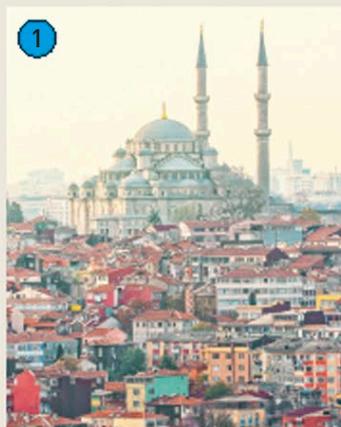
10

7

**Istanbul**  
Spreading out on both banks of the Bosphorus Strait, which divides Europe and Asia, this huge city has a foot in each continent.

1

**Istanbul**  
Istanbul, Europe's largest city, has a population of 14.7 million people. Its historical center lies on the city's European side.



The Suleymaniye Mosque in the center of Istanbul.

8

**Naples**  
While the city itself has 1 million inhabitants, another 3 million crowd around the shores of the Bay of Naples, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius.

**Valletta**  
Malta's historic capital, occupying a small peninsula of only 0.3 sq miles (0.8 sq km), houses 6,400 people.

**Athens**  
Greece's ancient capital city only has around 664,000 inhabitants, but Athens' whole metropolitan area is home to over 3 million.

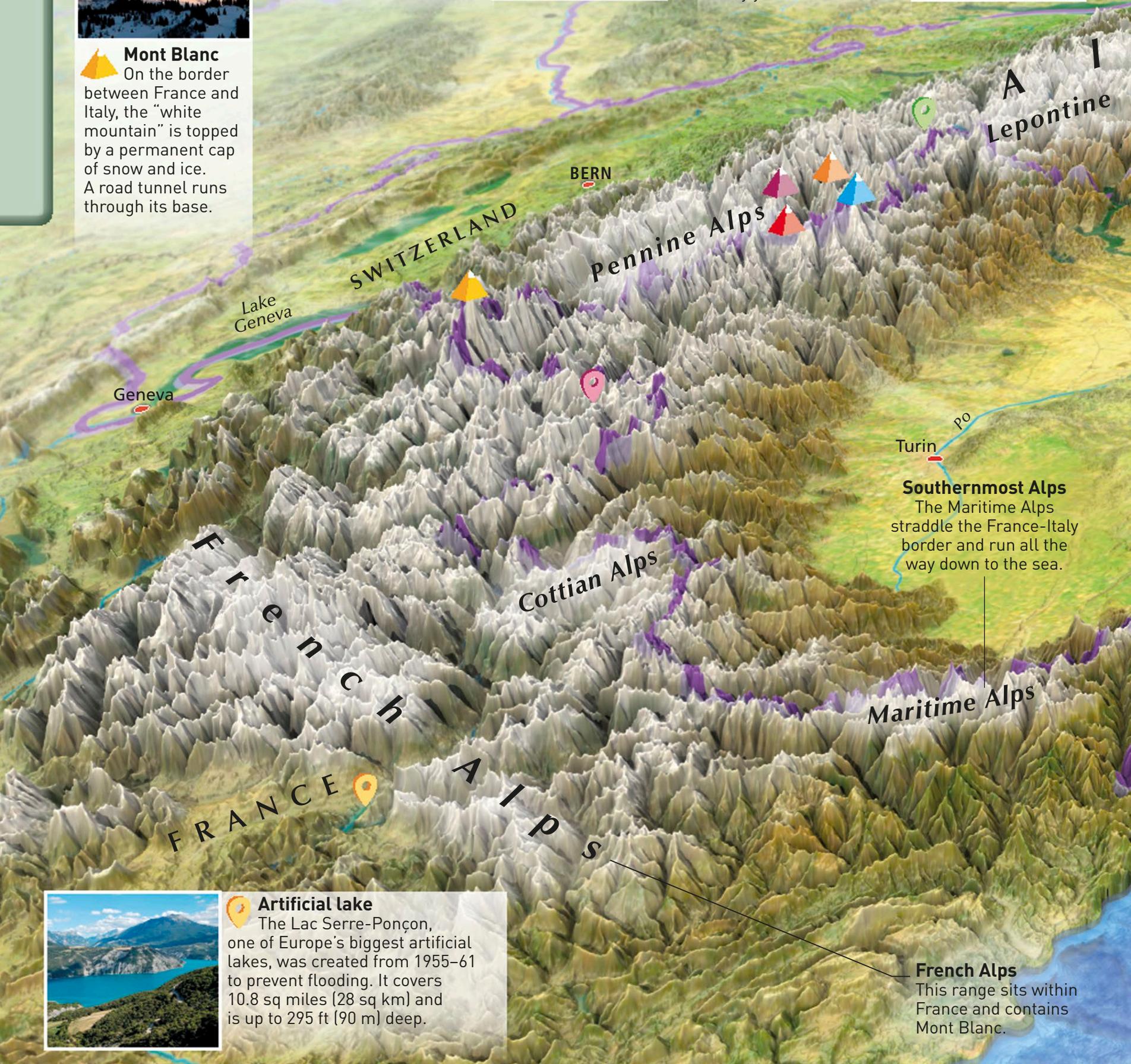


**Mont Blanc**  
On the border between France and Italy, the “white mountain” is topped by a permanent cap of snow and ice. A road tunnel runs through its base.

**Highest road**  
At 9,068 ft (2,764 m), Col de l’Iseran, France, is only accessible by car in summer. Tour de France cyclists have struggled over it several times.



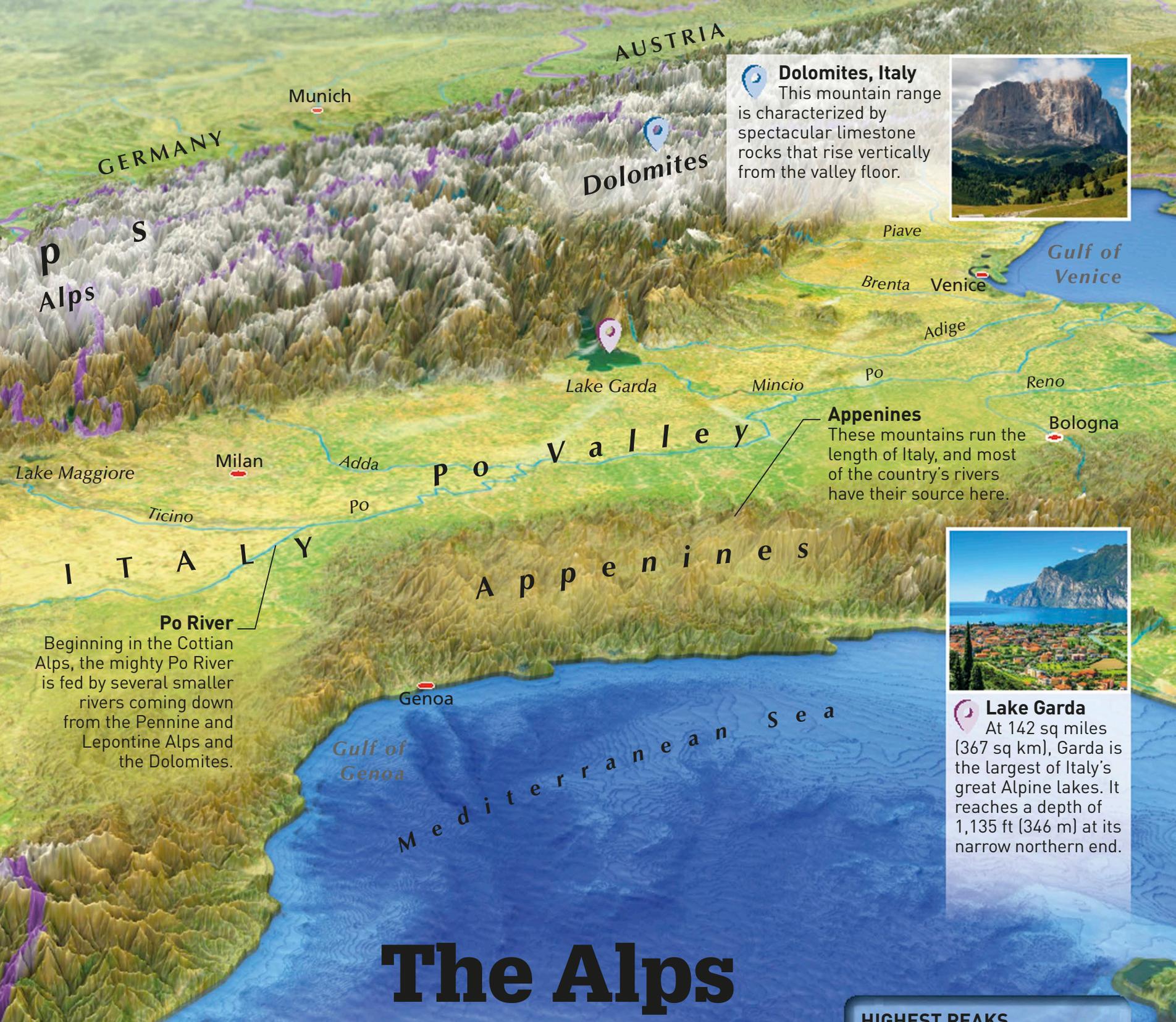
**Biggest glacier**  
The Aletsch glacier, Switzerland, measures over 2,950 ft (900 m) at its thickest, and is 45 sq miles (117 sq km) in size, but it is melting every year.



**Artificial lake**  
The Lac Serre-Ponçon, one of Europe’s biggest artificial lakes, was created from 1955–61 to prevent flooding. It covers 10.8 sq miles (28 sq km) and is up to 295 ft (90 m) deep.

**Southernmost Alps**  
The Maritime Alps straddle the France-Italy border and run all the way down to the sea.

**French Alps**  
This range sits within France and contains Mont Blanc.



**Dolomites, Italy**  
 This mountain range is characterized by spectacular limestone rocks that rise vertically from the valley floor.



**Apennines**  
 These mountains run the length of Italy, and most of the country's rivers have their source here.



**Lake Garda**  
 At 142 sq miles (367 sq km), Garda is the largest of Italy's great Alpine lakes. It reaches a depth of 1,135 ft (346 m) at its narrow northern end.

**Po River**  
 Beginning in the Cottian Alps, the mighty Po River is fed by several smaller rivers coming down from the Pennine and Lepontine Alps and the Dolomites.



The Alps are the highest and most extensive mountain range in western Europe. Shaped like a crescent, they stretch across eight countries for 750 miles (1,200 km) and are 125 miles (200 km) wide at their broadest point. Over 100 peaks are in excess of 13,123 ft (4,000 m), the highest of which is Mont Blanc, on the France-Italy border.

**HIGHEST PEAKS**

With the exception of Mont Blanc, the Alps' highest peaks are all located in Switzerland.

-  **Mont Blanc** 15,774 ft (4,808 m)
-  **Monte Rosa** 15,203 ft (4,634 m)
-  **Dom** 14,911 ft (4,545 m)
-  **Weisshorn** 14,783 ft (4,506 m)
-  **Matterhorn** 14,692 ft (4,478 m)

# The Alps

# Famous landmarks

From prehistoric monuments and Roman ruins to medieval town centers, Gothic cathedrals, and Baroque palaces, Europe has a wealth of architectural treasures from across the ages. Some of its most famous landmarks are natural formations, often protected as national parks.



**Thingvellir National Park, Iceland**

## United Kingdom

The 29 UNESCO heritage sites in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland include Stone Age monuments, castles, and feats of Victorian engineering.

## Landscapes

Europe has 468 national parks. Some are precious habitats or areas of natural beauty, while others contain particular geological formations.



Iceland's Thingvellir National Park lies at the meeting point between the North American and Eurasian plates.



Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland, is made of basalt columns in different formations, some like giant honeycombs.



**Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland**

**Brú na Bóinne, Ireland**

## France

Among France's many famous landmarks, 42 are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

**Toledo Cathedral, Spain**

**Torre de Belem, Lisbon, Portugal**

**Sagrada Familia, Barcelona, Spain**

**Alhambra, Granada, Spain**

## Moorish Alhambra

Many of Spain's landmarks show the country's Arabic heritage, such as the Alhambra palace and gardens in Granada.



**Onion-dome churches**

Onion domes top many churches in central and eastern Europe, the most famous of which is the colorful St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow.

France is the **most visited** country in the world, with over **85 million** tourists per year.

**Buildings**

Europe's architectural landmarks, whether in ruins, reconstructed, or in their original glory, all tell fascinating tales of the continent's history and its people.



● The historic city center of Riga, Latvia, is a mix of fine medieval buildings and some of the world's best Art Nouveau architecture.



● Meteora, Greece, features a breathtaking group of monasteries perched on vertical cliffs. Only six of the original 24 remain today.

**Ancient Greek ruins**

The Valley of the Temples in Agrigento, Sicily, is one of many ancient Greek sites dotted around the Mediterranean.

**KEY**  
○ Landmark location

# Climate

Europe's climate varies from subtropical in the south to polar in the north. Western and north-western parts have a mild, generally humid climate, while central and eastern Europe has a humid climate with cool summers.

**Polar easterlies**  
Prevailing winds that bring dry, cold air southward from the North Pole.

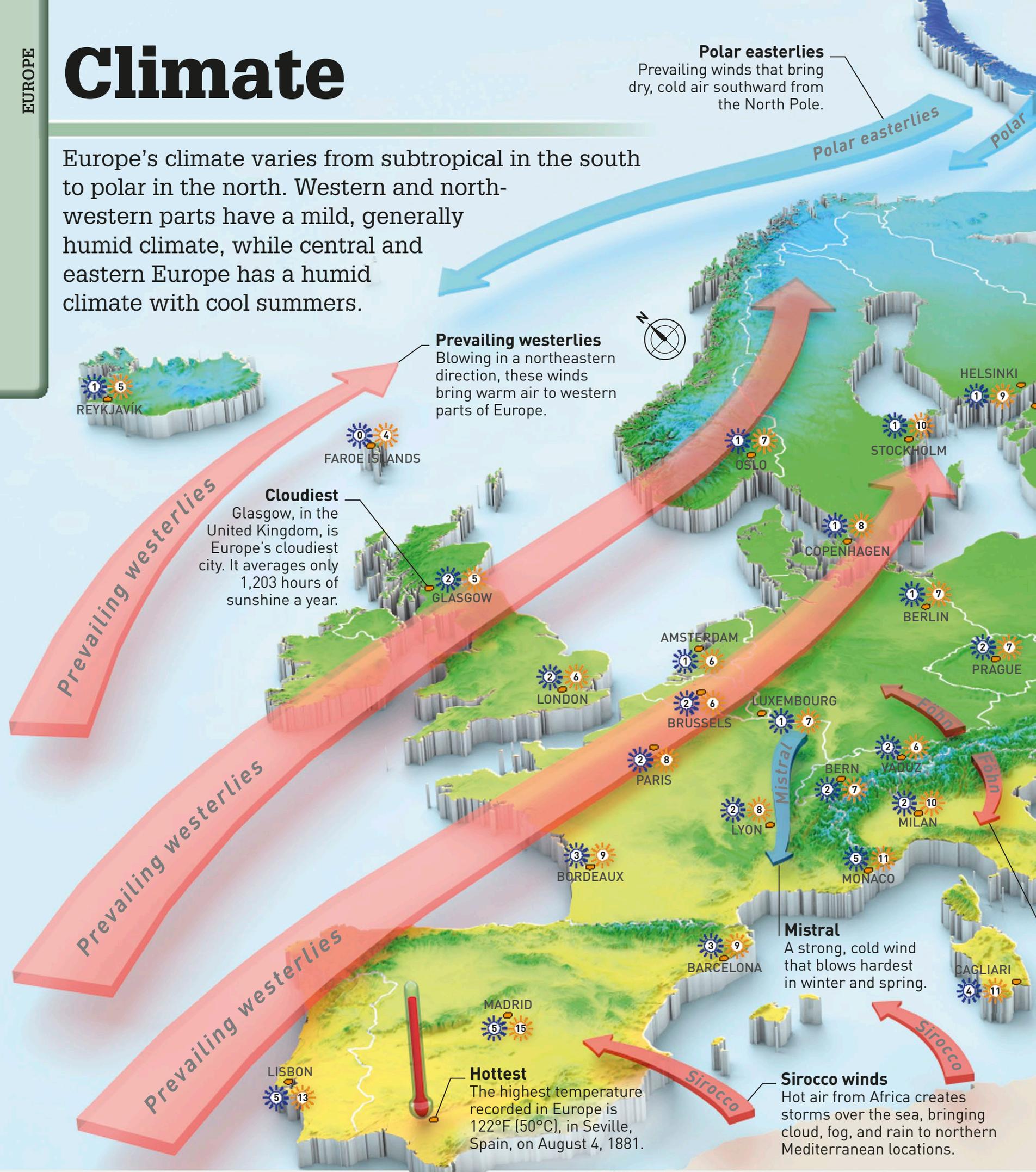
**Prevailing westerlies**  
Blowing in a northeastern direction, these winds bring warm air to western parts of Europe.

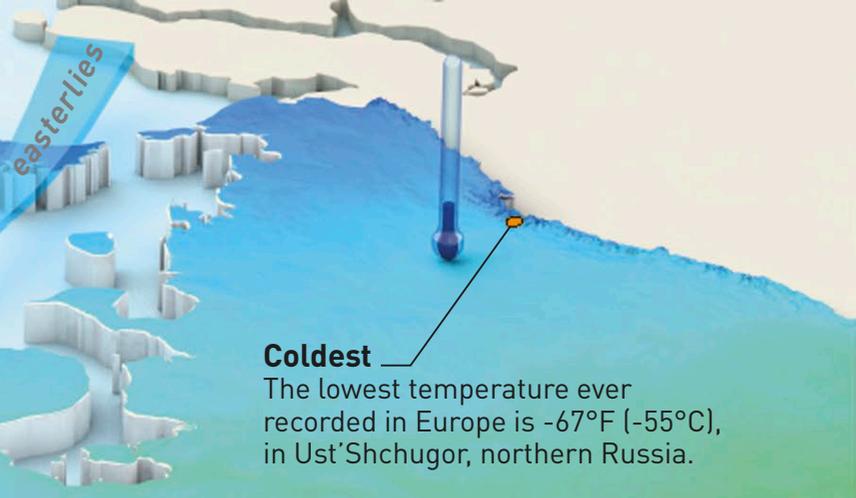
**Cloudiest**  
Glasgow, in the United Kingdom, is Europe's cloudiest city. It averages only 1,203 hours of sunshine a year.

**Mistral**  
A strong, cold wind that blows hardest in winter and spring.

**Hottest**  
The highest temperature recorded in Europe is 122°F (50°C), in Seville, Spain, on August 4, 1881.

**Sirocco winds**  
Hot air from Africa creates storms over the sea, bringing cloud, fog, and rain to northern Mediterranean locations.



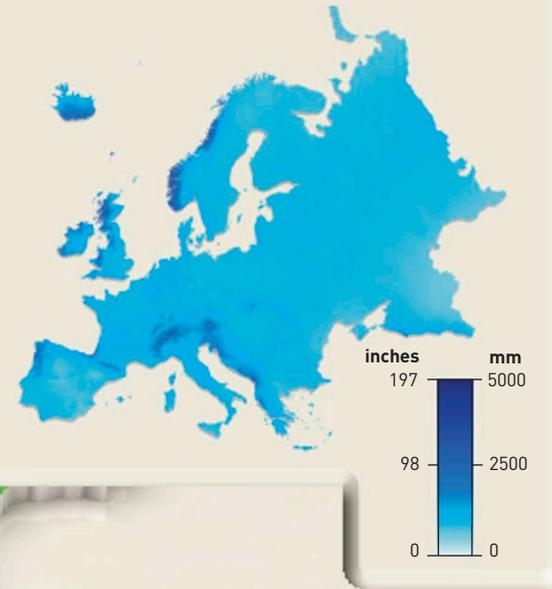


**Coldest**

The lowest temperature ever recorded in Europe is -67°F (-55°C), in Ust'Shchugor, northern Russia.

**Annual precipitation**

This map shows the difference in the average amounts of precipitation (snow and rain) that falls across Europe in a year; the darkest blue marking the highest amounts. Westerly winds bring more rain to the western coastal regions, while the Alps get high amounts in winter, usually in the form of snow.



**Driest**

Astrakhan, Russia, is Europe's driest city. On average, only 2.5 in (62.6 mm) of rain falls there per year.

**Bora winds**

Cold, typically dry, and often gusty winds blow down from the mountains on the eastern side of the Adriatic Sea.

**Etesian**

Prevailing summer winds blow over large areas of Greece.

**Föhn**

These warm, strong winds descend from the eastern Alps.

**Wettest**

Crkvica, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, is Europe's wettest place. It gets on average 183 in (4,648 mm) of rain a year.

**Sunniest**

Malta's capital, Valletta, averages 2,957 hours of sunshine a year, making it Europe's sunniest city.

**KEY**  
The scale on the right represents average annual temperatures, with dark red being the hottest and dark blue being the coldest.

**AVERAGE HOURS OF SUNSHINE/DAY**

- January
- July
- Town/city
- Warm winds
- Cold winds

# Wildlife

In densely populated Europe there is not much wilderness left for animals to thrive in, but nature reserves and some species' ability to adapt mean that the continent's wildlife is still surprisingly varied.

**Humpback whale**  
In winter, Arctic waters provide rich feeding grounds for these migrating whales.

**Reindeer**  
Both male and female reindeer have antlers.

**Eurasian lynx**  
Large padded paws prevent this big cat from sinking through the snow.

**Capercaillie**  
A bird famous for its spectacular courting rituals.

**Arctic fox**  
Thick, white winter fur keeps this fox warm and camouflaged in snow and ice.

**Moose**  
This giant of the forest is commonly seen in Scandinavia and the Baltic states.

**Red deer**  
Scotland has its own subspecies of this large deer, which is common throughout the continent.

**Roe deer**  
Small and graceful, this deer is widespread throughout Europe.

**Irish hare**  
Modern farming practices threaten this shy, nocturnal creature.

**Gray wolf**  
The largest of the dog family, wolves live in family packs in isolated, forested areas of Europe.

**Basking shark**  
To feed, this gigantic shark simply keeps its mouth wide open as it swims.

**Badger**  
Big groups live in setts (tunnels and underground chambers).

**Pine marten**  
Hollow trees make good homes for this member of the weasel family.

**Alpine marmot**  
These rodents hibernate in burrows for up to nine months.

**Golden eagle**  
This huge raptor picks and patrols huge territories in less populated areas across Europe.

**Pyrenean chamois**  
Close to extinction, as its skin was used for chamois gloves and polishing cloths, the numbers have recovered.

**European bee eater**  
Male birds offer the best insect morsels to the female during courtship.

**Barbary macaque**  
A 300-strong colony of Barbary macaques live on the Rock of Gibraltar.

**Iberian lynx**  
Only around 400 remain of the endangered Spanish lynx.

### Eurasian brown bear

Found in Scandinavia and eastern Europe, these omnivores love berries and fresh fish.

### Wolverine

Incredibly fierce, this predator hunts in the tundra and northern forests.

### White-tailed eagle

Once almost extinct, this enormous bird now soars across northern Europe.

### Eurasian otter

This web-footed otter catches fish in lakes, rivers, and ponds all over Europe.

### European polecat

This hunter produces a stinky smell to defend its territory.

### European bison

Hunted to near extinction in the 1920s, the bison has been reintroduced to the wild.

### Red fox

Common across the European countryside, this opportunist now also thrives in cities.

### European wild cat

Striped, bushy-tailed, and larger than domestic cats, this rare species lives in southern and central forests.

### Golden jackal

A hunter and scavenger, it has started to spread north and west from the Balkans.

### Wild boar

These large, bristly pigs are abundant in southern Europe.

### Greater flamingo

Mudflats and coastal lagoons are home to these noisy, pink birds.

### Common dolphin

These playful, sociable dolphins travel the Mediterranean in big groups.

### Mediterranean monk seal

One of the world's most endangered sea mammals, this seal breeds in underwater caves.

## Changing habitats

Many of the forests that once covered most of Europe have been replaced by farmland, towns and villages, and roads. Wild animals lost their habitats and were hunted, many to near extinction, but today some protected species, such as the gray wolf, are slowly spreading again.



## BIOMES

In the north, the wide tundra and dense boreal forests and taiga provide good shelter for hardy animals. The temperate forest and grasslands and dry, warm Mediterranean biomes of the rest of Europe make for great habitats for a variety of species, but many are threatened by the impact of human activity.

-  Ice
-  Tundra
-  Boreal forest/Taiga
-  Temperate broadleaf forest
-  Temperate coniferous forest
-  Temperate grassland
-  Mediterranean
-  Desert

# By night



This image photo of Europe at night shows where people live. The west of the continent is densely populated; the north and east are relatively uninhabited.



## Iceland

Reykjavík is almost the only bright spot, and is home to two-thirds of the country's population.

## Northwest England

The triangle formed by the cities of Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham is densely populated.



## Urban Monaco

The small principality of Monaco, squeezed into an area of only 0.78 sq miles (2 sq km), is all city. Every one of its 30,581 inhabitants lives in an urban environment.

**Lisbon**  
Just over one-quarter (26.2 percent) of Portugal's 10.8 million inhabitants live in the metropolitan area of Lisbon.

## Scandinavia

The relatively small populations of the large Scandinavian countries are concentrated in the main southern coastal cities.

## Mega metropolitan area

Urban areas of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Germany's Rhine-Ruhr form a continuous built-up zone.

## London

Europe's third-largest city has a population density of 14,290 people per sq mile (5,518 per sq km).

## Paris

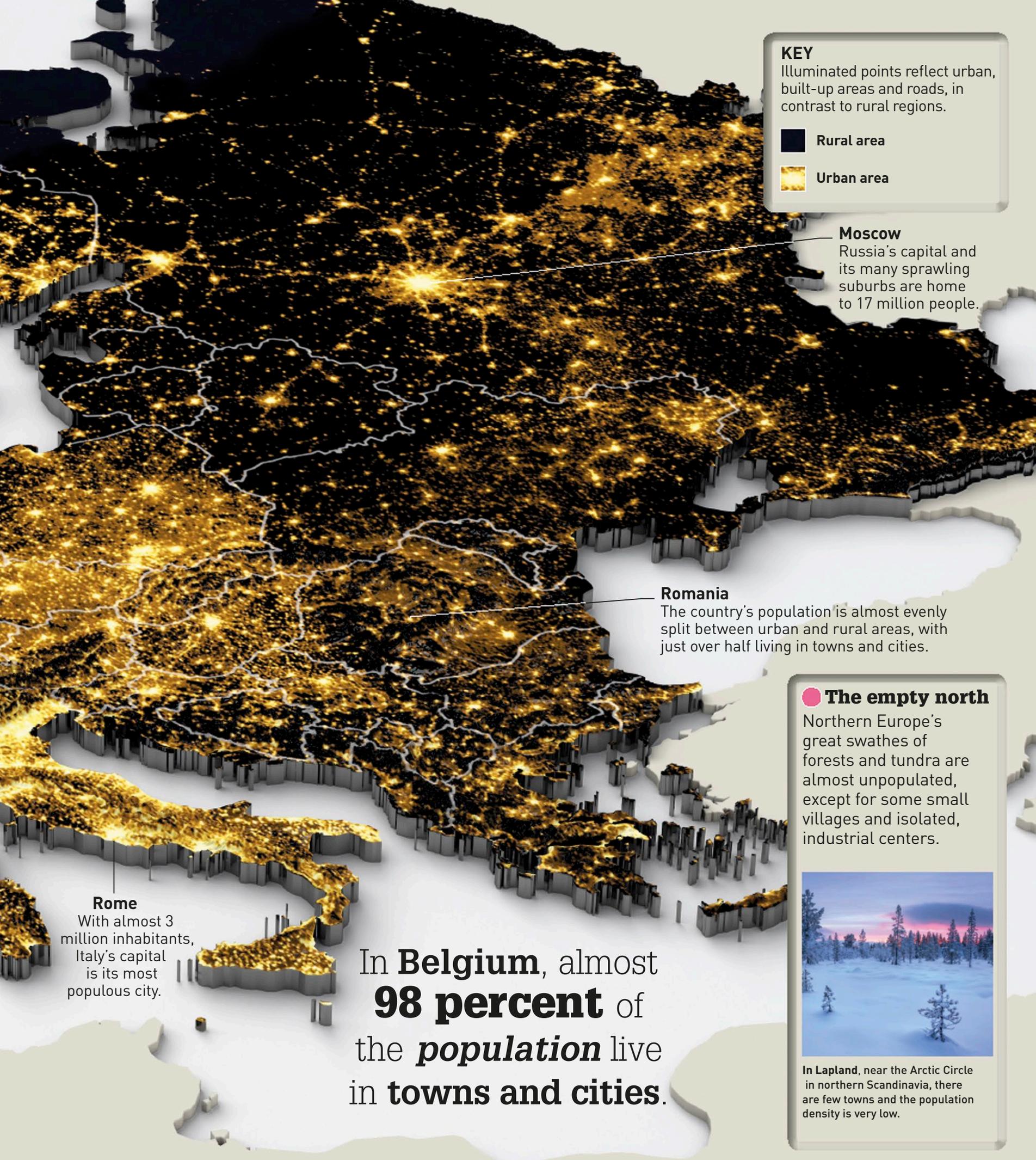
About 20 percent of France's 62.8 million inhabitants live in the Paris metropolitan area.

## Industrial hub

Milan and Turin, two of Italy's major industrial and economic centres, are home to a combined 6.57 million people.

## Madrid

Madrid is Spain's largest metropolitan area and 6.3 million people live here.



**KEY**

Illuminated points reflect urban, built-up areas and roads, in contrast to rural regions.

 Rural area

 Urban area

**Moscow**

Russia's capital and its many sprawling suburbs are home to 17 million people.

**Romania**

The country's population is almost evenly split between urban and rural areas, with just over half living in towns and cities.

 **The empty north**

Northern Europe's great swathes of forests and tundra are almost unpopulated, except for some small villages and isolated, industrial centers.



In Lapland, near the Arctic Circle in northern Scandinavia, there are few towns and the population density is very low.

**Rome**  
With almost 3 million inhabitants, Italy's capital is its most populous city.

In **Belgium**, almost **98 percent** of the *population* live in **towns and cities**.





# ASIA



## **Mighty continent**

Asia extends from the Arctic Ocean in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south, and from the Pacific Ocean in the east, to the Ural Mountains, the Suez Canal, the Bosphorus Strait, and the Caucasus Mountains in the west.



**Israel**  
The State of Israel was established in 1948.

**Russian Federation**  
Three-quarters of the Russian Federation, commonly known as Russia, lies in Asia, making it the continent's largest country.

**FAST FACTS**

**Total land area:**  
16,837,143 sq miles  
(43,608,000 sq km)

**Smallest country:**  
Maldives—115 sq miles  
(298 sq km)

**Total population:**  
4.4 billion

**Largest country population:**  
China—1.37 billion

**Number of countries:** 49

**Largest country:**  
Russian Federation  
— 6,601,668 sq miles  
(17,098,242 sq km)



Streets packed with people are a common sight in China's cities.

**India**  
With a population of 1.27 billion, India is the world's largest democracy.

**Indonesia**  
The world's largest island nation, Indonesia is made up of more than 13,000 islands.

# Countries and borders

The vast continent of Asia includes two giant nations—China and India, each with a population of more than a billion people and with rapidly growing economies. To the north is the world's biggest country by area—the Russian Federation. To the west lie the countries of the Middle East, today the centre of the Islamic world.



ARCTIC OCEAN

NORTH AMERICA

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

MONGOLIA

CHINA

JAPAN

PACIFIC OCEAN

(claimed by China)

**China**  
 Relatively closed to the outside world until the 1970s, China now plays a major role on the world's political stage.

**Japan**  
 Japan is a major industrial power and has the world's fourth-largest economy.

**KEY**

- Capital city
- Major city

**Dividing line**  
 The western half of the island of New Guinea lies in Asia; the eastern half is in Australasia and Oceania.

SHARES BORDERS WITH THREE OTHER CONTINENTS.



**Dead Sea**  
A salt lake bordering Israel, the West Bank, and Jordan. At 1,286 ft (392 m) below sea level, it is the lowest land point on Earth's surface.

Dead Sea  
-1,286 ft /  
-392 m

**West Siberian Plain**  
One of the largest plains in the world, it is a vast system of marshes.

### FAST FACTS

**1 Highest point:**  
Mount Everest, Nepal/  
Tibet, China—29,029 ft  
(8,848 m)

**2 Longest river:**  
Yangtze, China—  
3,964 miles (6,380 km)

**3 Largest lake:**  
Caspian Sea—  
143,243 sq miles  
(371,000 sq km)

**4 Largest island:**  
Borneo—  
288,869 sq miles  
(748,168 sq km)



Borneo is the largest island in Asia, and the third-largest island in the world.

# Landscape

Asia covers approximately 30 percent of Earth's land area and makes up the eastern portion of the Eurasian supercontinent (with Europe lying to the west). It is made up of five different landscapes: mountain systems, plateaus, plains, steppes (large areas of unforested grassland), and deserts.

**Indian Shield**  
Its collision with the Eurasian Plate has created the Himalayas, the world's tallest mountain system.

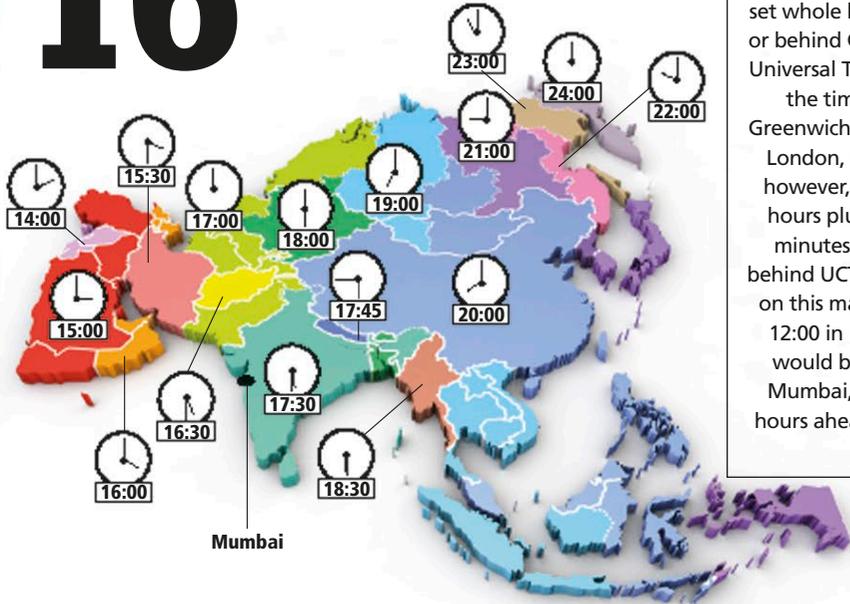
**Indonesian islands**  
Indonesia is the most volcanic country in the world. It is home to 147 volcanoes, 76 of which are active.



# Fascinating facts

## Number of time zones

# 16



**12:00**

The world is split into 39 time zones. Most are set whole hours ahead or behind Coordinated Universal Time (UCT)—the time at the Greenwich Meridian in London, UK. Some, however, are whole hours plus 30 or 45 minutes ahead or behind UCT. Therefore, on this map, if it was 12:00 in London, it would be 17:30 in Mumbai, India (5½ hours ahead of UCT).

## 13 Landlocked countries

- Afghanistan ▪ Armenia ▪ Azerbaijan ▪ Belarus ▪ Bhutan ▪ Kazakhstan ▪ Kyrgyzstan ▪ Laos ▪ Mongolia ▪ Nepal ▪ Tajikistan ▪ Turkmenistan ▪ Uzbekistan

## Fastest train

Shanghai Maglev Train, China—**267.2 mph (430 km/h)**



## Longest tunnels



### Railroad tunnel

Seikan Tunnel, Tsugaru Strait, Japan—33.5 miles (53.85 km)



### Subway line

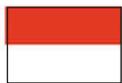
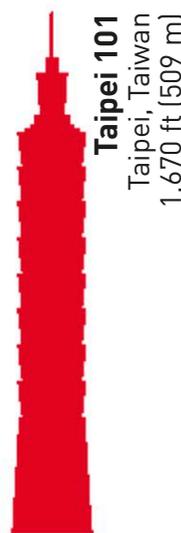
Guangzhou Metro Line 3, Guangzhou, China—37.5 miles (60.4 km)



### Road tunnel

Xishan Tunnel, Shanxi, China—8.5 miles (13.6 km)

## Tallest buildings



**Longest coastline** Indonesia—33,999 miles (54,716 km)



**Busiest airport** Beijing International Airport, China—**90.203 million passengers per year**

## Biggest glacier

**Fedchenko Glacier, Tajikistan—**

48 miles (77 km) long

The Fedchenko Glacier is the longest glacier in the world outside of the polar regions



## WATERFALLS

Tallest:

**Hannoki Falls, Toyama, Japan**—1,640 ft (500 m)

Largest (by volume):

**Chutes de Khone, Laos**—410,000 ft<sup>3</sup> (11,610 m<sup>3</sup>) of water per second

## Deepest lake

**Lake Baikal,**

Russian Federation—

**5,387 ft (1,642 m)**

Lake Baikal is the deepest lake in the world

## Most active volcano

**Mount Merapi, Indonesia**



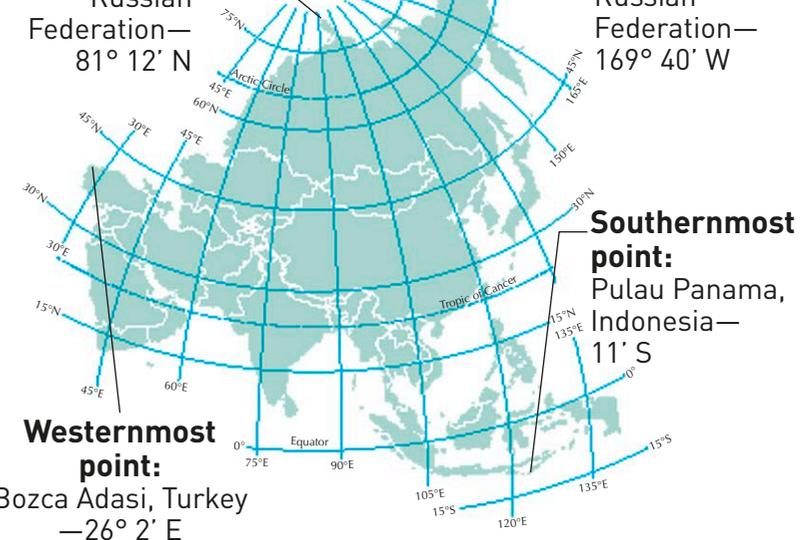
## Asia's extreme points

**Northernmost point:**

Mys Articesku, Russian Federation—81° 12' N

**Easternmost point:**

Mys Dezhneva, Russian Federation—169° 40' W



**Westernmost point:**

Bozca Adasi, Turkey—26° 2' E

**Southernmost point:**  
Pulau Panama, Indonesia—11' S

## Highest mountains

**2. K2**  
China/Pakistan  
28,251 ft (8,611 m)

**1. Mount Everest**  
Nepal/Tibet, China  
29,029 ft (8,848 m)

**3. Kangchenjunga**  
India/Nepal  
28,169 ft (8,586 m)

**4. Lhotse**  
Nepal/Tibet, China  
27,940 ft (8,516 m)

**5. Makalu**  
Nepal/Tibet, China  
27,838 ft (8,485 m)

## Most visited cities (Visitors per year)

**Bangkok, Thailand**  
18.24 million

**Singapore**  
11.88 million

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**  
11.12 million

**Seoul, South Korea**  
10.35 million

**Hong Kong**  
8.66 million

## Tallest bridge

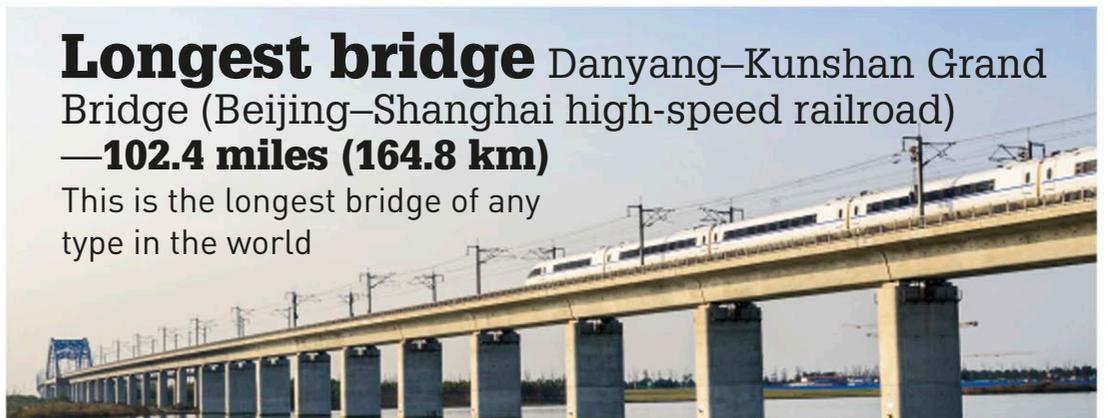
Sidu River Bridge, Yesanguan Township, Badong County, Hubei, China—**1,627 ft (496 m)**

The world's three tallest bridges are all in Asia:

- Sidu River Bridge—1,627 ft (496 m)
- Puli Bridge—1,591 ft (485 m)
- Qingshui River Bridge—1,332 ft (406 m)

**Longest bridge** Danyang–Kunshan Grand Bridge (Beijing–Shanghai high-speed railroad)  
—**102.4 miles (164.8 km)**

This is the longest bridge of any type in the world



**Bahrain**

Bahrain has a population of 1.3 million, but projections suggest that figure will double in 10 years—the fastest growth rate of any Asian country.

**Turkey**

Turkey is the most populous country in the Middle East, with a population of 80.3 million.

**Asia's largest cities**

The list below is based on the number of people living inside a city's boundaries.

- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ① Shanghai, China—<br>24.3 million   | ⑧ Mumbai, India—<br>12.4 million      |
| ② Karachi, Pakistan—<br>23.5 million | ⑨ Shenzhen, China—<br>10.5 million    |
| ③ Beijing, China—<br>21.5 million    | ⑩ Jakarta, Indonesia—<br>10.1 million |
| ④ Delhi, India—<br>16.4 million      |                                       |
| ⑤ Tianjin, China—<br>15.2 million    |                                       |
| ⑥ Tokyo, Japan—<br>13.5 million      |                                       |
| ⑦ Guangzhou, China—<br>13.1 million  |                                       |



The bright lights and busy streets of Tokyo—Japan's largest city.

**Bangladesh**

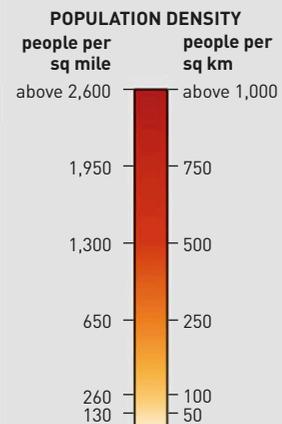
Of all the countries in the world with a population of over 100 million, Bangladesh has the highest population density—2,948 people per sq mile (1,138 per sq km).

**India**

India has the world's second-largest population (1.27 billion), but is expected to be the world's most populous country by 2028.

**KEY**

The colors represent the number of people living per square mile/ square kilometer.



# Population

Asia contains some of the most populous regions on Earth. The plains of eastern China, the Ganges-Brahmaputra rivers in India, Japan, and the Indonesian island of Jakarta all have very high population densities. By contrast, Siberia and the Plateau of Tibet are virtually uninhabited.

Almost **two-thirds** of the world's population live **in Asia.**

**Mongolia**

The least densely populated country in Asia, with an average of 4 inhabitants per sq mile (2 people per sq km).

**China**

With a population of 1.37 billion people, China is home to approximately one-fifth of the world's population.

**Java**

The Indonesian island is the world's most populous island—139.4 million people live there.

**Shanghai**

With a population of 24.3 million, Shanghai, China, located on the country's east coast, is the most populous city in the world.



Shanghai's Pudong district is on the banks of the Huangpu River.

**Karakoram Range**

This vast mountain range lies to the west of the Himalayas and contains the highest concentration of peaks over 26,247 ft (8,000 m) on Earth.



**Mount Everest**

Situated on the border between Nepal and Tibet, China, Mount Everest is the world's tallest mountain at 29,029 ft (8,848 m).

**Kathmandu**

The capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu has a population of 1.18 million people and is a gateway for tourism in the Himalayas.



**Taklamakan Desert**

A lifeless, sand-shifting desert, the famed Silk Road passed along its northern and southern fringes.

Tarim He

Tarim Basin

Shamo

Altun

Qingzang (Plateau of)

Kunlun Shan

Gangdisé Shan

Siwalik Range

INDIA

BANGLADESH

BHUTAN

**Bhutan**

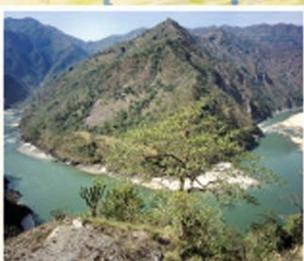
The small Himalayan kingdom only opened its borders to foreigners in 1974.

Brahmaputra

Padma

Dhaka

Bay of Bengal



**The Ganges**

The Ganges is the most sacred river of the Hindu religion. It rises in the Himalayas, and flows through India and Bangladesh to the Bay of Bengal.

**Siwalik Range**

An outer range of the Himalayas that extends more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) from east to west.

**Thimphu**

At 8,688 ft (2,648 m), Thimphu, in Bhutan, is the third-highest capital city in the world, after La Paz (Bolivia) and Quito (Ecuador).



# The Himalayas

The Himalayas is the world's highest mountain range. It runs in an arc 1,500 miles (2,400 km) long, spread across five countries: Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and China. It is also the source of some of the region's major rivers, including the mighty Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers.



## Plateau of Tibet

The world's largest and highest plateau, it contains the largest amount of ice found outside the poles.

Shan

Gaoyuan  
Tibet)

Siling Co

Lhasa

Qaidam Pendi

Qilian Shan

C H I N A

Nyainqêntanglha Shan



## Tsangpo Gorge

With an average depth of 16,400 ft (5,000 m), Tsangpo Gorge, in Tibet, China, is the deepest canyon in the world.

## HIGHEST PEAKS

The Himalayas is home to more than 110 mountains over 24,000 ft (7,300 m). The top five are:

- ▲ Mount Everest 29,029 ft (8,848 m)
- ▲ Kangchenjunga 28,169 ft (8,586 m)
- ▲ Lhotse 27,940 ft (8,516 m)
- ▲ Makalu 27,765 ft (8,462 m)
- ▲ Cho Oyu 26,905 ft (8,201 m)

## Brahmaputra River

One of Asia's major rivers, it cuts through China, Bhutan, India, and Bangladesh before flowing into the Bay of Bengal.



### Makkah Royal Clock Tower

The tower contains the world's largest clock face.

**Dome of the Rock,**  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Ziggurat of Ur,**  
Nasiriyah, Iraq

**Makkah Royal Clock Tower,**  
Mecca, Saudi Arabia

**Great Mosque of Sana'a,**  
Yemen

**Burj Khalifa,**  
Dubai, UAE

### Dome of the Rock

The world's oldest-standing Islamic monument, it dates to the seventh century CE.

### Fortress of Nisa

The fortress forms part of an ancient city that was totally destroyed by an earthquake in the first decade BCE.

**Fortress of Nisa,**  
Turkmenistan

**Citadel of Herat,**  
Afghanistan

**Persepolis,**  
Marvdasht, Iran

**Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasui,**  
Turkistan, Kazakhstan

**Shah-i-Zinda Mausoleum**  
Samarkand, Uzbekistan

**Badshahi Mosque,**  
Lahore, Pakistan

**Citadel of Herat**  
Dates back to 330 BCE, when Alexander the Great arrived in Herat with his army.

**Gateway of India,**  
Mumbai, India

**Taj Mahal,**  
Agra, India

**Potala Palace,**  
Lhasa, Tibet, China

### Burj Khalifa

Standing at 2,715 ft (828 m), the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, UAE, is the tallest manmade structure in the world. Completed in 2009, it has 163 floors (including the world's highest observation deck on the 148th floor), 57 elevators, and eight escalators.



### Meenakshi Amman Temple

This Hindu temple lies at the heart of the ancient Indian city of Madurai.

**Meenakshi Amman Temple,**  
Madurai, India

**Taj Mahal**  
The white-marble mausoleum (a building that covers a burial chamber) attracts 8 million visitors a year.

**Bagan,**  
Myanmar

**Petronas Towers**  
At 1,483 ft (452 m), they are the world's tallest twin towers.

# Famous landmarks

Asia is a continent of huge contrasts. It was the birthplace of some of the earliest human civilizations, has been a hub for many of the world's great religions, such as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and, today, is the site of some of the world's most amazing modern architecture.

### KEY

○ Landmark location



**Mogao Caves**  
Situated on the ancient Silk Road, the site's 492 caves are famous for their statues and wall paintings.

**Lena Pillars Nature Park**  
Spectacular rock pillars rise from the Lena River to reach a height of 330 ft (100 m).

**Church of St. Nicholas, Omsk, Russia**

**Lena Pillars Nature Park, Siberia, Russia**

**The Great Wall (Jinshanling section), near Beijing, China**

**Volcanoes of Kamchatka, Russia**

**Mogao Caves, Duanhang, China**

**Genghis Khan Statue, Erdene, Mongolia**

**Terracotta Army, Xian, China**

**Gyeongbokgung Palace, Seoul, South Korea**

**Imperial Palace, Tokyo, Japan**

**Leshan Giant Buddha, Mount Emei, China**

**Forbidden City, Beijing, China**

**Shanghai Tower, Shanghai, China**

**International Commerce Centre, Hong Kong**

**Ayutthaya, Thailand**

**My Son Sanctuary, Quang Nam, Vietnam**

**Terracotta Army**  
A collection of 8,000 figures that depict the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China.

**Paoay Church, Ilocos Norte, Philippines**

**Banaue Rice Terraces, Ifugao, Philippines**

**Great Wall of China**

Built over the course of 2,000 years, the Great Wall of China is a series of non-continuous walls built as protection from raiders and invaders. Its many branches add up to a length of 13,170 miles (21,196 km).



**Angkor Wat, Cambodia**

**Angkor Wat**  
Built in the 12th century, it is the world's largest religious monument.

**Petronas Towers, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

**Borobudur, Magelang, Indonesia**

**Borobudur**  
The world's largest Buddhist temple, it dates to the ninth century BCE.

**Kampong Ayer, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei**

**Komodo National Park, Lesser Sunda Islands, Indonesia**

**Driest**

Aden, in Yemen, is Asia's driest location. It receives an average of 1.8 in (45.7 mm) of rain annually.

**Hottest**

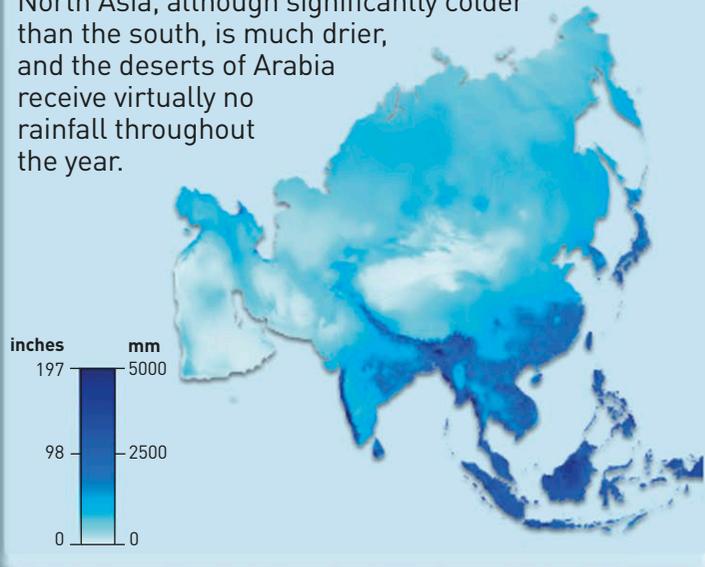
The hottest temperature ever recorded in Asia was 129°F (53.9°C), at Tirat Zvi, Israel, on June 21, 1942.

**Siberian winds**

Cold, dry air sweeps west from Siberia, and can affect weather patterns as far west as Italy, in Europe.

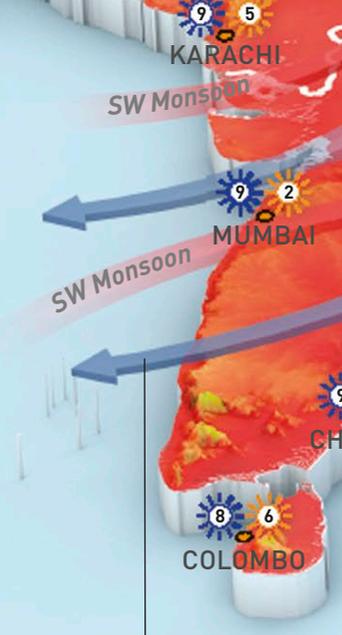
**ANNUAL PRECIPITATION**

Annual precipitation (snow and rain) varies dramatically throughout Asia. The wettest areas are in the tropical south, with some locations receiving more than 80 in (2,000 mm) of precipitation per year. North Asia, although significantly colder than the south, is much drier, and the deserts of Arabia receive virtually no rainfall throughout the year.



# Climate

Because of its enormous size, the climate in Asia varies dramatically, from the polar cold of the north, to the dry, desert environments of the southwest and center, and the hot, humid conditions of the tropical south. The continent is home to some of the coldest, hottest, driest, and wettest places on Earth.

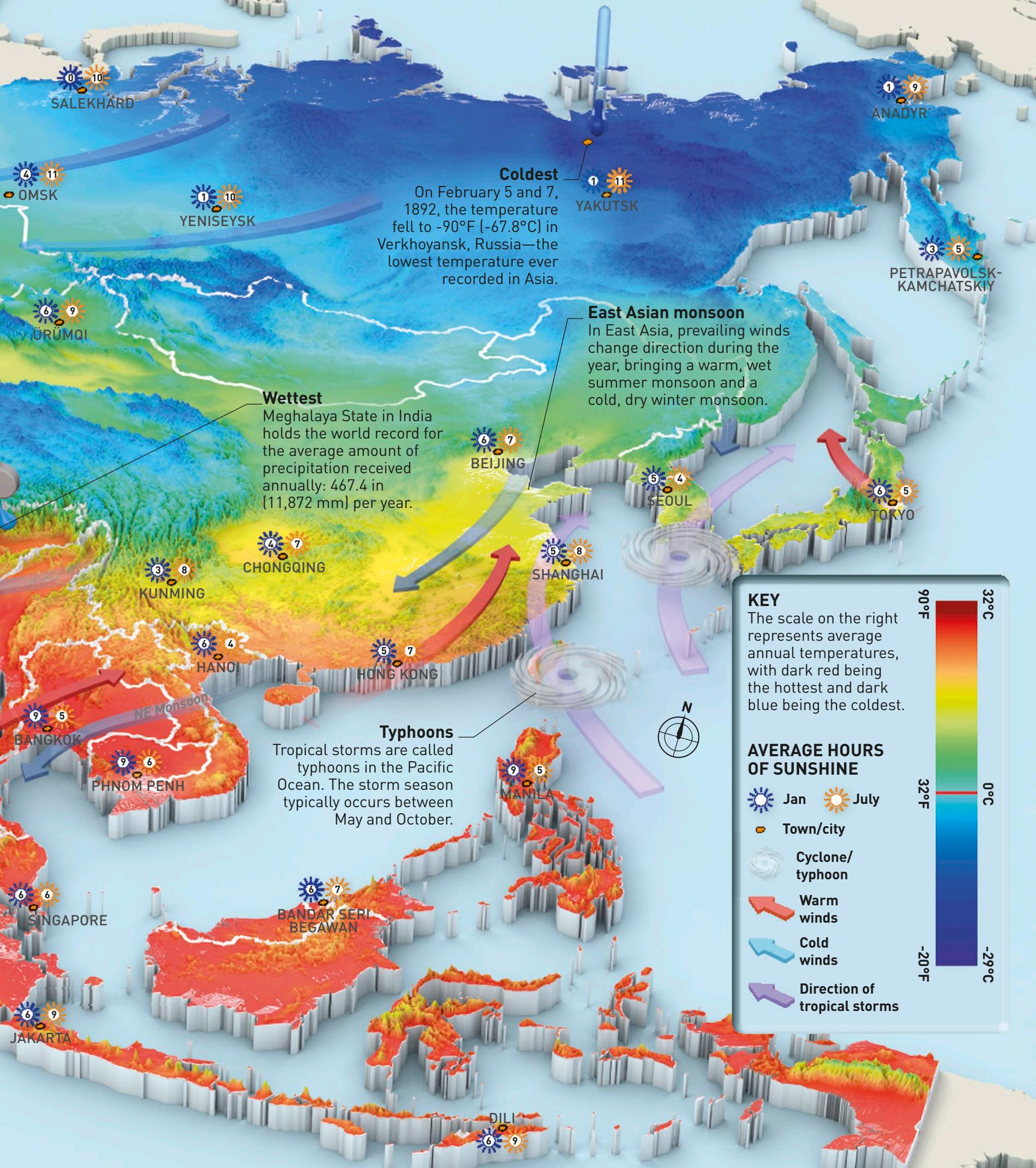


**Monsoon winds**

A monsoon is a seasonal change in the direction of the prevailing winds. In India, the change brings rain in the summer, and dry, cold winds in winter.

**Cyclones**

Tropical storms, known as cyclones in the Indian Ocean, form in the Bay of Bengal before sweeping northward over land, sometimes with catastrophic results.



MONSOON RAINY SEASON MAY CAUSE DROUGHT AND CROP FAILURES.

**Dromedary camel**

This single-humped camel can travel up to 100 miles (160 km) a day in the desert without water.



**Iranian wolf**

Lives in a variety of habitats, from arid deserts to lush forests.



**Snow leopard**

A large cat that can live at altitudes of up to 14,800 ft (4,500 m). Also known as an "ounce."



**Siberian musk deer**

During the breeding season, males grow fangs instead of antlers.



**Arabian leopard**

An opportunistic hunter that lives in mountainous areas.



**Bactrian camel**

A two-humped camel native to the steppes of Central Asia.



**Tibetan fox**

A small fox, it is only found on the Plateau of Tibet.



**Water buffalo**

First domesticated in India 5,000 years ago, it is widespread throughout South Asia.



**Bengal tiger**

A powerful, nocturnal hunter that preys on large mammals.



**BIOMES**

The vast continent of Asia is home to virtually every habitat on Earth.

- Ice
- Tundra
- Boreal forest/Taiga
- Temperate coniferous forest
- Temperate broadleaf forest
- Temperate grassland
- Tropical coniferous forest
- Tropical broadleaf forest
- Tropical dry broadleaf forest
- Tropical/sub-tropical grassland
- Mountain
- Desert
- Mangrove

**Asian elephant**

Slightly smaller than its African counterpart, it is identified by its smaller, rounder ears.



**Asian golden cat**

An elusive forest predator that preys on small mammals and birds.



**Gharial**

One of the longest of all living crocodilians, measuring up to 20.5 ft (6.25 m) in length.



**Siamang**

The largest of the gibbons, it has a throat pouch that can be inflated to the size of its head.



**Sumatran rhinoceros**

The smallest of the rhinoceroses, it is one of the world's most endangered species.



# Wildlife

From east to west, the continent of Asia stretches almost halfway around the world. As such, it contains a vast array of habitats, from Arctic tundra and high, cold plateaus, to barren deserts and damp, lush rain forests. The continent's array of wildlife is as vast and varied as the landscape itself.

**Arctic fox**

An incredibly hardy animal that is common throughout the Arctic region.



**Baikal seal**

Only found in Lake Baikal, Siberia, it is the only true seal that lives exclusively in freshwater.



**Steller's sea eagle**

Weighing up to 20 lb (9 kg), it is the heaviest eagle in the world.



**Polar bear**

The largest land carnivore in the world, it is only found in the Arctic.



**Giant panda**

The rarest member of the bear family, 99 percent of its diet is bamboo.



**Siberian tiger**

The largest of the tiger species, it can grow up to 13 ft (4 m) in length.



**Yak**

Similar to the American bison, it is adapted to living at altitude.



**Japanese macaque**

The world's most northern-living primate, it is also known as the "snow monkey."



**King cobra**

Reaching lengths of up to 18 ft (5.5 m), it is the world's longest venomous snake.



**Clouded leopard**

Named for the distinctive clouded spots on its coat, it is an excellent climber.



**Deforestation**

The world's third-largest area of tropical rainforest lies in Southeast Asia, but the region is experiencing deforestation at a faster rate than anywhere else on Earth. This has a devastating effect on both the region's wildlife and the global climate.



Borneo—56 percent of the island's forests were cut down between 1985 and 2001.

**Dhole**

A highly social animal well known for its vocal calls.



**Proboscis monkey**

Its large, fleshy nose is used to attract mates.



**Bornean orangutan**

The most intelligent of the primates, its name translates as "man of the forest."



**Philippine crocodile**

A freshwater crocodile, it has a broad snout and thick, bony plates on its body.



**Komodo dragon**

The world's largest lizard, it can consume 80 percent of its bodyweight in a single meal.



**KEY**

Illuminated areas on the map reflect urban, built-up areas and roads, in contrast to rural regions.

 Rural area

 Urban area

**Trans-Siberian Railway**

Bright lights mark a dotted line across Siberia, showing the route of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

**Arabian Peninsula**

A large portion of the Arabian Peninsula is an area of desert known as the "Empty Quarter."

**Oman**

This country had the fastest rate of urbanization in Asia over the past five years (8.54 percent).

**Hong Kong**

Hong Kong has a population of 7.35 million, making it the 21st largest city in Asia, but the city is the fourth most densely populated territory on Earth, with a staggering 17,294 inhabitants per sq mile (6,682 per sq km).

**Indus Valley**

This river valley in northern Pakistan is home to some of the country's largest cities, including Lahore and Islamabad.

**India**

Home to 1.27 billion people, but only 32.7 percent of the population live in towns or cities.

**Bangkok**

Almost one-sixth of Thailand's 68.2 million people live in or around the country's capital, Bangkok.

**Singapore**

One of three territories in Asia—along with Hong Kong and Macau—in which the entire population live in an urban environment.

# By night

This satellite image of Asia at night shows how the continent's huge population is concentrated in small pockets of land. India, northern China, the southern Korean peninsula, and Japan are densely populated, whereas Siberia and Central Asia are virtually empty.



**Philippines**  
 The National Capital Region of the Philippines, which includes Manila, the country's capital, is home to 12.9 million people.

**Tokyo-Yokohama**  
 38 million people live in and around the cities of Tokyo and Yokohama.

**North Korea**  
 Almost 61 percent of North Korea's population of 25.1 million live in an urban environment, but electricity shortages in the country mean few lights shine at night.



**Sri Lanka**  
 Only 18.4 percent of Sri Lanka's 22 million population live in towns and cities—the lowest figure of any Asian country.



# AUSTRALASIA & OCEANIA

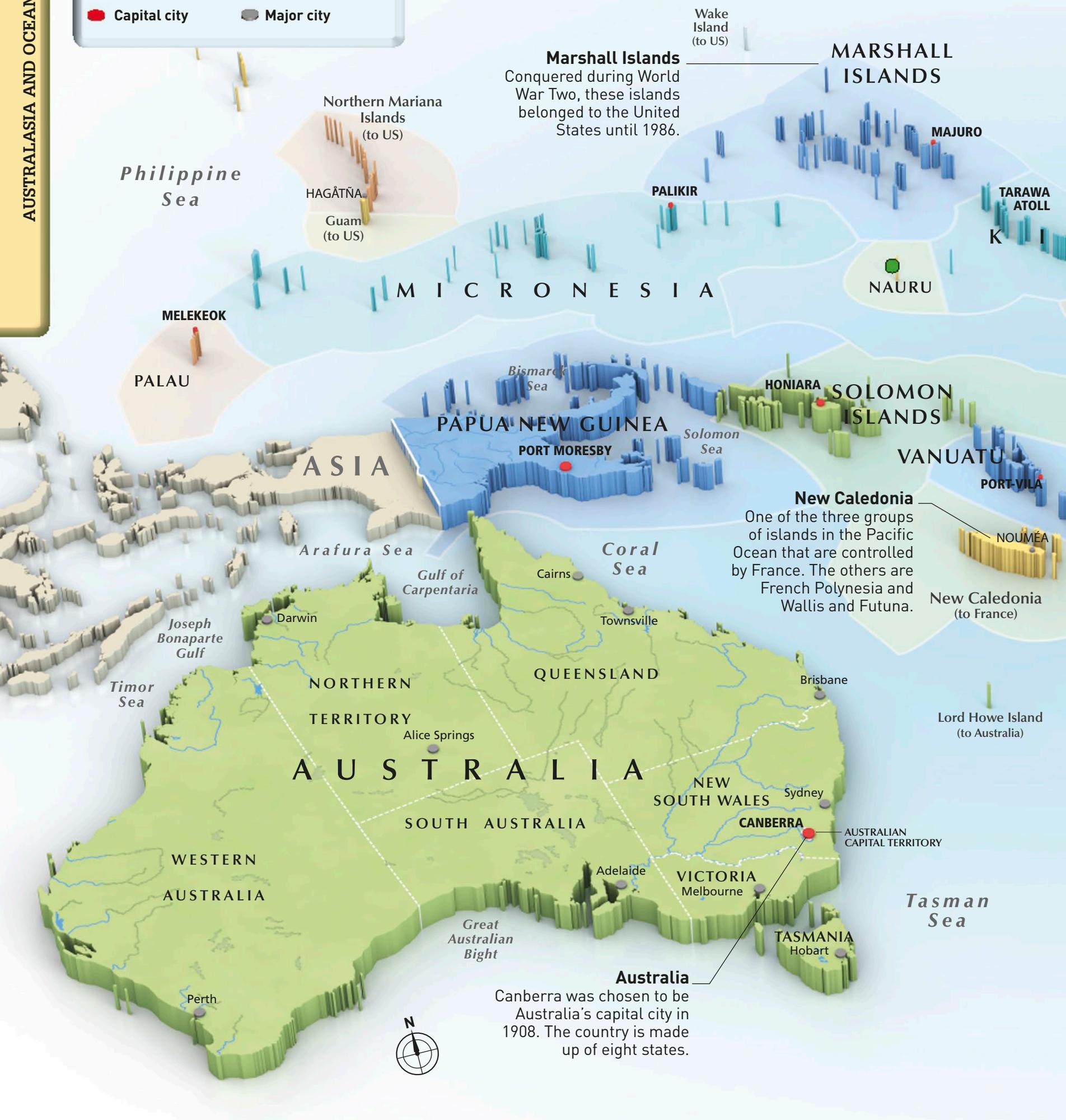


## **Australasia & Oceania from space**

Vast deserts dominate the interior of Australia, contrasting with the fertile southeast. To the north, dense forest covers much of New Guinea, while in the far south, the snowy peaks of New Zealand's mountains stand out clearly.

PACIFIC OCEAN

**KEY**  
● Capital city     ● Major city



**Marshall Islands**  
 Conquered during World War Two, these islands belonged to the United States until 1986.

**MARSHALL ISLANDS**

MAJURO

PALIKIR

TARAWA ATOLL

NAURU

Philippine Sea

Northern Mariana Islands (to US)  
 HAGÁTÑA  
 Guam (to US)

M I C R O N E S I A

MELEKEOK

PALAU

Bismarck Sea

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PORT MORESBY

Solomon Sea

HONIARA

SOLOMON ISLANDS

VANUATU

PORT-VILA

**New Caledonia**

One of the three groups of islands in the Pacific Ocean that are controlled by France. The others are French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna.

NOUMÉA

New Caledonia (to France)

ASIA

Arafura Sea

Gulf of Carpentaria

Coral Sea

Cairns

Townsville

Brisbane

Joseph Bonaparte Gulf

Darwin

NORTHERN TERRITORY

QUEENSLAND

Alice Springs

A U S T R A L I A

NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney

CANBERRA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VICTORIA

Melbourne

Adelaide

TASMANIA

Hobart

Tasman Sea

Great Australian Bight

Perth

**Australia**

Canberra was chosen to be Australia's capital city in 1908. The country is made up of eight states.

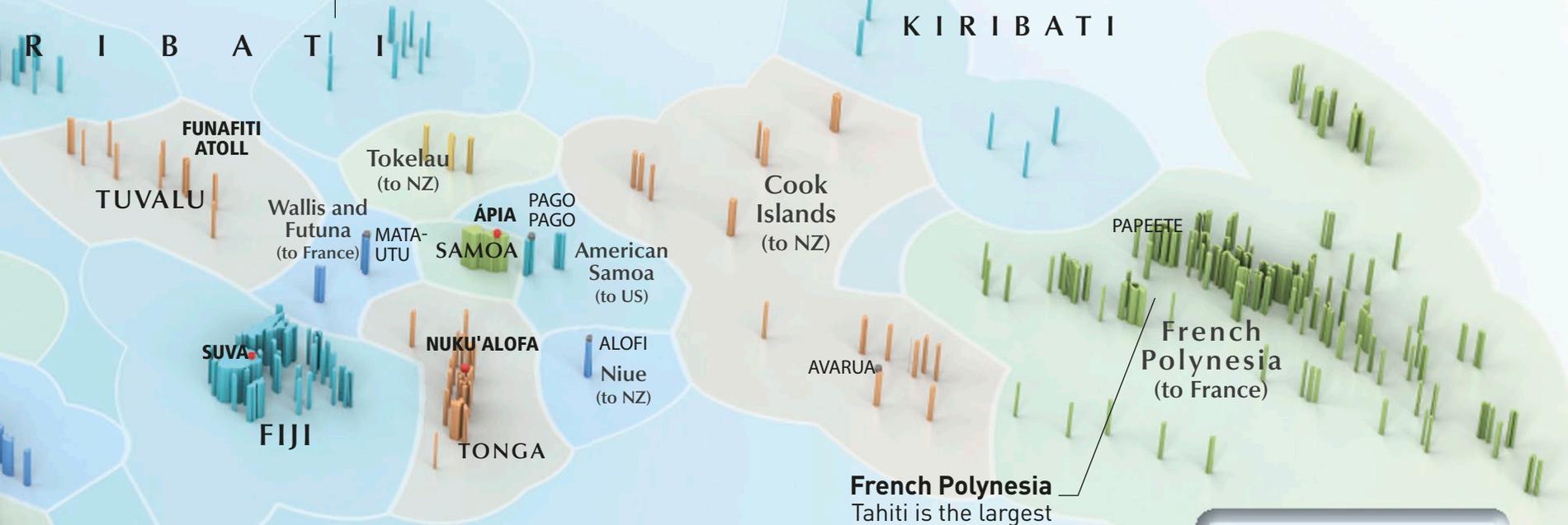


### Kiribati

This group of 33 tiny islands is spread over a vast area of the Pacific Ocean. Kiribati was a British colony from 1915 until it gained its independence in 1979.

### Nauru

The Republic of Nauru is the world's smallest island nation, with a total area of 8 sq miles (21 sq km) and a population of just 9,591. The oval-shaped island is surrounded by sandy beaches and a coral reef.



### New Zealand

Most New Zealanders have European ancestors, but about 15 percent of the population belong to the Maori community. The Maoris arrived in New Zealand in about 1300.

### French Polynesia

Tahiti is the largest island in French Polynesia. Many people work in tourism and pearl-farming.

# Countries and borders

### FAST FACTS

#### Total land area:

3,285,049 sq miles  
(8,508,238 sq km)

#### Total population:

39.7 million

#### Number of countries:

14

#### Largest country:

Australia—  
2,988,901 sq miles  
(7,741,220 sq km)

#### Smallest country:

Nauru— 8.1 sq miles  
(21 sq km)

#### Largest country population:

Australia—22.9 million

NEW ZEALAND



Australasia is dominated by Australia and New Zealand, two former British colonies that, in recent years, have built new relations with other Pacific nations, such as Japan. Oceania includes the many islands of the Pacific Ocean, whose communities rely increasingly on tourism.

**3 Lake Eyre**

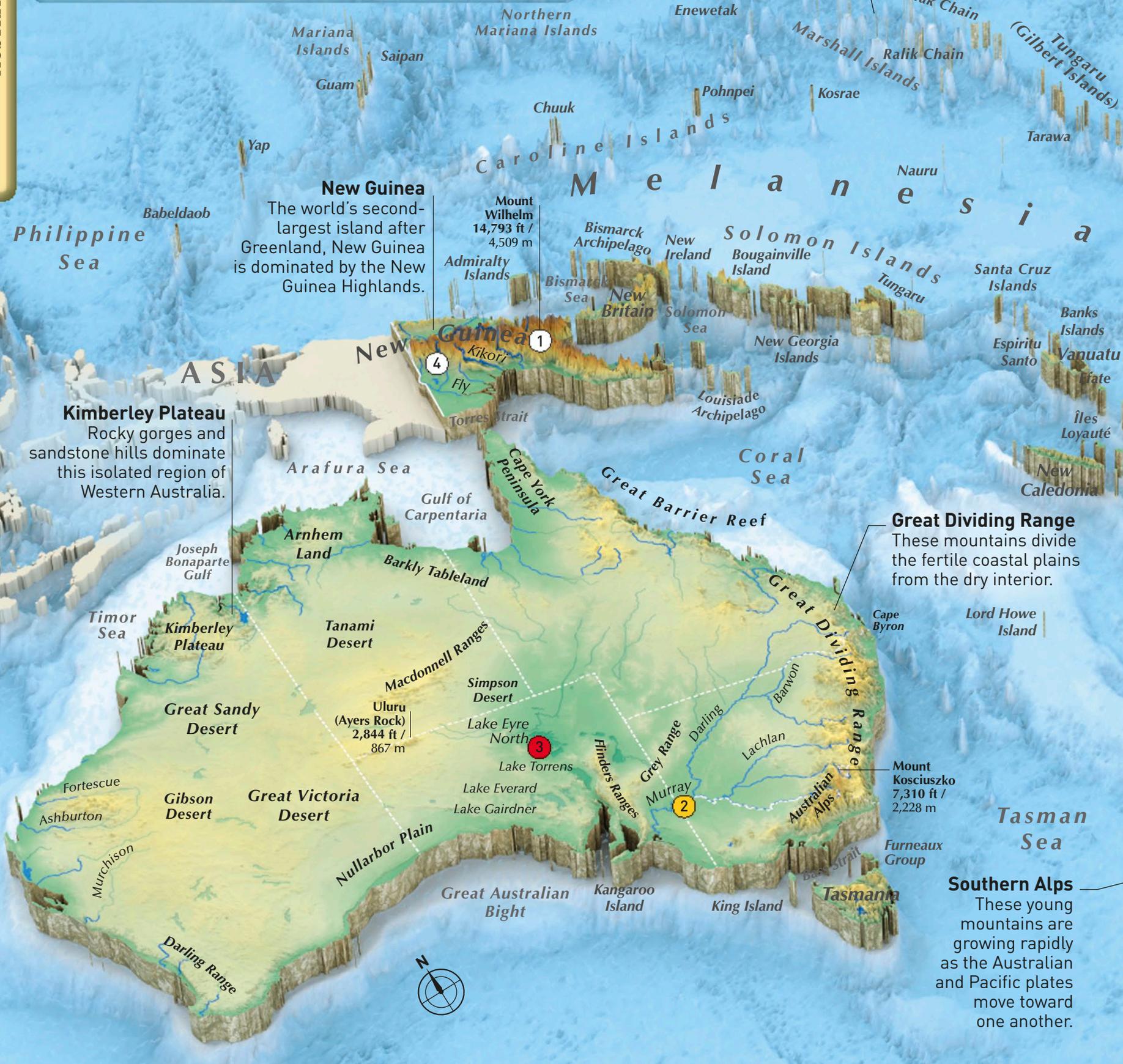
With an area of 3,700 sq miles (9,583 sq km), Lake Eyre is the largest lake in Australasia and Oceania. During the dry season, much of the lake evaporates, leaving behind a thick salt crust.



Lake Eyre sometimes turns pink because of a type of algae in the water.

**Marshall Islands**

A group of 34 scattered atolls (low-lying islands made of coral reefs) in the Pacific Ocean. The average height of each island is only 6.6 ft (2 m) above sea level.



**New Guinea**  
The world's second-largest island after Greenland, New Guinea is dominated by the New Guinea Highlands.

**Mount Wilhelm**  
14,793 ft / 4,509 m

**Kimberley Plateau**  
Rocky gorges and sandstone hills dominate this isolated region of Western Australia.

**Great Dividing Range**  
These mountains divide the fertile coastal plains from the dry interior.

**Southern Alps**  
These young mountains are growing rapidly as the Australian and Pacific plates move toward one another.

## FAST FACTS

**1 Highest point:**  
Mount Wilhelm, Papua  
New Guinea—14,793 ft  
(4,509 m)

**2 Longest river:**  
Murray-Darling,  
Australia—2,330 miles  
(3,750 km)

**3 Largest lake:**  
Lake Eyre, Australia—  
3,700 sq miles  
(9,583 sq km)

**4 Largest island:**  
New Guinea—  
312,000 sq miles  
(808,000 sq km)



The Murray-Darling river system is long and slow-flowing.

**Micronesia**  
Micronesia is a state of more than 600 islands, many of which are atolls.

### Fiji

A volcanic archipelago consisting of two main islands and 880 smaller islands.

### North Island

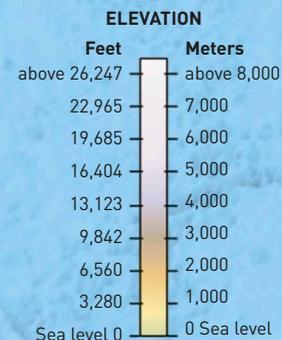
Most of New Zealand's active volcanoes are found on the North Island.

# Landscape

The Australian landscape is dominated by ancient mountain ranges and unusual rock formations. New Zealand is a land of earthquakes, volcanoes, and geysers. Oceania is made up of approximately 10,000 islands in the Pacific Ocean.

## KEY

The colors on the map represent the height of the land in relation to sea level.



# Fascinating facts

## COUNTRY WITH THE MOST NEIGHBORS

 **Papua New Guinea**  
1—Indonesia

## LONGEST TUNNELS



**Railroad tunnel**  
Kaimai Tunnel, North Island, New Zealand—  
5.5 miles (8.85 km)



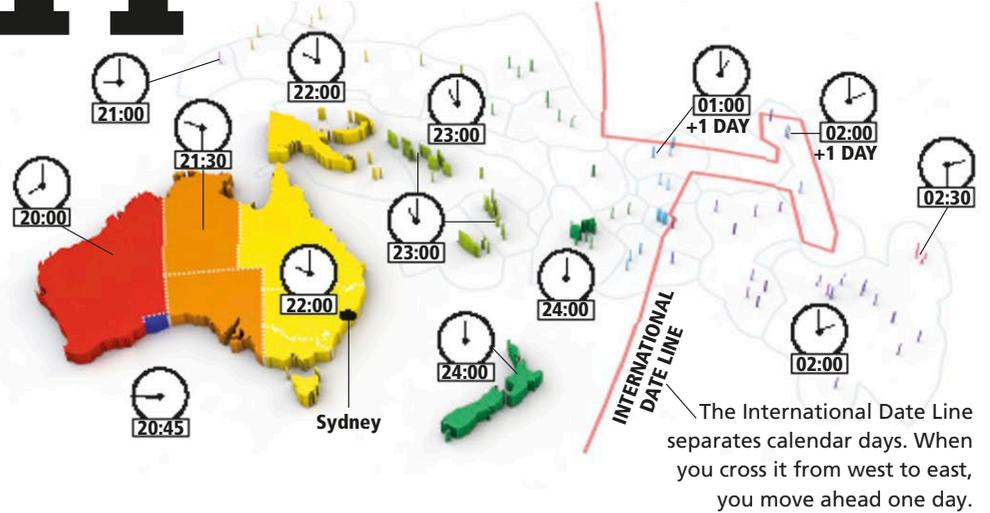
**Road tunnel**  
Airport Link, Brisbane, Australia—4.16 miles (6.7 km)

## Number of time zones

# 11



The world is split into 39 time zones. Most are set whole hours ahead or behind Coordinated Universal Time (UCT) – the time at the Greenwich Meridian in London, UK. Some, however, are whole hours plus 30 or 45 minutes ahead or behind UCT. Therefore, on this map, if it was 12:00 in London, it would be 22:00 in Sydney, Australia (10 hours ahead of UCT).

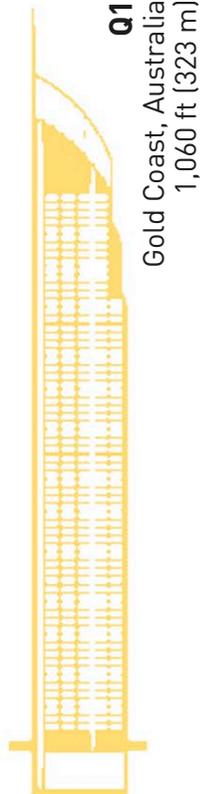
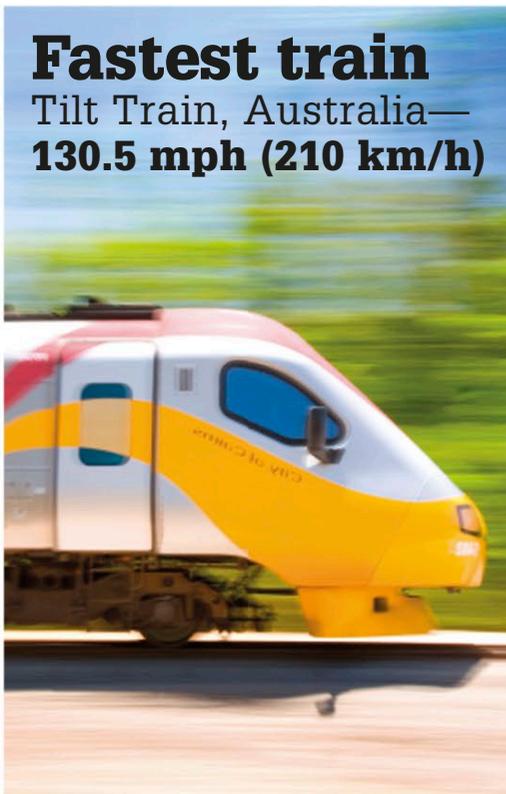


**Longest coastline**  
Australia—16,006.5 miles (25,760 km)

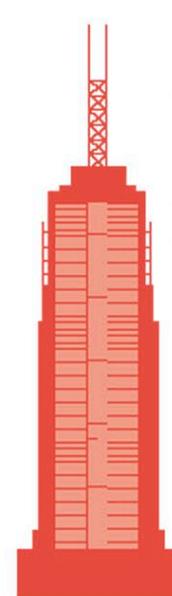
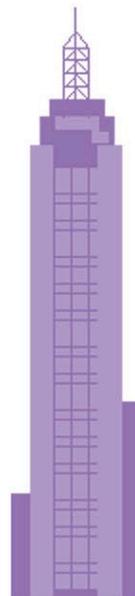


**Busiest port**  
Port Hedland, Western Australia—  
**537,927 kilotons of cargo per year**,  
making it the eighth-busiest port in the world

**Fastest train**  
Tilt Train, Australia—  
**130.5 mph (210 km/h)**



## Tallest buildings



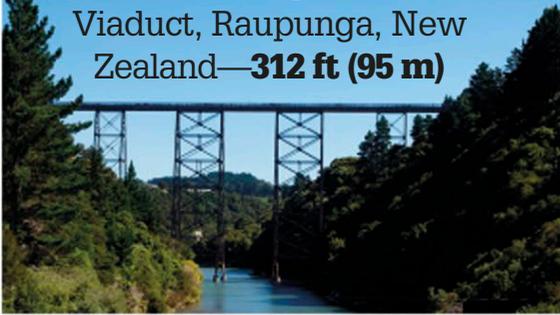
 **Busiest airport Sydney Airport, Sydney, Australia—39.7 million passengers per year**

## BRIDGES

### Longest bridge:

Macleay River Bridge, Australia—**2 miles (3.2 km)**

**Tallest bridge:** Mohaka Viaduct, Raupunga, New Zealand—**312 ft (95 m)**



## Most visited cities (Visitors per year)

**Sydney, Australia**  
2.853 million

**Melbourne, Australia**  
2.166 million

**Auckland, NZ**  
1.965 million

**Christchurch, NZ**  
1.732 million

**Brisbane, Australia**  
1.066 million

## WATERFALLS

Highest: **Browne Falls, New Zealand**—  
2,744 ft (836 m)

Largest (by volume):  
**Huka Falls, Taupo, New Zealand**—  
7,769 ft<sup>3</sup> (220 m<sup>3</sup>)  
of water per second

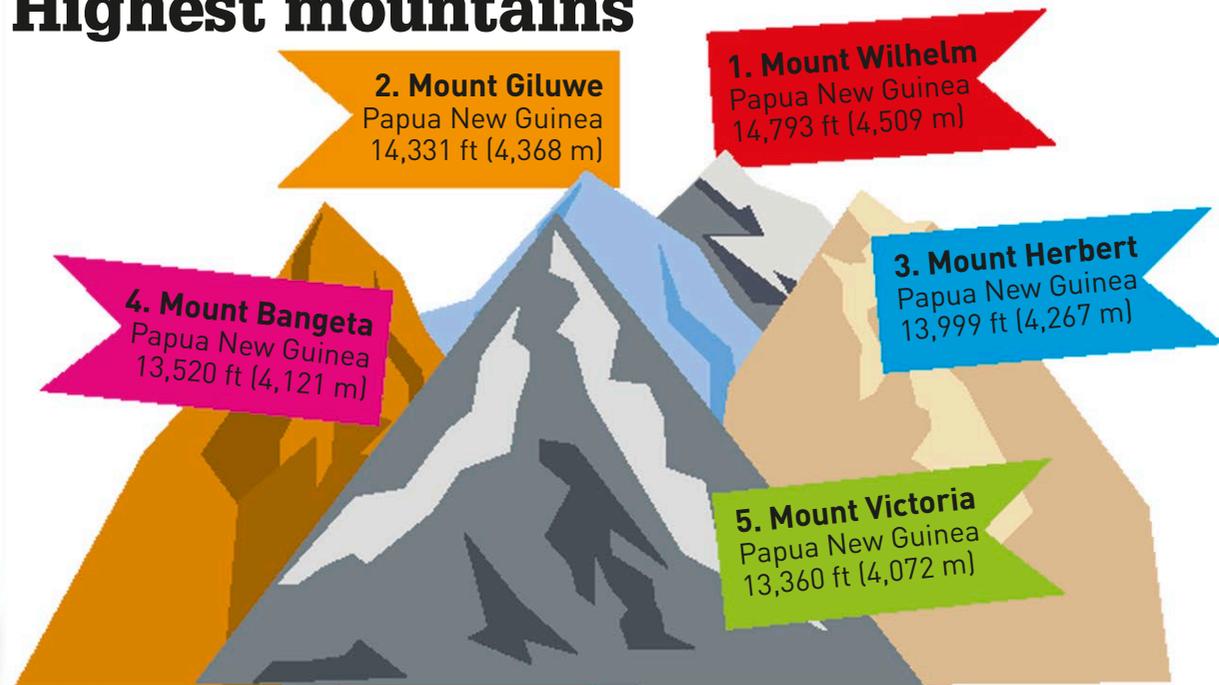
## LAKES

Largest lake: Lake Eyre, Australia—  
**3,700 sq miles (9,583 sq km)**

**Deepest lake:** Lake Hauroko, New Zealand—**1,516 ft (462 m)**



## Highest mountains



## TALLEST VOLCANO

Mount Giluwe, Papua New Guinea—**14,331 ft (4,368 m)**

### Northernmost point:

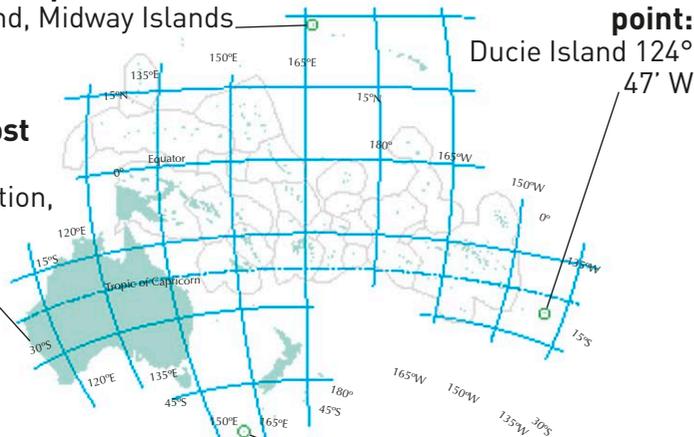
Eastern Island, Midway Islands  
28° 15' N

### Easternmost point:

Ducie Island 124°  
47' W

### Westernmost point:

Cape Inscription, Australia  
112° 57' E



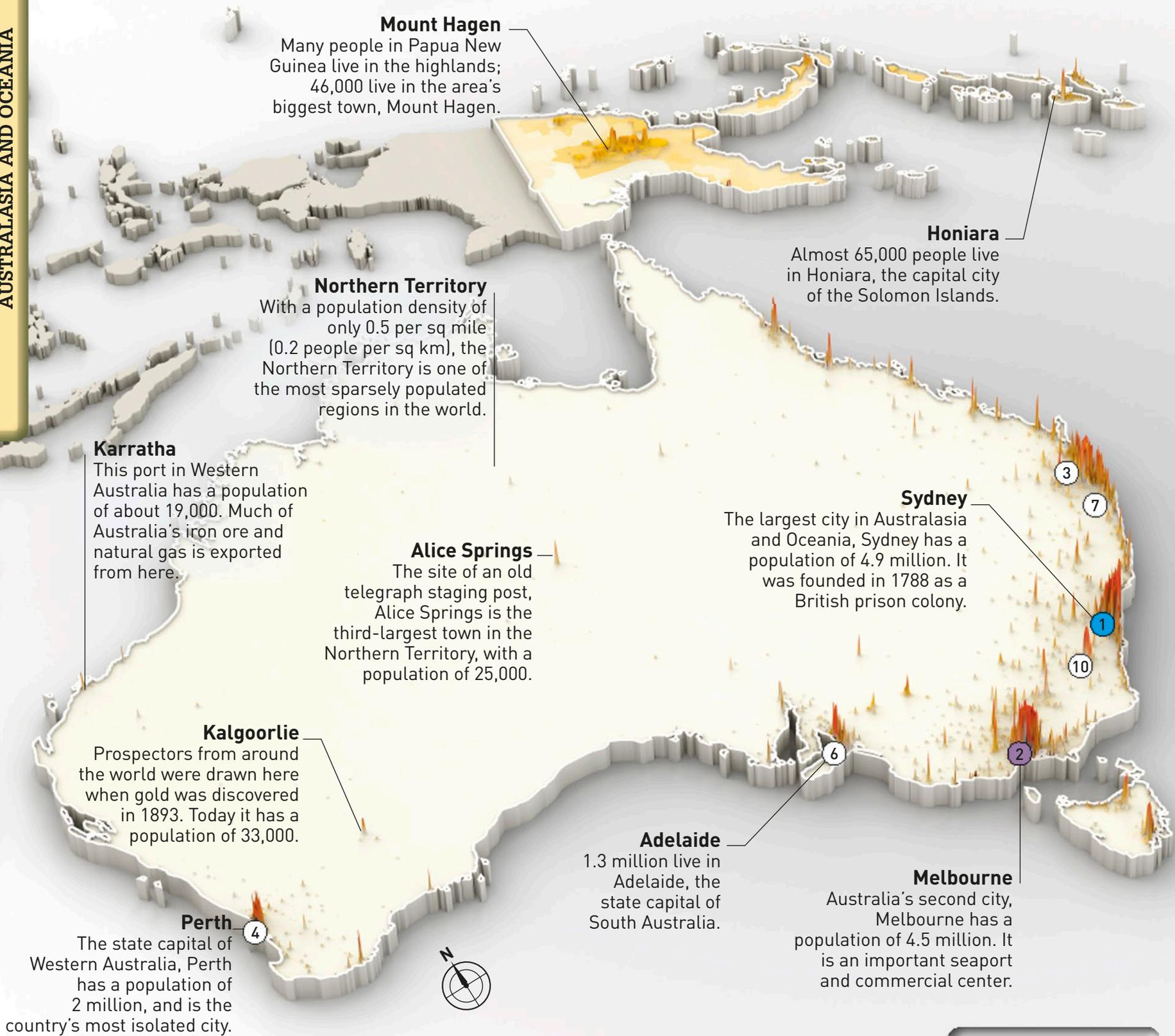
## Australasia and Oceania's extreme points

**Southernmost point:**  
Macquarie Island, NZ  
54° 30' S

## BIGGEST GLACIER

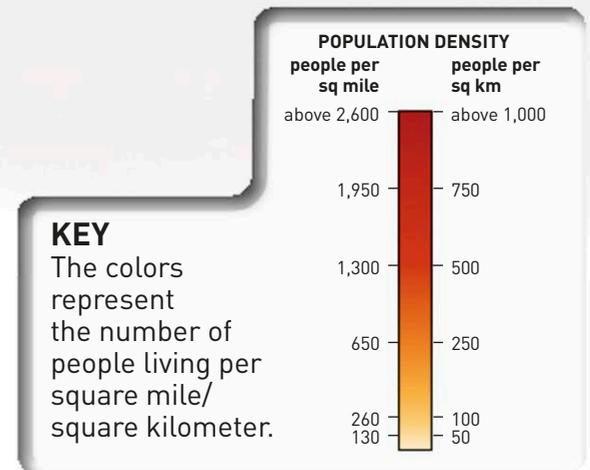
Tasman Glacier, New Zealand—  
**17 miles (27 km) long, with an area of 39 sq miles (101 sq km)**

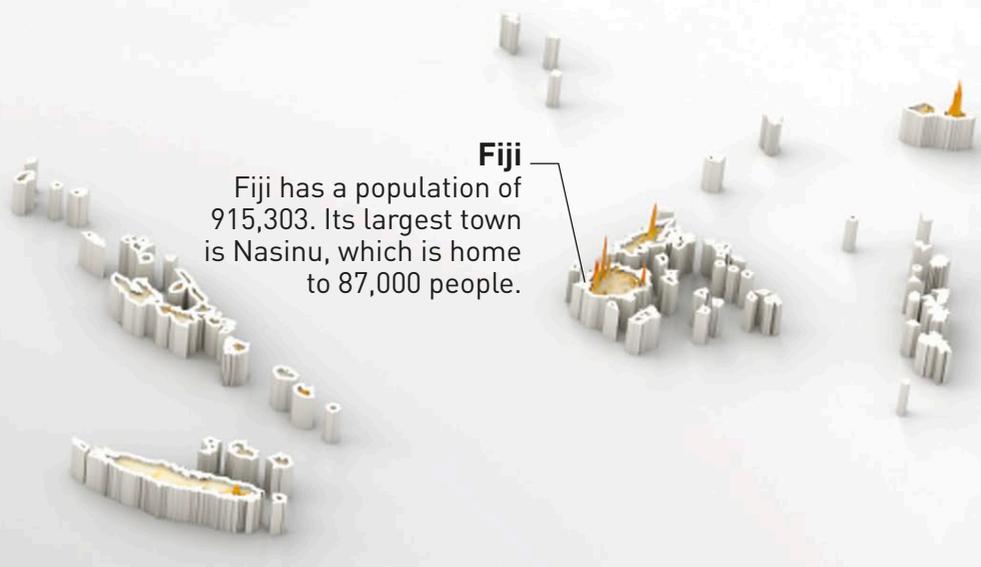




# Population

Australia's population is concentrated in the major cities of the southeast, with very few people living in the continent's center. In New Zealand, most people live in cities on the North Island, while the mountainous South Island is less populated.



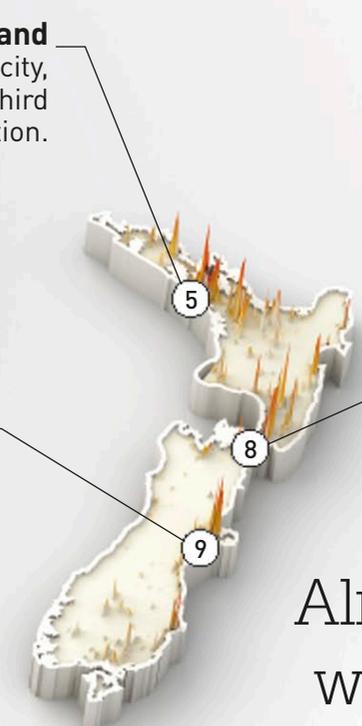


**Fiji**

Fiji has a population of 915,303. Its largest town is Nasinu, which is home to 87,000 people.

**Auckland**  
New Zealand's largest city, Auckland is home to one-third of the country's population.

**Christchurch**  
380,000 people live in Christchurch, the largest city in New Zealand's South Island.



**Wellington**  
New Zealand's capital, Wellington has a population of 400,000 and is the country's second-largest city.

**Australasia and Oceania's largest cities**

The list below is based on the number of people living inside a city's boundaries.

- 1 Sydney, Australia—4.9 million
- 2 Melbourne, Australia—4.5 million
- 3 Brisbane, Australia—2.3 million
- 4 Perth, Australia—2 million
- 5 Auckland, New Zealand—1.4 million
- 6 Adelaide, Australia—1.3 million

- 7 Gold Coast, Australia—530,000
- 8 Wellington, New Zealand—400,000
- 9 Christchurch, New Zealand—389,000
- 10 Canberra, Australia—380,000



Melbourne is the capital city of the Australian state of Victoria.

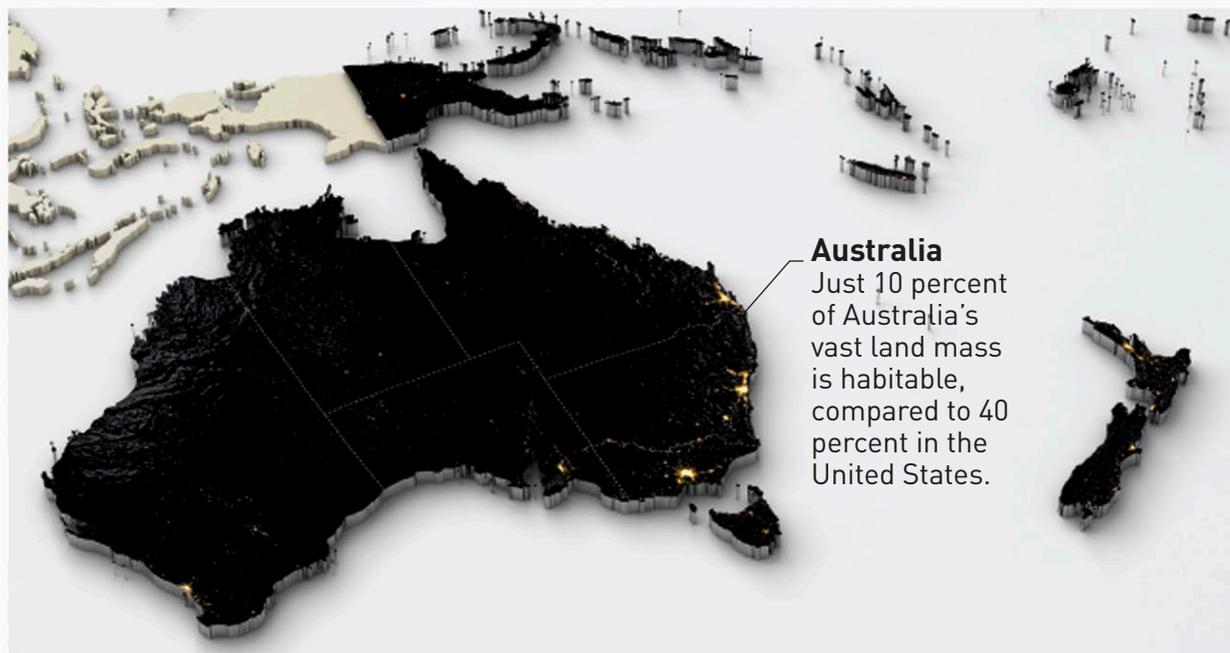
Almost **one in three** Australians were born **outside** the country.

**BY NIGHT**

The brightly lit cities of southeastern Australia shine brightly, and Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane are easy to spot. In contrast, the country's interior is shrouded in darkness. Auckland and Wellington are two of the bright points on New Zealand's North Island, with only Christchurch standing out on South Island.

**KEY**

- Rural area
- Urban area



**Australia**  
Just 10 percent of Australia's vast land mass is habitable, compared to 40 percent in the United States.

# New Zealand



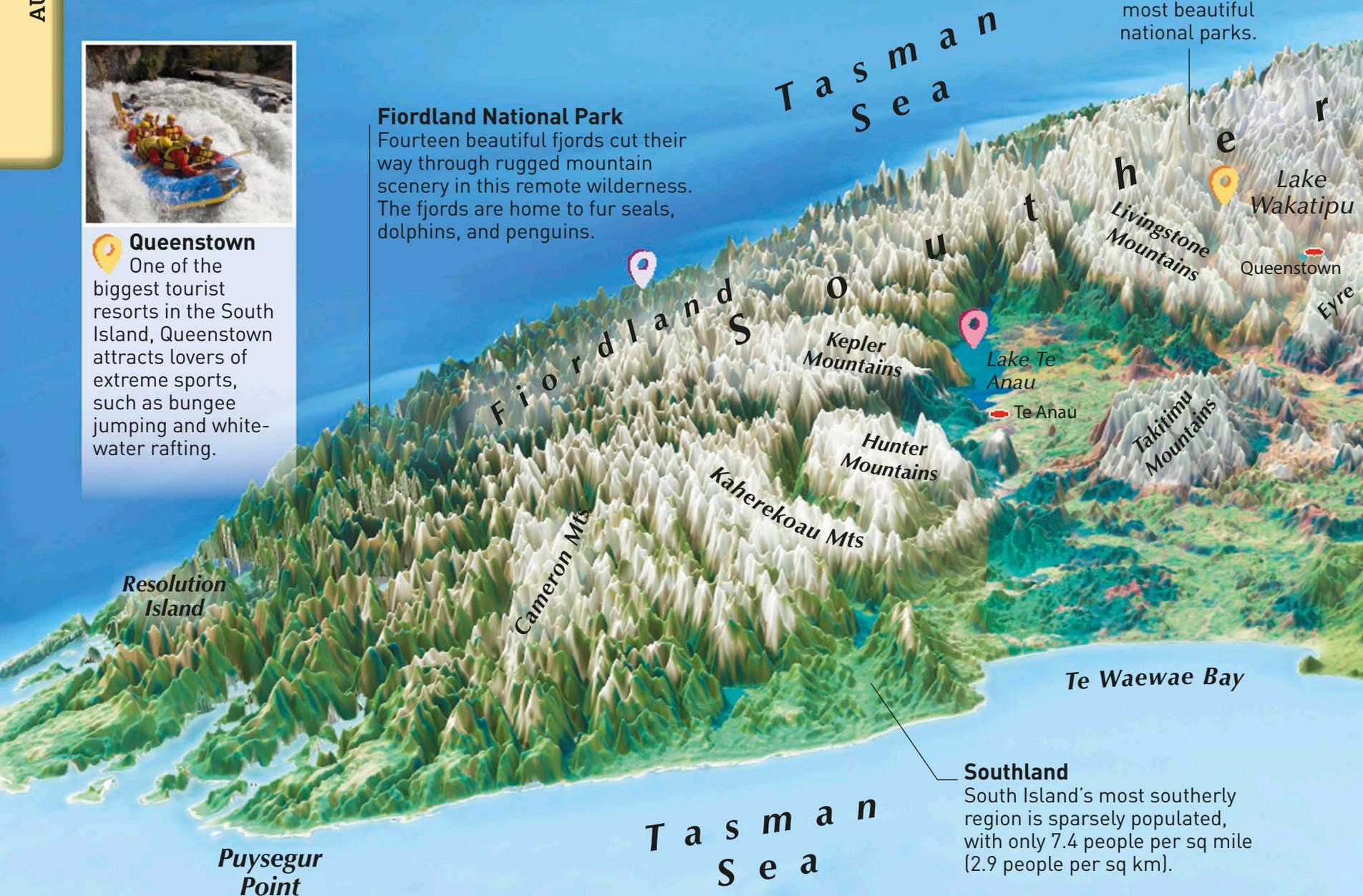
Almost one-third of New Zealand has been set aside as protected national park. Among its incredible range of landscapes are the towering peaks of the Southern Alps, and the geysers and hot springs of North Island.



**Queenstown**  
One of the biggest tourist resorts in the South Island, Queenstown attracts lovers of extreme sports, such as bungee jumping and white-water rafting.

**Mount Aspiring National Park**  
Soaring peaks, alpine lakes, and dense forests make this one of the country's most beautiful national parks.

**Fiordland National Park**  
Fourteen beautiful fjords cut their way through rugged mountain scenery in this remote wilderness. The fjords are home to fur seals, dolphins, and penguins.



**Milford Sound**  
This 10-mile (16-km) long fjord is one of the highlights of the Fiordland National Park. The surrounding mountains are very popular with hikers.



**Lake Te Anau**  
With a depth of up to 1,368 ft (417 m), Lake Te Anau contains the largest amount of freshwater in Australasia and Oceania. It is a popular destination for fishing and water sports.



### Ruapehu

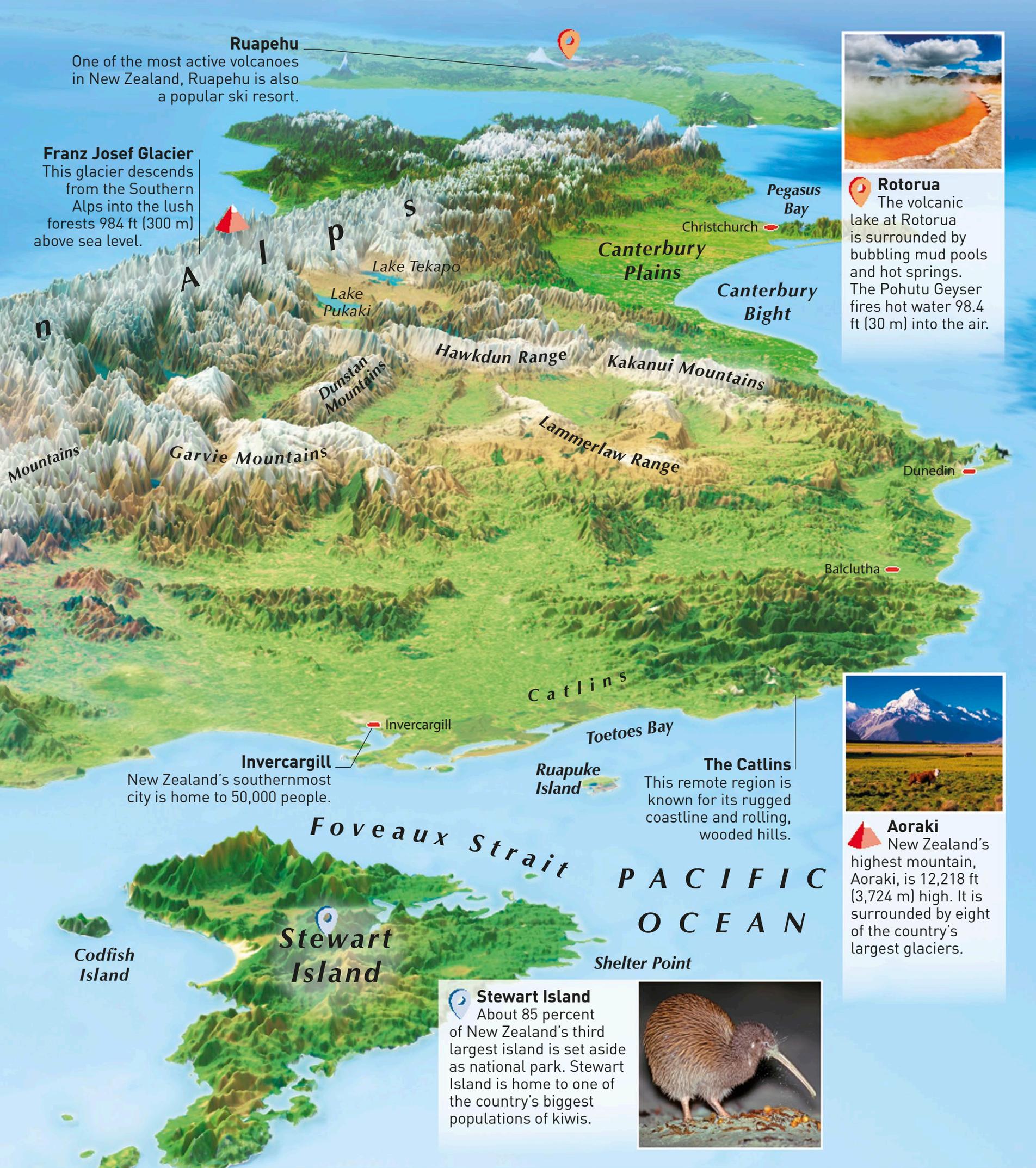
One of the most active volcanoes in New Zealand, Ruapehu is also a popular ski resort.

### Franz Josef Glacier

This glacier descends from the Southern Alps into the lush forests 984 ft (300 m) above sea level.



**Rotorua**  
The volcanic lake at Rotorua is surrounded by bubbling mud pools and hot springs. The Pohutu Geyser fires hot water 98.4 ft (30 m) into the air.



**Aoraki**  
New Zealand's highest mountain, Aoraki, is 12,218 ft (3,724 m) high. It is surrounded by eight of the country's largest glaciers.

**Stewart Island**  
About 85 percent of New Zealand's third largest island is set aside as national park. Stewart Island is home to one of the country's biggest populations of kiwis.



Rock islands,  
Southern Lagoon, Palau

**Spirit house**

These long timber buildings are places in which Melanesian tribes practice rituals. They are reserved for men.

Mount Tavurur,  
New Britain Island,  
Papua New Guinea

Spirit house,  
Sepik River,  
Papua New Guinea

Parliament House,  
Port Moresby,  
Papua New Guinea

Kakadu rock art,  
Australia

Cattle stations,  
Barkly Tableland,  
Australia

Kuranda Scenic Railway,  
Queensland rainforest,  
Australia

**Florence Falls**

The forests of Litchfield National Park are home to this beautiful double waterfall.

Florence Falls,  
Australia

Bungle Bungle,  
Purnululu National  
Park, Australia

Karlu Karlu  
(Devil's Marbles),  
Northern Territory

Diamantina National Park,  
Queensland

**Wolfe Creek**  
A meteorite collision  
300,000 years ago  
left this well-  
preserved crater.

Wolfe Creek  
meteor crater,  
Western Australia

Gosses Bluff Crater,  
Australia

Burrup Peninsula  
rock art,  
Western Australia

Uluru  
(Ayers Rock),  
Northern  
Territory

Lake Eyre,  
South Australia

Karijini  
National Park,  
Western Australia

Trans-Australian  
Railway, Nullarbor  
Plain, Australia

Adelaide Oval,  
Adelaide, Australia

Swan Bells,  
Perth, Western  
Australia

Bunda Cliffs, Nullarbor Plain,  
South Australia

Pinnacles Desert,  
Western Australia

**Fremantle Prison**  
Built for British convicts  
in the 1850s, this prison  
is now a tourist site.

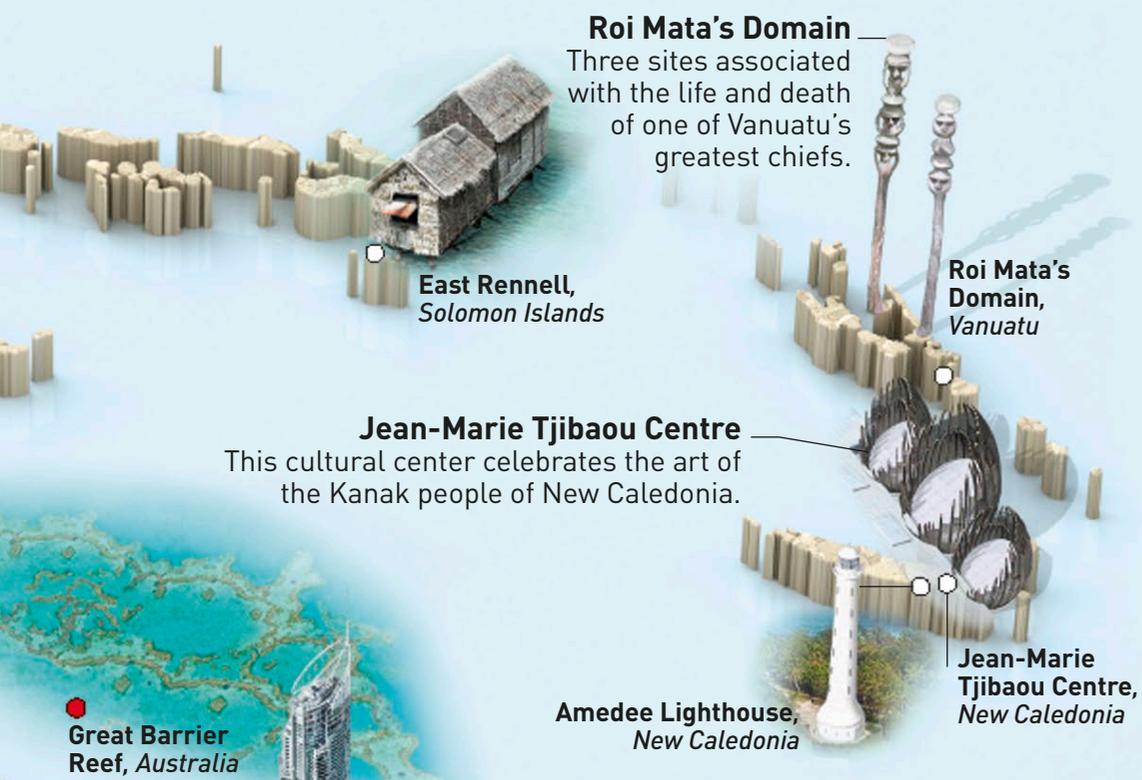
Fremantle Prison,  
Western Australia

ANZAC Memorial,  
Western Australia

**Uluru (Ayers Rock)**

This huge mass of sandstone appears to change color during the day as the sun reflects on its different minerals.





**Roi Mata's Domain**  
Three sites associated with the life and death of one of Vanuatu's greatest chiefs.

**East Rennell, Solomon Islands**

**Roi Mata's Domain, Vanuatu**

**Jean-Marie Tjibaou Centre**  
This cultural center celebrates the art of the Kanak people of New Caledonia.

**Amedee Lighthouse, New Caledonia**

**Jean-Marie Tjibaou Centre, New Caledonia**



**Great Barrier Reef, Australia**

**Q1 Tower, Gold Coast, Australia**

**Byron Bay Lighthouse, New South Wales**

**Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia**

**Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, Australia**

**Twelve Apostles National Park, Victoria**

**Port Arthur Historic Site, Tasmania**

● **The Great Barrier Reef**

One of the natural wonders of the world, the Great Barrier Reef stretches for 2,600 km (1,600 miles) along the northeastern coast of Australia. The reef is made of coral, which is built by billions of tiny creatures over hundreds of years. It is home to about 1,500 species of fish, 14 species of sea snake, and more than 3,000 different types of mollusc.



The *roof* of the **Sydney Opera House** is covered with **1,056,006 ceramic tiles**.

# Famous landmarks



**Sky Tower, Auckland, New Zealand**

**Mount Ngauruhoe,**  
This active volcano is situated at the heart of New Zealand's oldest national park.

**Mount Ngauruhoe, Tongariro National Park, New Zealand**

**Milford Sound, Te Wahipounamu, New Zealand**

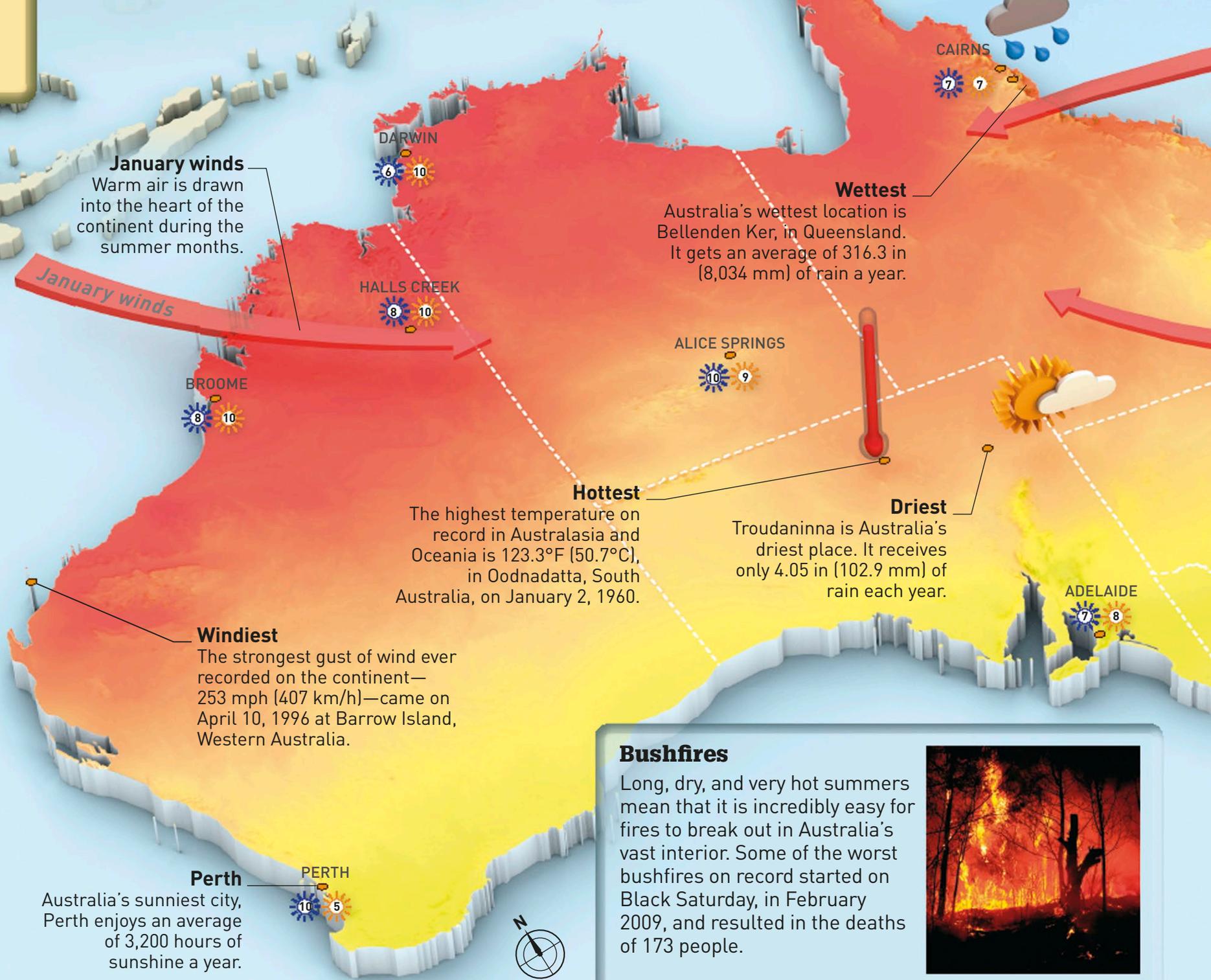
**Moeraki Boulders, Hampden, New Zealand**

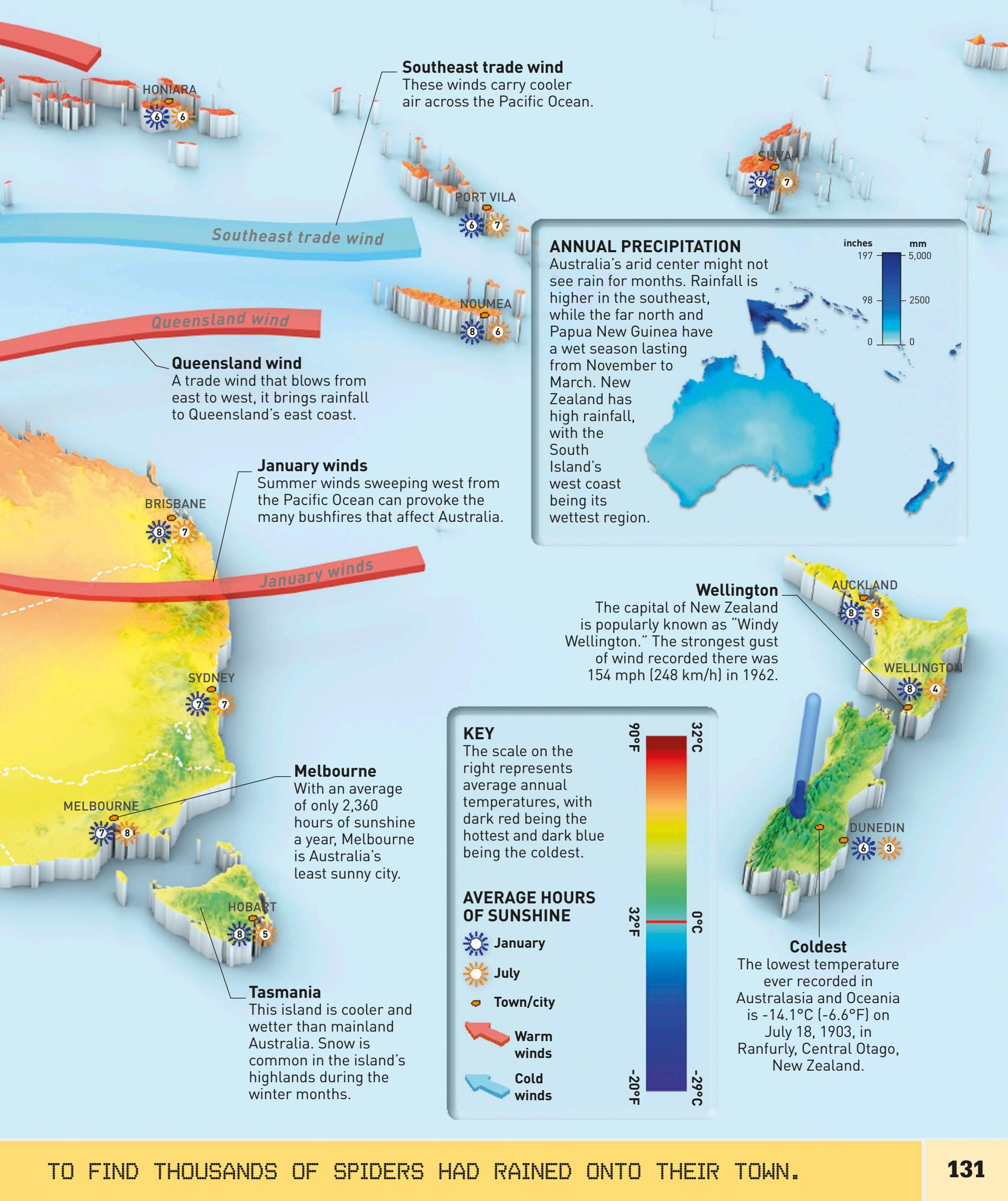
The rock formations of the Australian Outback and the dramatic scenery of New Zealand's fjordland are just two of the region's many natural wonders. The region is also home to some iconic modern architecture, such as the Sydney Opera House.

**KEY**  
○ Landmark location

# Climate

Temperatures soar during the day in the dry interior of Australia, while the coastal regions of the southeast are cooler and wetter. New Zealand has a mild climate, although heavy snow falls during the winter on the South Island. The islands of the Pacific are often hot and humid.





**Southeast trade wind**

These winds carry cooler air across the Pacific Ocean.

*Southeast trade wind*

*Queensland wind*

**Queensland wind**

A trade wind that blows from east to west, it brings rainfall to Queensland's east coast.

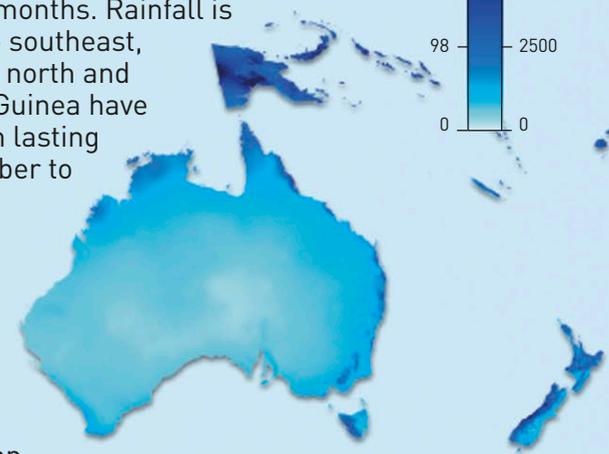
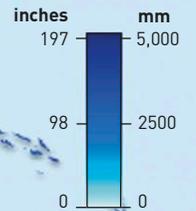
**January winds**

Summer winds sweeping west from the Pacific Ocean can provoke the many bushfires that affect Australia.

*January winds*

**ANNUAL PRECIPITATION**

Australia's arid center might not see rain for months. Rainfall is higher in the southeast, while the far north and Papua New Guinea have a wet season lasting from November to March. New Zealand has high rainfall, with the South Island's west coast being its wettest region.



BRISBANE



SYDNEY



MELBOURNE



HOBART



**Tasmania**

This island is cooler and wetter than mainland Australia. Snow is common in the island's highlands during the winter months.

**Wellington**

The capital of New Zealand is popularly known as "Windy Wellington." The strongest gust of wind recorded there was 154 mph (248 km/h) in 1962.

AUCKLAND



WELLINGTON



DUNEDIN



**Coldest**

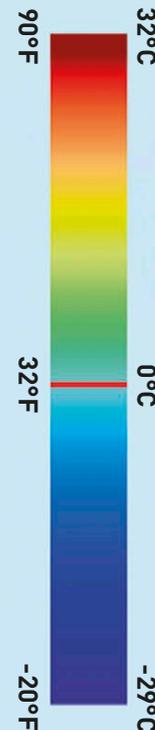
The lowest temperature ever recorded in Australasia and Oceania is -14.1°C (-6.6°F) on July 18, 1903, in Ranfurly, Central Otago, New Zealand.

**KEY**

The scale on the right represents average annual temperatures, with dark red being the hottest and dark blue being the coldest.

**AVERAGE HOURS OF SUNSHINE**

- January
- July
- Town/city
- Warm winds
- Cold winds



**BIOMES**

Deserts and temperate broadleaf forest are dominant in Australia, while the mountain habitat of the Southern Alps dominates New Zealand.

-  Temperate broadleaf forest
-  Temperate grassland
-  Mediterranean
-  Tropical broadleaf forest
-  Tropical dry broadleaf forest
-  Tropical/subtropical grassland
-  Mountain
-  Desert
-  Mangrove

**Sir David's echidna**

This spiny anteater, named for British naturalist Sir David Attenborough, is critically endangered.

**Southern cassowary**

Its hornlike crest helps this bird push head-first through vegetation.

**Saltwater crocodile**

The largest of the reptiles, this crocodile drowns its prey by rolling it in the water.

**Cuscus**

This possum uses its strong tail to climb through trees.

**Frilled lizard**

When threatened, this lizard opens a flap of skin to warn off predators.

**Queen Alexandra birdwing butterfly**

The world's largest butterfly, it has a wingspan of up to 12 in (31 cm).

**Clownfish**

This fish hides among the poisonous tentacles of the sea anemone.

**Black flying fox**

This fruit bat's wingspan reaches up to 6.6 ft (2 m).

**Blue-spotted stingray**

Hiding patiently on the seabed, this ray ambushes passing snails and crabs.

**Dingo**

Descended from prehistoric domestic dogs, dingoes are widespread throughout Australia.

**Cockatoo**

These noisy parrots gather in flocks that can include several hundred birds.

**Wallaby**

Like their larger cousin, the kangaroo, wallabies carry their young in pouches.

**Kangaroo**

These animals are marsupials, meaning that females nurture their young in pouches.

**Spiny anteater**

One of the few mammals to lay eggs, the spiny anteater is protected by sharp spines.

**Wombat**

This marsupial lives in complex burrows that can be up to 660 ft (200 m) long.

**Inland taipan**

The most venomous land snake in the world, its prey includes rats and other small mammals.

**Dwarf bearded dragon**

This small lizard lives off insects, invertebrates, and small mammals.

**Western brown snake**

This fast-moving snake preys on mice and lizards.

**Redback spider**

A bite from this spider can cause pain, sickness, and convulsions.

**Emu**

Australia's largest bird can reach up to 6.2 ft (1.9 m) in height. Its shaggy plumage resembles hair.

**Tiger snake**

This extremely venomous snake preys on frogs, lizards, birds, and small mammals.

**Numbat**

This marsupial rips open termite nests with its powerful front teeth and claws.

**Poisonous snakes**

Some of the world's most dangerous snakes live in Australia. The eastern brown snake causes the most deaths, followed by the western brown snake, and the tiger snake.



The eastern brown snake can be extremely aggressive.

**Fijian monkey-faced bat**

This bat can only be found on Fiji, but is endangered due to habitat loss.

**Coconut crab**

The largest land-living crab in the world uses its pincers to pierce coconut shells.

**Banded sea krait**

The coral reef provides a hunting ground for this highly venomous sea snake.

**Giant manta ray**

To feed, this ray pulls in water through its mouth, collecting up to 66 lb (30 kg) of plankton each day.

**Koala**

Eucalyptus leaves provide the koala with its staple diet.

**Regent bowerbird**

The male's plumage is glossy black and gold, while the female's is drab olive-brown.

**Lyrebird**

During courtship, the male displays an extraordinary repertoire of songs.

**Duck-billed platypus**

With its webbed feet and paddlelike tail, the platypus is well equipped for its semi-aquatic life.

**Kookaburra**

Known for its laughing call, the kookaburra eats mice and small reptiles.

**Tasmanian devil**

The size of a small dog, this ferocious marsupial feeds on animal carcasses.

**Green turtle**

This turtle feeds on seagrasses and is found throughout the region's seas.

**Kiwi**

This nocturnal, flightless bird preys on earthworms and other invertebrates.

**Dusky dolphin**

Highly acrobatic, these dolphins can be found in the coastal waters around New Zealand.

**Kakapo**

This large, flightless parrot lives off seeds and fruit.

**New Zealand sea lion**

This highly endangered sea lion preys on crabs and penguins in the seas around New Zealand's South Island.

The **platypus** has a pair of **venomous spurs** on its hind legs.

# Wildlife

Australia and New Zealand are home to some weird and wonderful animals, among them egg-laying mammals, marsupials, and flightless birds. The seas of Oceania, meanwhile, are home to turtles, dolphins, and an extraordinary range of tropical fish.





# POLEAR REGIONS

## **Extreme cold**

The North and South Poles are the northernmost and southernmost points on Earth. The climate there is extremely harsh, with temperatures rarely rising above 32°F (0°C).



**Vinson Massif**  
Part of a large mountain range by the Ronne Ice Shelf, this massif contains Antarctica's highest peak, Mount Vinson, at 16,050 ft (4,892 m).



**South Pole Station**  
The Amundsen-Scott research station is located at the Geographical South Pole. First opened in 1956, it can house up to 200 researchers.

### Southern elephant seal

The largest of all seals, males can be over 20 ft (6 m) long and weigh up to 8,800 lb (4,000 kg).

### Antarctic minke whale

This small whale lives in groups of two to four.

### Antarctic ice fish

A type of anti-freeze in its blood enables this fish to survive in ice-cold water.

### Wandering albatross

With the largest wingspan of any bird—up to 11.5 ft (3.5 m)—it spends most of its life in flight at sea.

### Snowy sheathbill

This bird does not swim, so it steals fish, and eggs or chicks, from penguins.

### South polar skua

Up to 21 in (53 cm) tall, this large bird breeds in Antarctica before returning to a life on the oceans.

### Antarctic toothfish

Growing up to 5.6 ft (1.7 m) long, this fish feeds on squid, crabs, shrimp, and smaller fish.

### Leopard seal

This fierce, sharp-toothed predator hunts other seals, penguins, and fish.

# Antarctica



Earth's southernmost continent is the coldest region in the world, with temperatures reaching as low as  $-135.8^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $-93.2^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Despite the harsh conditions, the continent is home to a number of animals. However, climate change is a threat to both Antarctica's animals and landscape.



### Ross Ice Shelf

This enormous layer of floating ice is over 370 miles (600 km) long. About 90 percent of its ice lies underwater.



### Orca

In fact the largest of all dolphins, this is one of the world's most powerful predators.



### Colossal squid

This squid is up to 46 ft (14 m) long, and has sharp hooks on its limbs.



### Adelie penguin

Parents take turns in feeding and keeping their eggs safe from predators.

### Antarctic fur seal

Males battle for territory during the breeding season when these seals gather in vast numbers on land.

### Geographical South Pole

This is Earth's southernmost point. The Ceremonial South Pole, situated 590 ft (180 m) from the Geographical South Pole, is marked by a pole surrounded by the flags of the nations that signed the Antarctic Treaty, an agreement that set aside the continent for scientific research.



### Extreme climate

The average annual temperature in Antarctica is around -58°F (-50°C). Winds often reach storm force, there is little snowfall, and the sun does not rise at all between March and September.



### Emperor penguin

The largest of all penguins has an average height of 45 in (115 cm). They can survive in temperatures as low as -76° F (-60° C).



### Gentoo penguin

These speedy swimmers have red beaks, white feather caps, and orange feet.



### Mount Erebus

One of the world's most active volcanoes and, at 12,448 ft (3,794 m), the highest active volcano in Antarctica, Mount Erebus has a very rare, bubbling, lava lake.



### Snow petrel

These birds nest on cliffs, but prefer to gather on pack ice.

### KEY

Antarctica is a cold desert. Where it is not covered in ice, the barren ground is gravel or rock.

-  Ice
-  Tundra

**Bowhead whale**

These whales can break through ice to breathe and can live for up to 130 years.

**North Pole**

Earth's northernmost point is situated on an ice cap. Below it, the Arctic Ocean is around 13,800 ft (4,200 m) deep.



**Arctic skua**

These aggressive seabirds steal food from other birds by attacking them in mid-air.

**Arctic hare**

These hares do not hibernate, and find food under the snow.



**Bewick's swan**

Each individual swan has a unique pattern on its black and yellow beak.

**Siberian salamander**

This amphibian can survive in very low temperatures by deep-freezing itself until temperatures start to rise.



**Spectacled eider**

After breeding on the coasts of Alaska and northeast Siberia, these ducks gather in spots of open ocean in the pack ice.

**Guillemot**

Found throughout the Arctic, these birds can dive as deep as 197 ft (60 m) to find food.



**Rock ptarmigan**

This bird changes its white feathers to speckled brown in summer.



**Arctic tern**

These small birds fly 43,496 miles (70,000 km) between the North and South Poles every year.

**BIOMES**

- Ice
- Tundra
- Boreal forest/taiga

**Lake Hazen**

One of the largest lakes in the Arctic region, the 883-ft (269-m) deep Lake Hazen, in Canada, is frozen over for most of the year.



**Greenland shark**

A slow-swimming scavenger, this shark sniffs out dead animals in the water.

# The Arctic

## Yenisei

The Yenisei river in Russia is the largest river to flow out into the Arctic Ocean. Its 31-mile (50-km) wide estuary is frozen for long parts of the year.



## Siberian crane

This bird easily snips off roots and catches fish with its saw-edged beak.



## Beluga whale

White in color, this small whale speaks in clicks and whistles.



Unlike Antarctica, the Arctic is not a continent, but the area of frozen waters surrounding the North Pole. It includes the northernmost parts of three continents—North America, Europe, and Asia. Many different animals have made a home in this inhospitable region.



## Ermine

This mammal's coat turns from brown to white in winter for camouflage.



## Porbeagle shark

This shark grows up to 8.2 ft (2.5 m) in length and feeds on squid and fish.



## Spiny dogfish

This fish is one of the most numerous species of shark in the world.



## Brent goose

Unlike other geese, the Brent flies in long lines instead of in a V-shape.



## Polar bear

A powerful predator, this bear roams over land and pack ice to find prey.



## Narwhal

The tusks of this small whale can grow to 9.8 ft (3 m).



## Lemming

Soft, warm fur helps this rodent stay active through the winter.



## Bluntnose sixgill shark

This fast-swimming shark has six gills instead of the five normal in most sharks.



## Puffin

60 percent of the world's puffins live in Iceland.



## Murmansk

Around 300,000 people live in the Russian port of Murmansk, the largest city inside the Arctic Circle.







# THE OCEANS

## **Mighty seas**

Oceans cover approximately 71 percent of Earth's surface and contain 97 percent of the water found on our planet.

# Pacific Ocean

The Pacific is by far the world's largest ocean. At its widest point (stretching from Colombia to Indonesia), it extends for 12,300 miles (19,800 km)—almost halfway around the world. The deepest trenches on Earth can be found here, along with massive volcanoes that rise up from the ocean's floor.

## FAST FACTS

### Total area:

60,060,893 sq miles  
(155,557,000 sq km)

### Coastline:

84,297 miles (135,663 km)

### Average depth:

13,025 ft (3,970 m)

### Lowest point:

Challenger Deep, Mariana Trench—  
35,840 ft (10,924 m)

### Major access points:

- ① Panama Canal
- ② Strait of Magellan
- ③ Tsugaru Strait
- ④ Tsushima
- ⑤ Torres Straits



The Strait of Magellan, in southern Chile/Argentina, connects the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

### The Emperor Seamounts

These underwater mountains extend northwest from Hawaii. Each mount is named after a Japanese emperor.

### Mariana Trench

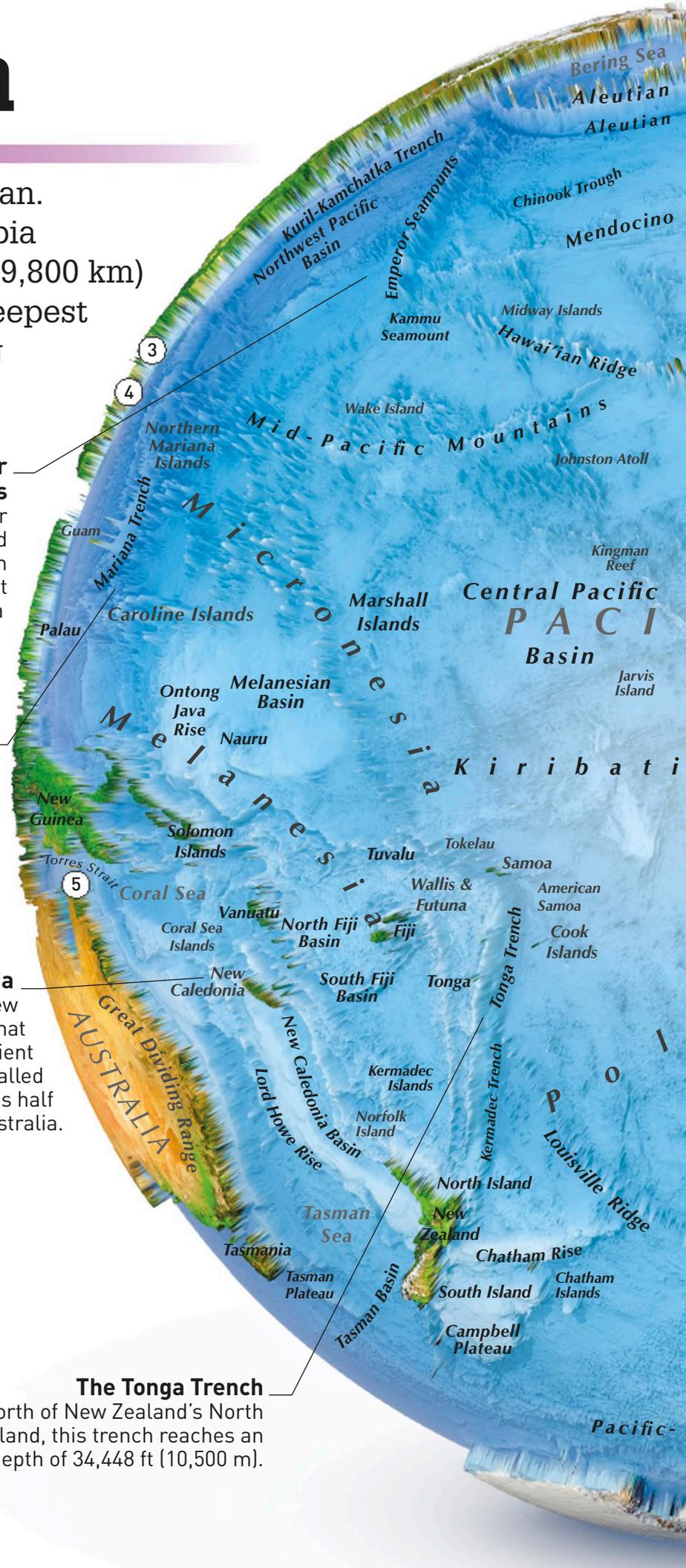
The lowest point on Earth, its deepest point lies almost 7 miles (11 km) beneath the ocean's surface.

### New Caledonia

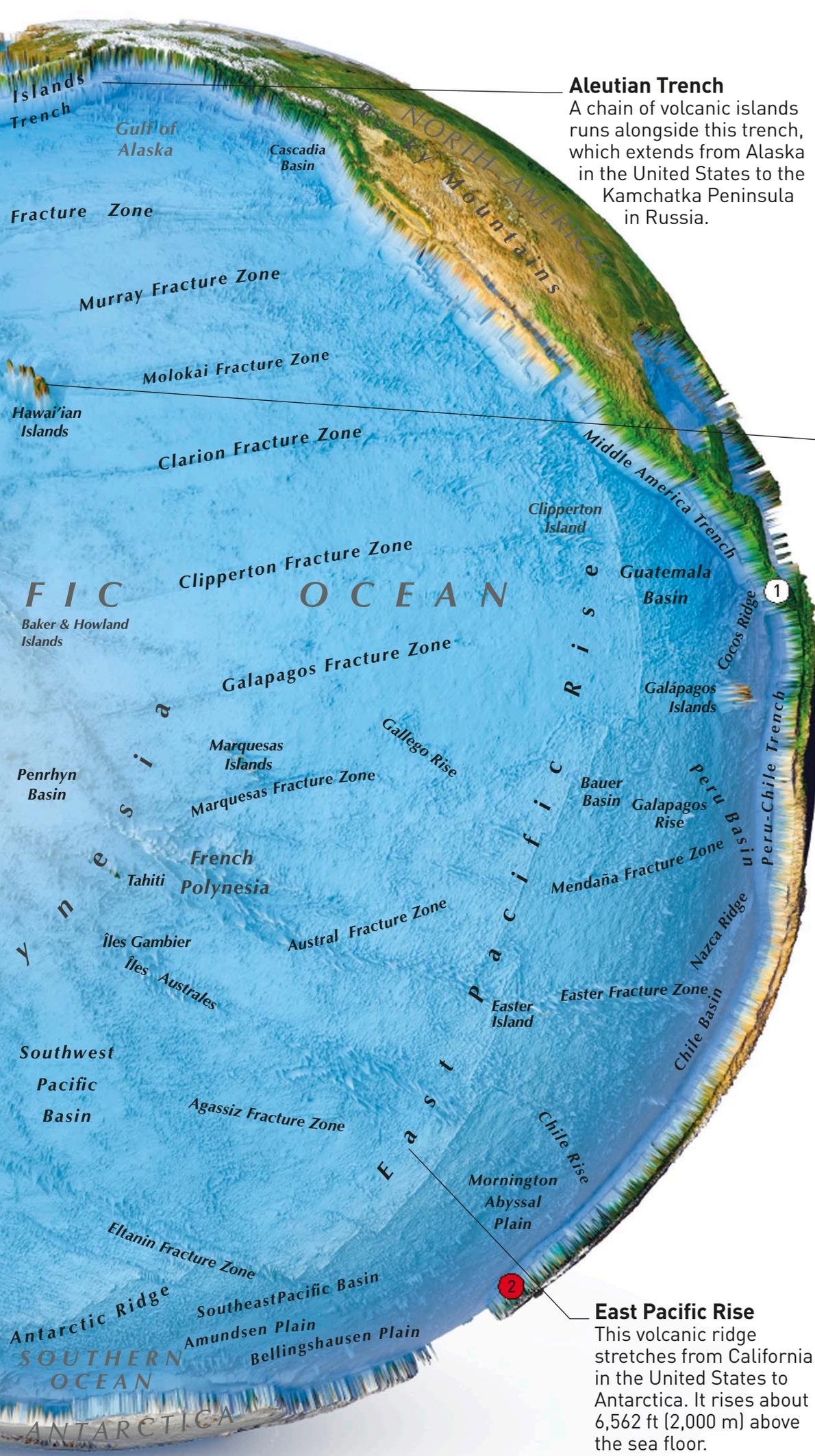
This island and New Zealand are all that remain of an ancient continent called Zealandia that was half the size of Australia.

### The Tonga Trench

Lying north of New Zealand's North Island, this trench reaches an average depth of 34,448 ft (10,500 m).



The **Pacific Ocean** contains *just over half* of all the world's **seawater**.



**Aleutian Trench**

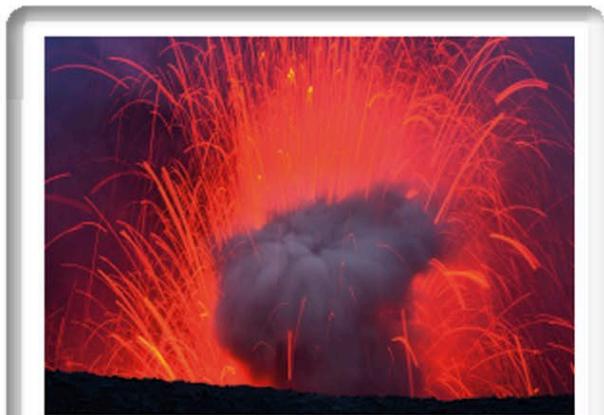
A chain of volcanic islands runs alongside this trench, which extends from Alaska in the United States to the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia.

**Mauna Loa**

Measuring 29,500 ft (9,000 m) in height from the ocean floor to its summit, the world's largest active volcano looms over Hawaii.

**Peru-Chile Trench**

This 3,660-mile (5,900-km) long trench is the longest in the Pacific Ocean. It follows the line of the Andes Mountains.



**Ring of Fire**

The Pacific Ocean is surrounded by a band of volcanoes called the Ring of Fire. This ring extends from New Zealand to South America and contains more than three-quarters of the world's volcanoes, including Mount Fuji, in Japan, and Mount St. Helens in the United States.

**East Pacific Rise**

This volcanic ridge stretches from California in the United States to Antarctica. It rises about 6,562 ft (2,000 m) above the sea floor.

# Atlantic Ocean

The Atlantic is the world's second-largest ocean. It stretches from the Arctic to the Antarctic, separating Europe and Africa from the Americas. The Atlantic Ocean covers about one-fifth of the planet's surface, is home to some of the world's richest fishing waters, and contains a plentiful supply of gas and oil.

## FAST FACTS

### Total area:

29,637,974 sq miles (76,762,000 sq km)

### Coastline:

69,510 miles (111,866 km)

### Average depth:

11,962 ft (3,646 m)

### Lowest point:

Milwaukee Deep, Puerto Rico Trench—  
28,232 ft (8,605 m)

### Major access points:

- ① English Channel
- ② Panama Canal
- ③ Straits of Florida
- ④ Strait of Gibraltar
- ⑤ Strait of Magellan



② The Panama Canal, one of the world's busiest waterways, connects the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

### Puerto Rico Trench

This trench stretches for 497 miles (800 km) and contains the Atlantic Ocean's deepest point.

### Mid-Atlantic Ridge

This underwater mountain range runs for about 10,000 miles (16,000 km) along the ocean floor.

### Amazon Fan

Mud and clay from the Amazon River have settled on the ocean floor, forming a mound of sediment 502,000 sq miles (1.3 million sq km) in size.

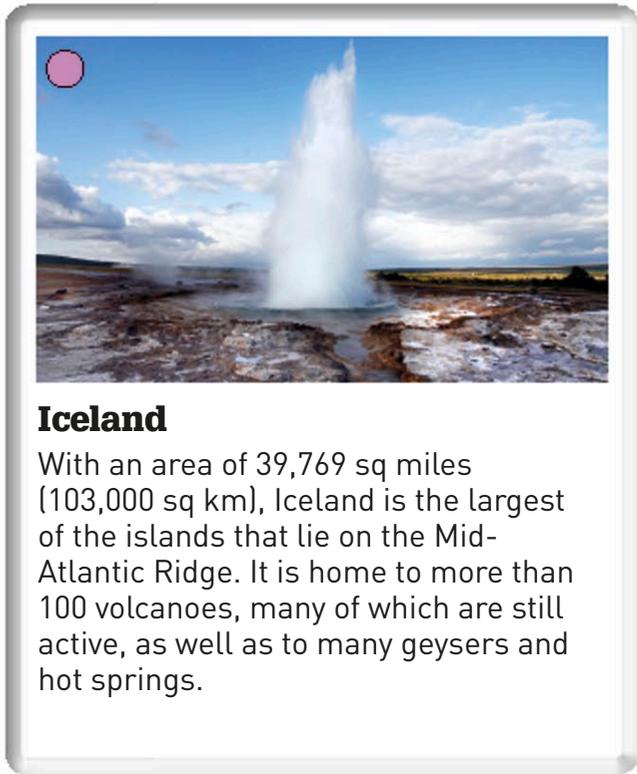
### Icebergs

The icebergs of the Antarctic are usually much larger than those found in the Arctic. They can reach lengths of up to 50 miles (80 km).





**Azores**  
 These islands lie on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Heat from volcanoes is used to supply the islands' electricity.



**Iceland**  
 With an area of 39,769 sq miles (103,000 sq km), Iceland is the largest of the islands that lie on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. It is home to more than 100 volcanoes, many of which are still active, as well as to many geysers and hot springs.

**Saint Helena**  
 This tiny volcanic island has an area of just 47 sq miles (122 sq km). It has been under British control since 1676.

**Tristan da Cunha**  
 Lying 1,250 miles (2,000 km) from the nearest inhabited land (Saint Helena), this is the most isolated group of inhabited islands in the world. Just over 250 people live there.

**South Sandwich Trench**  
 The deepest trench in the South Atlantic, it reaches depths of 27,651 ft (8,428 m) below sea level.

The **Atlantic** is **widening** by up to **3.9 in** (10 cm) every year as its **continental plates** move **slowly** apart.

# Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean is the smallest of the world's major oceans, but it provides important sea routes connecting the Middle East, Africa, and East Asia, with Europe and the Americas. As with the Pacific Ocean, its warm waters are dotted with coral atolls and islands. Around one-fifth of the world's population live on its shores.

## FAST FACTS

### Total area:

26,469,620 sq miles  
(68,556,000 sq km)

### Coastline:

41,337 miles (66,526 km)

### Average depth:

12,274 ft (3,741 m)

### Lowest point:

Diamantina Deep, Java Trench—  
23,812 ft (7,258 m)

### Major access points:

- ① Bab El Mandeb
- ② Strait of Hormuz
- ③ Strait of Malacca
- ④ Suez Canal
- ⑤ Torres Straits



Satellite view of the Strait of Hormuz, with the United Arab Emirates on the left of the image.

### Mid-Indian Ridge

Heading southeast from the Gulf of Aden, this ridge meets the Southwest Indian Ridge mid-ocean.

### Seychelles

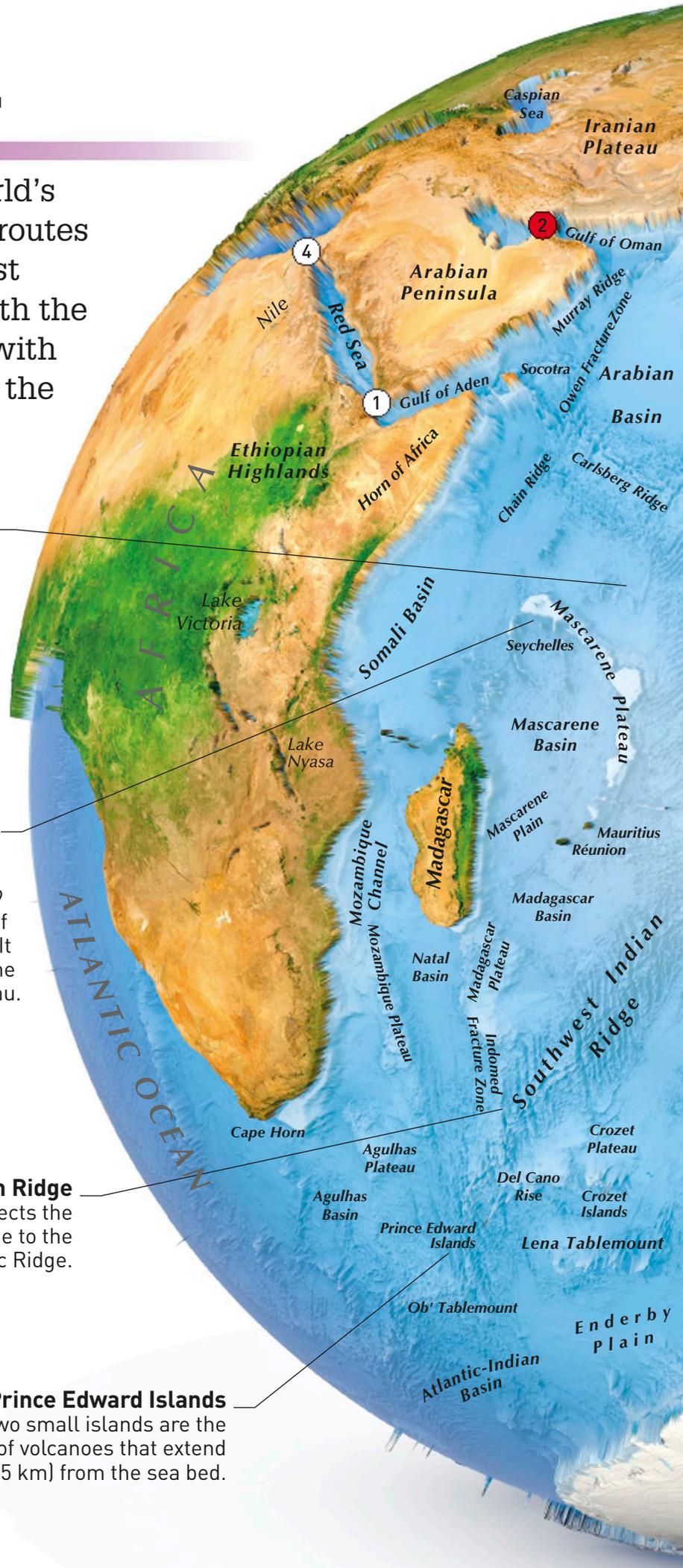
This group of 115 islands lies 1,130 miles (1,819 km) to the north of Madagascar. It forms part of the Mascarene Plateau.

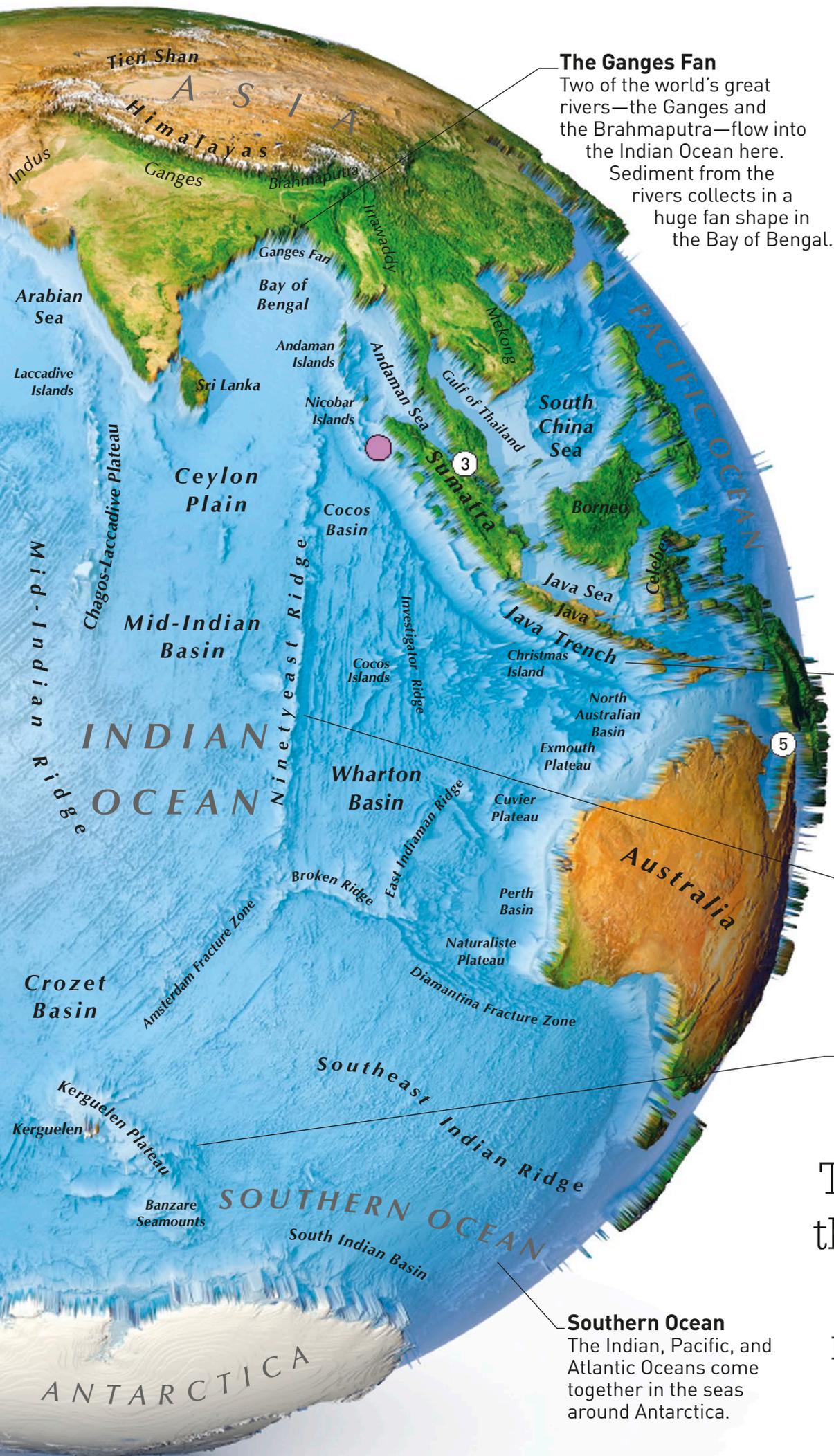
### Southwest Indian Ridge

This ridge connects the Mid-Indian Ridge to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

### Prince Edward Islands

These two small islands are the peaks of volcanoes that extend 3 miles (5 km) from the sea bed.





### The Ganges Fan

Two of the world's great rivers—the Ganges and the Brahmaputra—flow into the Indian Ocean here. Sediment from the rivers collects in a huge fan shape in the Bay of Bengal.



### Indian Ocean tsunami

On December 26, 2004, an earthquake (the third largest ever recorded) off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, triggered a tsunami (a huge wave that destroys everything in its path). It had catastrophic consequences for many countries bordering the Indian Ocean, when waves of up to 100 ft (30 m) high left as many as 230,000 people dead.

### Java Trench

The Indian Ocean's only major trench runs for 1,600 miles (2,570 km) south of the Indonesian islands of Java and Sumatra.

### Ninety East Ridge

This ridge is named for the line of longitude it follows. At 3,100 miles (5,000 km), it is the world's longest sea ridge, and also its straightest.

### Kerguelen Plateau

Only a few uninhabited islands remain of what was once a small continent.

### Southern Ocean

The Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans come together in the seas around Antarctica.

The **Indian Ocean** is the world's **warmest**. Water temperatures reach **82.4°F (28°C)** in its **eastern** parts.





# REFERENCE

**Night and day**

While Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa are bathed in sunlight, in Europe and West Africa, the lights continue to shine in the dark hours before dawn.

# Countries of the world

This section includes 195 of the world's countries. With the exception of Taiwan and the Vatican City, all of them are member states of the United Nations.

\* denotes official language

## NORTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

### CANADA

*North America*



Capital: Ottawa

Population: 35.1 million / 9 people per sq mile (4 people per sq km)

Total area: 3,855,103 sq miles (9,984,670 sq km)

Languages: English\*, French\*, Punjabi, Italian, German, Cantonese, Inuktitut

Currency: Canadian dollar = 100 cents

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*North America*



Capital: Washington, DC

Population: 324 million / 85 people per sq mile (33 people per sq km)

Total area: 3,796,742 sq miles (9,833,517 sq km)

Languages: English, Spanish

Currency: US dollar = 100 cents

### MEXICO

*North America*



Capital: Mexico City

Population: 123.2 million / 162 people per sq mile (63 people per sq km)

Total area: 758,449 sq miles (1,964,375 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, Nahuatl, Mayan

Currency: Mexican peso = 100 centavos

### BELIZE

*Central America*



Capital: Belmopan

Population: 347,370 / 39 people per sq mile (15 people per sq km)

Total area: 8,867 sq miles (22,966 sq km)

Languages: English\*, English Creole, Spanish, Mayan, Garifuna (Carib)

Currency: Belizean dollar = 100 cents

### COSTA RICA

*Central America*



Capital: San José

Population: 4.8 million / 243 people per sq mile (94 people per sq km)

Total area: 19,730 sq miles (51,100 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, English

Currency: Costa Rican colón = 100 céntimos

### EL SALVADOR

*Central America*



Capital: San Salvador

Population: 6.1 million / 750 people per sq mile (290 people per sq km)

Total area: 8,124 sq miles (21,041 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, Nawat

Currency: US dollar = 100 cents

### GUATEMALA

*Central America*



Capital: Guatemala City

Population: 15.2 million / 362 people per sq mile (140 people per sq km)

Total area: 42,042 sq miles (108,889 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, indigenous languages

Currency: Quetzal = 100 centavos

### HONDURAS

*Central America*



Capital: Tegucigalpa

Population: 8.9 million / 206 people per sq mile (79 people per sq km)

Total area: 43,278 sq miles (112,090 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, Indigenous languages

Currency: Lempira = 100 centavos

### NICARAGUA

*Central America*



Capital: Managua

Population: 6 million / 119 people per sq mile (46 people per sq km)

Total area: 50,336 sq miles (130,370 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, Miskito

Currency: Córdoba = 100 centavos

### PANAMA

*Central America*



Capital: Panama City

Population: 3.7 million / 127 people per sq mile (49 people per sq km)

Total area: 29,120 sq miles (75,420 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, English Creole, Indigenous languages including Ngabere

Currency: Balboa = 100 centesimos

### ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

*West Indies*



Capital: St. John's

Population: 92,436 / 540 people per sq mile (209 people per sq km)

Total area: 171 sq miles (443 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Antiguan Creole

Currency: Eastern Caribbean dollar = 100 cents

### THE BAHAMAS

*West Indies*



Capital: Nassau

Population: 324,600 / 61 people per sq mile (23 people per sq km)

Total area: 5,359 sq miles (13,880 sq km)

Languages: English\*, English Creole, French Creole

Currency: Bahamian dollar = 100 cents

### BARBADOS

*West Indies*



Capital: Bridgetown

Population: 290,600 / 1,750 people per sq mile (676 people per sq km)

Total area: 166 sq miles (430 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Bajan (Barbadian English)

Currency: Barbados dollar = 100 cents

### CUBA

*West Indies*



Capital: Havana

Population: 11 million / 256 people per sq mile (99 people per sq km)

Total area: 42,803 sq miles (110,860 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*

Currency: Cuban peso = 100 centavos

### DOMINICA

*West Indies*



Capital: Roseau

Population: 73,607 / 254 people per sq mile (98 people per sq km)

Total area: 290 sq miles (751 sq km)

Languages: English\*, French Creole

Currency: East Caribbean dollar = 100 cents

### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

*West Indies*



Capital: Santo Domingo

Population: 10.5 million / 559 people per sq mile (216 people per sq km)

Total area: 18,792 sq miles (48,670 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*

Currency: Dominican Republic peso = 100 centavos

### GRENADA

*West Indies*



Capital: St. George's

Population: 111,000 / 836 people per sq mile (323 people per sq km)

Total area: 133 sq miles (344 sq km)

Languages: English\*, French Patois

Currency: East Caribbean dollar = 100 cents

### HAITI

*West Indies*



Capital: Port-au-Prince

Population: 10.5 million / 979 people per sq mile (378 people per sq km)

Total area: 10,714 sq miles (27,750 sq km)

Languages: French\*, French Creole\*

Currency: Gourde = 100 centimes

### JAMAICA

*West Indies*



Capital: Kingston

Population: 3 million / 613 people per sq mile (237 people per sq km)

Total area: 4,243 sq miles (10,991 sq km)

Languages: English\*, English Creole

Currency: Jamaican dollar = 100 cents

### SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

*West Indies*



Capital: Basseterre

Population: 52,329 / 519 people per sq mile (201 people per sq km)

Total area: 101 sq miles (261 sq km)

Language: English\*

Currency: Eastern Caribbean dollar = 100 cents

### SAINT LUCIA

*West Indies*



Capital: Castries

Population: 164,464 / 692 people per sq mile (267 people per sq km)

Total area: 238 sq miles (616 sq km)

Languages: English\*, French Creole

Currency: Eastern Caribbean dollar = 100 cents

### SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

*West Indies*



Capital: Kingstown

Population: 102,350 / 682 people per sq mile (263 people per sq km)

Total area: 150 sq miles (389 sq km)

Languages: English\*, English Creole

Currency: Eastern Caribbean dollar = 100 cents

### TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

*West Indies*



Capital: Port-of-Spain

Population: 1.2 million / 606 people per sq mile (234 people per sq km)

Total area: 1,980 sq miles (5,128 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Caribbean Hindustani, French, Spanish

Currency: Trinidad and Tobago dollar = 100 cents

## SOUTH AMERICA

### COLOMBIA

*South America*



Capital: Bogotá

Population: 46.7 million / 106 people per sq mile (41 people per sq km)

Total area: 439,736 sq miles (1,138,910 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, Amerindian languages, English Creole

Currency: Colombian peso = 100 centavos

### GUYANA

*South America*



Capital: Georgetown

Population: 735,900 / 9 people per sq mile (3 people per sq km)

Total area: 83,000 sq miles (214,969 sq km)

Languages: English\*, English Creole, Indigenous languages, Indian languages

Currency: Guyana dollar = 100 cents

### SURINAME

*South America*



Capital: Paramaribo

Population: 585,800 / 9 people per sq mile (4 people per sq km)

Total area: 63,251 sq miles (163,820 sq km)

Languages: Dutch\*, English, Sranan Tongo

Currency: Suriname dollar = 100 cents

### VENEZUELA

*South America*



Capital: Caracas

Population: 30.9 million / 88 people per sq mile (34 people per sq km)

Total area: 352,143 sq miles (912,050 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, numerous indigenous languages

Currency: Bolívar fuerte = 100 centimos

**BOLIVIA**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Sucre (judicial); La Paz (administrative)  
**Population:** 10.8 million / 26 people per sq mile (10 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 424,165 sq miles (1,098,581 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Quechua\*, Aymara\*  
**Currency:** Boliviano = 100 centavos

**ECUADOR**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Quito  
**Population:** 15.9 million / 145 people per sq mile (56 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 109,484 sq miles (283,561 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Quechua\*, other indigenous languages  
**Currency:** US dollar = 100 cents

**PERU**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Lima  
**Population:** 30.7 million / 62 people per sq mile (24 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 496,225 sq miles (1,285,216 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Quechua\*, Aymará\*, other indigenous languages  
**Currency:** New sol = 100 centimos

**BRAZIL**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Brasília  
**Population:** 204.3 million / 62 people per sq mile (24 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 3,287,957 sq miles (8,515,770 sq km)  
**Languages:** Portuguese\*, German, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Japanese  
**Currency:** Real = 100 centavos

**ARGENTINA**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Buenos Aires  
**Population:** 43.4 million / 40 people per sq mile (16 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 1,073,518 sq miles (2,780,400 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Italian, English, German, French, Indigenous languages  
**Currency:** Argentine Peso = 100 centavos

**URUGUAY**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Montevideo  
**Population:** 3.4 million / 70 people per sq mile (27 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 68,036 sq miles (176,215 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Portuguñol  
**Currency:** Uruguayan peso = 100 centesimos

**CHILE**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Santiago  
**Population:** 17.5 million / 60 people per sq mile (23 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 291,932 sq miles (756,102 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Indigenous languages  
**Currency:** Chilean peso = 100 centavos

**PARAGUAY**  
*South America*  
  
**Capital:** Asunción  
**Population:** 6.9 million / 44 people per sq mile (17 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 157,048 sq miles (406,752 sq km)  
**Languages:** Spanish\*, Guaraní\*  
**Currency:** Guaraní = 100 centimos

**AFRICA**  
**ALGERIA**  
*North Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Algiers  
**Population:** 39.5 million / 43 people per sq mile (17 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 919,595 sq miles (2,381,740 sq km)  
**Languages:** Arabic\*, Tamazight\*, French  
**Currency:** Algerian dinar = 100 santeems

**LIBYA**  
*North Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Tripoli  
**Population:** 6.5 million / 10 people per sq mile (4 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 679,362 sq miles (1,759,540 sq km)  
**Languages:** Arabic\*, Berber languages  
**Currency:** Libyan dinar = 1,000 dirhams

**MOROCCO**  
*North Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Rabat  
**Population:** 33.7 million / 196 people per sq mile (76 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 172,414 sq miles (446,550 sq km)  
**Languages:** Arabic\*, Tamazight\*, French  
**Currency:** Moroccan dirham = 100 santim

**TUNISIA**  
*North Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Tunis  
**Population:** 11.1 million / 176 people per sq mile (68 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 63,170 sq miles (163,610 sq km)  
**Languages:** Arabic\*, French, Berber  
**Currency:** Tunisian dinar = 1,000 millimes

**BURUNDI**  
*Central Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Bujumbura  
**Population:** 10.7 million / 996 people per sq mile (384 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 10,745 sq miles (27,830 sq km)  
**Languages:** Kirundi\*, French\*, Kiswahili  
**Currency:** Burundi franc = 100 centimes

**DJIBOUTI**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Djibouti  
**Population:** 828,324 / 92 people per sq mile (36 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 8,958 sq miles (23,200 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, Arabic\*, Somali, Afar  
**Currency:** Djibouti franc = 100 centimes

**EGYPT**  
*North Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Cairo  
**Population:** 88.5 million / 229 people per sq mile (88 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 386,660 sq miles (1,001,450 sq km)  
**Languages:** Arabic\*, French, English  
**Currency:** Egyptian pound = 100 piastres

**ERITREA**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Asmara  
**Population:** 5.9 million / 130 people per sq mile (50 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 45,406 sq miles (117,600 sq km)  
**Languages:** Tigrinya\*, Arabic\*, English\*, Tigre, Afar, Bilen, Kunama, Nara  
**Currency:** Nafka = 100 cents

**ETHIOPIA**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Addis Ababa  
**Population:** 102.3 million / 235 people per sq mile (91 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 426,373 sq miles (1,104,300 sq km)  
**Languages:** Amharic\*, Oromo, Tigrinya  
**Currency:** Ethiopian birr = 100 santim

**KENYA**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Nairobi  
**Population:** 45.5 million / 208 people per sq mile (80 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 224,081 sq miles (580,367 sq km)  
**Languages:** Kiswahili\*, English\*  
**Currency:** Kenya shilling = 100 cents

**RWANDA**  
*Central Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Kigali  
**Population:** 12.9 million / 1,269 people per sq mile (490 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 10,169 sq miles (26,338 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, Kinyarwanda\*, English  
**Currency:** Rwandan franc = 100 centimes

**SOMALIA**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Mogadishu  
**Population:** 10.8 million / 44 people per sq mile (17 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 246,199 sq miles (637,657 sq km)  
**Languages:** Somali\*, Arabic\*, English, Italian  
**Currency:** Somali shilling = 100 cents

**SOUTH SUDAN**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Juba  
**Population:** 12.5 million / 50 people per sq mile (19 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 248,777 sq miles (644,329 sq km)  
**Languages:** English\*, Arabic, Dinka, Nuer  
**Currency:** South Sudanese pound = 100 piasters

**SUDAN**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Khartoum  
**Population:** 36.7 million / 51 people per sq mile (20 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 718,723 sq miles (1,861,484 sq km)  
**Languages:** Arabic\*, English\*, Nubian, Fur  
**Currency:** Sudanese pound = 100 piastres

**TANZANIA**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Dodoma  
**Population:** 52.5 million / 144 people per sq mile (55 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 365,755 sq miles (947,300 sq km)  
**Languages:** English\*, Swahili\*, Sukuma, Chagga, Nyamwezi, Hehe, Makonde  
**Currency:** Tanzanian shilling = 100 cents

**UGANDA**  
*East Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Kampala  
**Population:** 38.3 million / 412 people per sq mile (159 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 93,065 sq miles (241,038 sq km)  
**Languages:** English\*, Luganda  
**Currency:** Uganda shilling = 100 cents

**BENIN**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Porto-Novo  
**Population:** 10.4 million / 239 people per sq mile (92 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 43,483 sq miles (112,622 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, Fon, Bariba, Yoruba, Adja, Houeda, Somba  
**Currency:** West African CFA franc = 100 centimes

**BURKINA FASO**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Ouagadougou  
**Population:** 18.9 million / 179 people per sq mile (69 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 105,869 sq miles (274,200 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, various languages belonging to the Sudanic family  
**Currency:** West African CFA franc = 100 centimes

**CAPE VERDE**  
*Atlantic Ocean*  
  
**Capital:** Praia  
**Population:** 545,993 / 351 people per sq mile (135 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 1,557 sq miles (4,033 sq km)  
**Languages:** Portuguese\*, Portuguese Creole  
**Currency:** Cape Verde escudo = 100 centavos

**IVORY COAST**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Yamoussoukro  
**Population:** 23.7 million / 190 people per sq mile (74 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 124,504 sq miles (322,463 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, Dioula  
**Currency:** West African CFA franc = 100 centimes

**GAMBIA**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Banjul  
**Population:** 2 million / 458 people per sq mile (177 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 4,363 sq miles (11,300 sq km)  
**Languages:** English\*, Mandinka, Fula, Wolof  
**Currency:** Dalasi = 100 butut

**GHANA**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Accra  
**Population:** 26.9 million / 292 people per sq mile (113 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 92,098 sq miles (238,533 sq km)  
**Languages:** English\*, Asante, Ewe, Fante, Boron  
**Currency:** Cedi = 100 pesewas

**GUINEA**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Conakry  
**Population:** 12.1 million / 128 people per sq mile (49 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 94,925 sq miles (245,857 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, Fulani, Malinke, Soussou  
**Currency:** Guinea franc = 100 centimes

**GUINEA BISSAU**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Bissau  
**Population:** 1.8 million / 124 people per sq mile (49 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 13,948 sq miles (36,125 sq km)  
**Languages:** Portuguese\*, West African Crioulo  
**Currency:** West African CFA franc = 100 centimes

**LIBERIA**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Monrovia  
**Population:** 4.3 million / 101 people per sq mile (39 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 43,000 sq miles (111,370 sq km)  
**Languages:** English\*  
**Currency:** Liberian dollar = 100 cents

**MALI**  
*West Africa*  
  
**Capital:** Bamako  
**Population:** 17.5 million / 37 people per sq mile (14 people per sq km)  
**Total area:** 478,764 sq miles (1,240,000 sq km)  
**Languages:** French\*, Bambara, Peul, Dogon  
**Currency:** West African CFA franc = 100 centimes

**MAURITANIA**

*West Africa*

Capital: Nouakchott

Population: 3.7 million / 9 people per sq mile (4 people per sq km)

Total area: 397,953 sq miles (1,030,700 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, Hassaniyah Arabic, Pulaar, Soninke

Currency: Ouguiya = 5 khoums



**NIGER**

*West Africa*

Capital: Niamey

Population: 18.6 million / 38 people per sq mile (15 people per sq km)

Total area: 489,189 sq miles (1,267,000 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Hausa, Djerma

Currency: West African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**NIGERIA**

*West Africa*

Capital: Abuja

Population: 186 million / 522 people per mile km (201 people per sq km)

Total area: 356,667 sq miles (923,768 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo

Currency: Naira = 100 kobo



**SENEGAL**

*West Africa*

Capital: Dakar

Population: 14.3 million / 188 people per sq mile (73 people per sq km)

Total area: 75,955 sq miles (196,722 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Wolof, Pulaar

Currency: West African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**SIERRA LEONE**

*West Africa*

Capital: Freetown

Population: 6 million / 217 people per sq mile (84 people per sq km)

Total area: 27,669 sq miles (71,740 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Mende, Temne, Krio

Currency: Leone = 100 cents



**TOGO**

*Western Africa*

Capital: Lomé

Population: 7.8 million / 356 people per sq mile (137 people per sq km)

Total area: 21,925 sq miles (56,785 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Ewe, Mina, Kabye

Currency: West African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**CAMEROON**

*Central Africa*

Capital: Yaoundé

Population: 23.7 million / 130 people per sq mile (50 people per sq km)

Total area: 183,567 sq miles (475,440 sq km)

Languages: English\*, French\*, Bamileke, Fang, Fulani

Currency: Central African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

*Central Africa*

Capital: Bangui

Population: 5.4 million / 23 people per sq mile (9 people per sq km)

Total area: 240,535 sq miles (622,984 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Sangho, Banda, Gbaya

Currency: CFA franc = 100 centimes



**CHAD**

*Central Africa*

Capital: N'Djaména

Population: 13 million / 27 people per sq mile (10 people per sq km)

Total area: 495,752 sq miles (1,284,000 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Arabic\*, Sara, Maba

Currency: Central African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**CONGO**

*Central Africa*

Capital: Brazzaville

Population: 4.8 million / 36 people per sq mile (14 people per sq km)

Total area: 132,046 sq miles (342,000 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Monokutuba, Mikongo, Lingala

Currency: Central African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**CONGO, DEM. REP.**

*Central Africa*

Capital: Kinshasa

Population: 79.4 million / 88 people per sq mile (34 people per sq km)

Total area: 905,355 sq miles (2,344,858 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Tshiluba, Kikongo, Lingala, Kingwana

Currency: Congolese Franc = 100 centimes



**EQUATORIAL GUINEA**

*Central Africa*

Capital: Malabo

Population: 759,451 / 70 people per sq mile (27 people per sq km)

Total area: 10,830 sq miles (28,051 sq km)

Languages: Spanish\*, Fang, Bubi

Currency: Central African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**GABON**

*Central Africa*

Capital: Libreville

Population: 1.7 million / 16 people per sq mile (6 people per sq km)

Total area: 103,346 sq miles (267,667 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Fang, Myene, Bapounou, Nzebi

Currency: Central African CFA franc = 100 centimes



**SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE**

*West Africa*

Capital: São Tomé

Population: 197,541 / 531 people per sq mile (204 people per sq km)

Total area: 372 sq miles (964 sq km)

Languages: Portuguese\*, Forro

Currency: Dobra = 100 centimos



**ANGOLA**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Luanda

Population: 25.7 million / 54 people per sq mile (21 people per sq km)

Total area: 481,351 sq miles (1,246,700 sq km)

Languages: Portuguese\*, Umbundu, Kimbundu, Kikongo

Currency: Kwanzas = 100 centimos



**BOTSWANA**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Gaborone

Population: 2.2 million / 10 people per sq mile (4 people per sq km)

Total area: 224,607 sq miles (581,730 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Setswana, Shona, San, Khoikhoi, Ndebele

Currency: Pula = 100 thebe



**COMOROS**

*Indian Ocean*

Capital: Moroni

Population: 780,972 / 905 people per sq mile (349 people per sq km)

Total area: 863 sq miles (2,235 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, French\*, Comoran\*

Currency: Comoros franc = 100 centimes



**LESOTHO**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Maseru

Population: 2 million / 171 people per sq mile (66 people per sq km)

Total area: 11,720 sq miles (30,355 sq km)

Languages: Sesotho\*, English\*, Zulu

Currency: Loti = 100 lisente



**MADAGASCAR**

*Indian Ocean*

Capital: Antananarivo

Population: 24.4 million / 108 people per sq mile (42 people per sq km)

Total area: 226,658 sq miles (587,041 sq km)

Languages: French\*, Malagasy\*

Currency: Malagasy ariary = 5 iraimbilanja



**MALAWI**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Lilongwe

Population: 18.6 million / 407 people per sq mile (157 people per sq km)

Total area: 45,747 sq miles (118,484 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Chichewa\*, Chinyanja, Chiyao

Currency: Malawi kwacha = 100 tambala



**MAURITIUS**

*Indian Ocean*

Capital: Port Louis

Population: 1.4 million / 1,778 people per sq mile (686 people per sq km)

Total area: 788 sq miles (2,040 sq km)

Languages: English, French, French Creole

Currency: Mauritian rupee = 100 cents



**MOZAMBIQUE**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Maputo

Population: 26 million / 84 people per sq mile (32 people per sq km)

Total area: 308,642 sq miles (799,380 sq km)

Languages: Portuguese\*, Emakhuwa, Xichangana

Currency: Metical = 100 centavos



**NAMIBIA**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Windhoek

Population: 2.4 million / 8 people per sq mile (3 people per sq km)

Total area: 318,261 sq miles (824,292 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Oshiwambo languages, Nama, Afrikaans

Currency: Namibian dollar = 100 cents



**SEYCHELLES**

*Indian Ocean*

Capital: Victoria

Population: 93,200 / 531 people per sq mile (205 people per sq km)

Total area: 176 sq miles (455 sq km)

Languages: Seychellois Creole\*, English\*, French\*

Currency: Seychelles rupee = 100 cents



**SOUTH AFRICA**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Pretoria (administrative)

Population: 54.3 million / 115 people per sq mile (45 people per sq km)

Total area: 470,693 sq miles (1,219,090 sq km)

Languages: IsiZulu\*, IsiXhosa\*, Afrikaans\*, English\*

Currency: Rand = 100 cents



**SWAZILAND**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Mbabane

Population: 1.5 million / 224 people per sq mile (86 people per sq km)

Total area: 6,704 sq miles (17,364 sq km)

Languages: Siswati\*, English\*

Currency: Lilangeni = 100 cents



**ZAMBIA**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Lusaka

Population: 15.5 million / 53 people per sq mile (21 people per sq km)

Total area: 290,587 sq miles (752,618 sq km)

Languages: English\*, Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga

Currency: Zambian kwacha = 100 ngwee



**ZIMBABWE**

*Southern Africa*

Capital: Harare

Population: 14.5 million / 96 people per sq mile (37 people per sq km)

Total area: 150,872 sq miles (390,757 sq km)

Languages: Shona\*, Ndebele\*, English

Currency: US dollar = 100 cents



**EUROPE**

**ICELAND**

*Northwest Europe*

Capital: Reykjavik

Population: 335,900 / 8 people per sq mile (3 people per sq km)

Total area: 39,768 sq miles (103,000 sq km)

Languages: Icelandic\*, English

Currency: Icelandic króna = 100 aurar



**DENMARK**

*Northern Europe*

Capital: Copenhagen

Population: 5.4 million / 325 people per sq mile (125 people per sq km)

Total area: 16,639 sq miles (43,094 sq km)

Languages: Danish\*, Faroese, Inuit

Currency: Danish krone = 100 øre



**FINLAND**

*Northern Europe*

Capital: Helsinki

Population: 5.5 million / 42 people per sq mile (16 people per sq km)

Total area: 130,559 sq miles (338,145 sq km)

Languages: Finnish\*, Swedish, Sami

Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**NORWAY**

*Northern Europe*

Capital: Oslo

Population: 5.3 million / 42 people per sq mile (16 people per sq km)

Total area: 125,021 sq miles (323,802 sq km)

Languages: Norwegian\* (Bokmål and Nynorsk), Sami, Finnish

**BELGIUM**  
*Northwest Europe*  
Capital: Brussels  
Population: 11.3 million / 874 people per sq mile (338 people per sq km)  
Total area: 11,787 sq miles (30,528 sq km)  
Languages: Dutch\*, French\*, German\*, Flemish  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**LUXEMBOURG**  
*Northwest Europe*  
Capital: Luxembourg  
Population: 582,300 / 583 people per sq mile (225 people per sq km)  
Total area: 998 sq miles (2,586 sq km)  
Languages: French\*, German\*, Luxembourgish\*, Portuguese  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**NETHERLANDS**  
*Northwest Europe*  
Capital: Amsterdam/The Hague  
Population: 17 million / 1,060 people per sq mile (409 people per sq km)  
Total area: 16,040 sq miles (41,543 sq km)  
Languages: Dutch\*, Frisian  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**IRELAND**  
*Northwest Europe*  
Capital: Dublin  
Population: 4.9 million / 181 people per sq mile (70 people per sq km)  
Total area: 27,133 sq miles (70,273 sq km)  
Languages: English\*, Irish\*  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**UNITED KINGDOM**  
*Northwest Europe*  
Capital: London  
Population: 64.4 million / 685 people per sq mile (264 people per sq km)  
Total area: 94,058 sq miles (243,610 sq km)  
Languages: English\*, Welsh  
Currency: Pound sterling = 100 pence



**FRANCE**  
*Western Europe*  
Capital: Paris  
Population: 62.8 million / 295 people per sq mile (114 people per sq km)  
Total area: 212,935 sq miles (551,500 sq km)  
Languages: French\*, Provençal, Breton, Catalan, Basque, Corsican  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**MONACO**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Monaco  
Population: 30,581 / 39,602 people per sq mile (15,291 people per sq km)  
Total area: 0.77 sq miles (2 sq km)  
Languages: French\*, Italian, Monégasque, English  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**ANDORRA**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Andorra la Vella  
Population: 85,580 / 474 people per sq mile (183 people per sq km)  
Total area: 181 sq miles (468 sq km)  
Languages: Catalan\*, Spanish, French, Portuguese  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



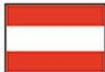
**PORTUGAL**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Lisbon  
Population: 10.8 million / 281 people per sq mile (109 people per sq km)  
Total area: 35,556 sq miles (92,090 sq km)  
Languages: Portuguese\*, Mirandese  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**SPAIN**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Madrid  
Population: 48.6 million / 249 people per sq mile (96 people per sq km)  
Total area: 195,125 sq miles (505,370 sq km)  
Languages: Castilian Spanish\*, Catalan\*, Galician\*, Basque\*  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**AUSTRIA**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Vienna  
Population: 8.7 million / 269 people per sq mile (104 people per sq km)  
Total area: 32,383 sq miles (83,871 sq km)  
Languages: German\*, Turkish, Serbian, Croatian, Slovene, Hungarian (Magyar)  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**GERMANY**  
*Northern Europe*  
Capital: Berlin  
Population: 81 million / 588 people per sq mile (227 people per sq km)  
Total area: 137,847 sq miles (357,022 sq km)  
Languages: German\*  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**LIECHTENSTEIN**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Vaduz  
Population: 37,937 / 614 people per sq mile (237 people per sq km)  
Total area: 62 sq miles (160 sq km)  
Languages: German\*, Alemannish dialect, Italian  
Currency: Swiss franc = 100 centimes



**SLOVENIA**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Ljubljana  
Population: 2 million / 256 people per sq mile (99 people per sq km)  
Total area: 7,827 sq miles (20,273 sq km)  
Languages: Slovene\*, Serbo-Croat  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**SWITZERLAND**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Bern  
Population: 8.2 million / 515 people per sq mile (199 people per sq km)  
Total area: 15,937 sq miles (41,277 sq km)  
Languages: German\*, French\*, Italian\*, Romansch\*  
Currency: Swiss franc = 100 centimes



**ITALY**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Rome  
Population: 62 million / 533 people per sq mile (206 people per sq km)  
Total area: 116,348 sq miles (301,340 sq km)  
Languages: Italian\*, German, French, Slovene  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**MALTA**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Valletta  
Population: 415,196 / 3,403 people per sq mile (1,314 people per sq km)  
Total area: 122 sq miles (316 sq km)  
Languages: Maltese\*, English  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**SAN MARINO**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: San Marino  
Population: 33,285 / 1,413 people per sq mile (546 people per sq km)  
Total area: 24 sq miles (61 sq km)  
Language: Italian\*  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**VATICAN CITY**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Vatican City  
Population: 1000 / 5,886 people per sq mile (2,273 people per sq km)  
Total area: 0.17 sq miles (0.44 sq km)  
Languages: Italian\*, Latin\*  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**CZECH REPUBLIC**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Prague  
Population: 10.6 million / 348 people per sq mile (134 people per sq km)  
Total area: 30,450 sq miles (78,867 sq km)  
Languages: Czech\*, Slovak,  
Currency: Czech koruna = 100 halers



**HUNGARY**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Budapest  
Population: 9.9 million / 276 people per sq mile (106 people per sq km)  
Total area: 35,918 sq miles (93,028 sq km)  
Languages: Hungarian\*  
Currency: Forint = 100 fillér



**POLAND**  
*Northern Europe*  
Capital: Warsaw  
Population: 38.5 million / 319 people per sq mile (123 people per sq km)  
Total area: 120,728 sq miles (312,685 sq km)  
Languages: Polish\*, Silesian  
Currency: Zloty = 100 groszy



**SLOVAKIA**  
*Central Europe*  
Capital: Bratislava  
Population: 5.5 million / 291 people per sq mile (112 people per sq km)  
Total area: 18,933 sq miles (49,035 sq km)  
Languages: Slovak\*, Hungarian (Magyar), Romany  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**ALBANIA**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Tirana  
Population: 3 million / 270 people per sq mile (104 people per sq km)  
Total area: 11,100 sq miles (28,748 sq km)  
Languages: Albanian\*, Greek, Macedonian  
Currency: Lek = 100 qindarkas



**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Sarajevo  
Population: 3.9 million / 197 people per sq mile (76 people per sq km)  
Total area: 19,767 sq miles (51,197 sq km)  
Languages: Bosnian\*, Croatian\*, Serbian\*  
Currency: Marka = 100 pfenigs



**CROATIA**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Zagreb  
Population: 4.5 million / 206 people per sq mile (80 people per sq km)  
Total area: 21,851 sq miles (56,594 sq km)  
Languages: Croatian\*, Serbian, Hungarian  
Currency: Kuna = 100 lipa



**MACEDONIA**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Skopje  
Population: 2.1 million / 212 people per sq mile (82 people per sq km)  
Total area: 9,928 sq miles (25,713 sq km)  
Languages: Macedonian\*, Albanian, Turkish  
Currency: Macedonian denar = 100 deni



**MONTENEGRO**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Podgorica  
Population: 644,578 / 121 people per sq mile (47 people per sq km)  
Total area: 5,322 sq miles (13,812 sq km)  
Languages: Montenegrin\*, Serbian, Bosnian, Albanian  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**SERBIA**  
*Southern Europe*  
Capital: Belgrade  
Population: 7.1 million / 238 people per sq mile (92 people per sq km)  
Total area: 29,913 sq miles (77,474 sq km)  
Languages: Serbian\*, Hungarian  
Currency: Serbian dinar = 100 para



**CYPRUS**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Nicosia  
Population: 1.2 million / 336 people per sq mile (130 people per sq km)  
Total area: 3,751 sq miles (9,250 sq km)  
Languages: Greek\*, Turkish\*, English  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**BULGARIA**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Sofia  
Population: 7.2 million / 168 people per sq mile (65 people per sq km)  
Total area: 42,811 sq miles (110,879 sq km)  
Languages: Bulgarian\*, Turkish, Roma  
Currency: Lev = 100 stotinki



**GREECE**  
*Southeast Europe*  
Capital: Athens  
Population: 10.7 million / 210 people per sq mile (81 people per sq km)  
Total area: 50,949 sq miles (131,957 sq km)  
Languages: Greek\*  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**BELARUS**  
*Eastern Europe*  
Capital: Minsk  
Population: 9.6 million / 120 people per sq mile (46 people per sq km)  
Total area: 80,154 sq miles (207,600 sq km)  
Languages: Belarussian\*, Russian\*  
Currency: New Belarussian rouble = 100 copecks



**ESTONIA**  
*Northeast Europe*  
Capital: Tallinn  
Population: 1.3 million / 74 people per sq mile (29 people per sq km)  
Total area: 17,463 sq miles (45,228 sq km)  
Languages: Estonian\*, Russian  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**LATVIA**  
*Northeast Europe*  
Capital: Riga  
Population: 2 million / 80 people per sq mile (31 people per sq km)  
Total area: 24,938 sq miles (64,589 sq km)  
Languages: Latvian\*, Russian  
Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**LITHUANIA**

*Northwest Europe*

Capital: Vilnius

Population: 2.8 million / 111 people per sq mile (43 people per sq km)

Total area: 25,213 sq miles (65,300 sq km)

Languages: Lithuanian\*, Russian

Currency: Euro = 100 cents



**MOLDOVA**

*Southeast Europe*

Capital: Chisinau

Population: 3.5 million / 268 people per sq mile (103 people per sq km)

Total area: 13,070 sq miles (33,851 sq km)

Languages: Moldovan\*, Romanian, Russian

Currency: Moldovan leu = 100 bani



**ROMANIA**

*Southeast Europe*

Capital: Bucharest

Population: 21.6 million / 235 people per sq mile (91 people per sq km)

Total area: 91,699 sq miles (237,500 sq km)

Languages: Romanian\*, Hungarian, Romany

Currency: Romanian leu = 100 bani



**UKRAINE**

*Eastern Europe*

Capital: Kiev

Population: 44.2 million / 190 people per sq mile (73 people per sq km)

Total area: 233,031 sq miles (603,550 sq km)

Languages: Ukrainian\*, Russian

Currency: Hryvnia = 100 kopykas



**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

*Europe/Asia*

Capital: Moscow

Population: 142.4 million / 22 people per sq mile (8 people per sq km)

Total area: 6,601,668 sq miles (17,098,242 sq km)

Languages: Russian\*, Tatar

Currency: Russian Rouble = 100 kopeks



**ASIA**

**KAZAKHSTAN**

*Central Asia*

Capital: Astana

Population: 18.4 million / 15 people per sq mile (6 people per sq km)

Total area: 1,052,090 sq miles (2,724,900 sq km)

Languages: Kazakh\*, Russian

Currency: Tenge = 100 tiin



**ARMENIA**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Yerevan

Population: 3.1 million / 270 people per sq mile (104 people per sq km)

Total area: 11,484 sq miles (29,743 sq km)

Languages: Armenian\*, Russian, Kurdish

Currency: Dram = 100 luma



**AZERBAIJAN**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Baku

Population: 9.8 million / 293 people per sq mile (113 people per sq km)

Total area: 33,436 sq miles (86,600 sq km)

Languages: Azeri\*, Russian

Currency: Manat = 100 qopiks



**GEORGIA**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Tbilisi

Population: 4.9 million / 182 people per sq mile (70 people per sq km)

Total area: 26,911 sq miles (69,700 sq km)

Languages: Georgian\*, Russian

Currency: Lari = 100 tetri



**TURKEY**

*Asia/Europe*

Capital: Ankara

Population: 80.3 million / 265 people per sq mile (103 people per sq km)

Total area: 302,535 sq miles (783,562 sq km)

Languages: Turkish\*, Kurdish

Currency: Turkish lira = 100 kurus



**ISRAEL**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Jerusalem (disputed)

Population: 8.2 million / 1,023 people per sq mile (395 people per sq km)

Total area: 8,019 sq miles (20,770 sq km)

Languages: Hebrew\*, Arabic, English

Currency: Shekel = 100 agorot



**JORDAN**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Amman

Population: 8.2 million / 143 people per sq mile (55 people per sq km)

Total area: 34,495 sq miles (89,342 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*

Currency: Jordanian dinar = 1,000 fils



**LEBANON**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Beirut

Population: 6.2 million / 1,544 people per sq mile (596 people per sq km)

Total area: 4,015 sq miles (10,400 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, French, Armenian, Assyrian

Currency: Lebanese pound = 100 piastres



**SYRIA**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Damascus

Population: 17.2 million / 241 people per sq mile (93 people per sq km)

Total area: 71,498 sq miles (185,180 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, Kurdish, Armenian, Circassian, Aramaic

Currency: Syrian pound = 100 piastres



**BAHRAIN**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Manama

Population: 1.3 million / 4,590 people per sq mile (1,772 people per sq km)

Total area: 293 sq miles (720 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, English, Urdu, Farsi

Currency: Bahraini dinar = 1,000 fils



**IRAN**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Tehran

Population: 82.8 million / 130 people per sq mile (50 people per sq km)

Total area: 636,372 sq miles (1,648,195 sq km)

Languages: Farsi (Persian)\*, Azeri, Gilaki, Balochi, Mazandarani, Kurdish, Arabic

Currency: Iranian rial = 10 tomans



**IRAQ**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Baghdad

Population: 38.2 million / 226 people per sq mile (87 people per sq km)

Total area: 169,235 sq miles (438,317 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, Kurdish\*, Armenian, Assyrian, Turkic languages

Currency: Iraqi dinar = 100 fils



**KUWAIT**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Kuwait City

Population: 2.8 million / 407 people per sq mile (157 people per sq km)

Total area: 6,880 sq miles (17,820 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, English

Currency: Kuwaiti dinar = 1,000 fils



**OMAN**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Muscat

Population: 3.4 million / 28 people per sq km (11 people per sq mile)

Total area: 119,499 sq miles (309,500 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, Baluchi

Currency: Omani rial = 1000 baizas



**QATAR**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Doha

Population: 2.3 million / 514 people per sq mile (198 people per sq km)

Total area: 4,473 sq miles (11,586 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*

Currency: Qatar riyal = 100 dirhams



**SAUDI ARABIA**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Riyadh

Population: 28.1 million / 34 people per sq mile (13 people per sq km)

Total area: 830,000 sq miles (2,149,690 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*

Currency: Saudi riyal = 100 halalas



**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Abu Dhabi

Population: 5.9 million / 183 people per sq mile (71 people per sq km)

Total area: 32,278 sq miles (82,600 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*, Farsi, English, Indian and Pakistani languages

Currency: UAE dirham = 100 fils



**YEMEN**

*Southwest Asia*

Capital: Sana

Population: 27.4 million / 134 people per sq mile (52 people per sq km)

Total area: 203,850 sq miles (527,968 sq km)

Languages: Arabic\*

Currency: Yemeni rial = 100 fils



**AFGHANISTAN**

*Central Asia*

Capital: Kabul

Population: 32 million / 129 people per sq mile (50 people per sq km)

Total area: 251,827 sq miles (652,230 sq km)

Languages: Persian\*, Pashto\*, Uzbek, Turkmen

Currency: Afghani = 100 pul



**KYRGYZSTAN**

*Central Asia*

Capital: Bishkek

Population: 5.7 million / 74 people per sq mile (29 people per sq km)

Total area: 77,202 sq miles (199,951 sq km)

Languages: Krygyz\*, Russian\*, Uzbek

Currency: Som = 100 tiyin



**TAJIKISTAN**

*Central Asia*

Capital: Dushanbe

Population: 8.3 million / 149 people per sq mile (58 people per sq km)

Total area: 55,637 sq miles (144,100 sq km)

Languages: Tajik\*, Russian

Currency: Somoni = 100 diram



**TURKMENISTAN**

*Central Asia*

Capital: Ashgabat

Population: 5.3 million / 28 people per sq mile (11 people per sq km)

Total area: 188,455 sq miles (488,100 sq km)

Languages: Turkmen\*, Russian, Uzbek

Currency: Manat = 100 tenge



**UZBEKISTAN**

*Central Asia*

Capital: Tashkent

Population: 29.5 million / 171 people per sq mile (66 people per sq km)

Total area: 172,741 sq miles (447,400 sq km)

Languages: Uzbek\*, Russian

Currency: Som = 100 tiyin



**CHINA**

*East Asia*

Capital: Beijing

Population: 1.37 billion / 370 people per sq mile (143 people per sq km)

Total area: 3,705,960 sq miles (9,596,960 sq km)

Languages: Mandarin\*, Wu, Cantonese, Xiang, Min, Hakka, Gan

Currency: Yuan (Renminbi) = 100 fen



**MONGOLIA**

*East Asia*

Capital: Ulan Bator

Population: 3 million / 4 people per sq mile (2 people per sq km)

Total area: 603,909 sq miles (1,566,116 sq km)

Languages: Khalkha Mongolian\*, Kazakh, Chinese, Russian

Currency: Tögrög = 100 möngös



**NORTH KOREA**

*East Asia*

Capital: Pyongyang

Population: 25.1 million / 539 people per sq mile (208 people per sq km)

Total area: 46,540 sq miles (120,538 sq km)

Languages: Korean\*

Currency: North Korean won = 100 chon



**SOUTH KOREA**

*East Asia*

Capital: Seoul

Population: 50.9 million / 1,322 people per sq mile (510 people per sq km)

Total area: 38,502 sq miles (99,720 sq km)

Languages: Korean\*

Currency: South Korean won = 100 jeon



**TAIWAN**

**INDIA**  
*South Asia*  
 Capital: New Delhi  
 Population: 1.27 billion / 1,001 people per sq mile (386 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 1,269,219 sq miles (3,287,263 sq km)  
 Languages: Hindi\*, English\*, Urdu, Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, other  
 Currency: Indian rupee = 100 paise



**SRI LANKA**  
*South Asia*  
 Capital: Colombo  
 Population: 22.2 million / 876 people per sq mile (338 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 25,332 sq miles (65,610 sq km)  
 Languages: Sinhalese\*, Tamil, English  
 Currency: Sri Lanka rupee = 100 cents



**MALDIVES**  
*Indian Ocean*  
 Capital: Malé  
 Population: 393,000 / 3,415 people per sq mile (1,319 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 115 sq miles (298 sq km)  
 Languages: Dhivehi\*, English  
 Currency: Rufiyaa = 100 laari



**PAKISTAN**  
*South Asia*  
 Capital: Islamabad  
 Population: 202 million / 657 people per sq mile (254 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 307,374 sq miles (796,095 sq km)  
 Languages: Urdu\*, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtu, Balochi  
 Currency: Pakistani rupee = 100 paise



**BANGLADESH**  
*South Asia*  
 Capital: Dhaka  
 Population: 169 million / 2,948 people per sq mile (1,138 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 57,321 sq miles (148,460 sq km)  
 Languages: Bengali\*, Urdu, Chakma  
 Currency: Taka = 100 poisha



**BHUTAN**  
*South Asia*  
 Capital: Thimphu  
 Population: 741,919 / 50 people per sq mile (19 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 14,824 sq miles (38,394 sq km)  
 Languages: Dzongkha\*, Sharchhopka, Lhotshamkha  
 Currency: Ngultrum = 100 chetrum



**NEPAL**  
*South Asia*  
 Capital: Kathmandu  
 Population: 29 million / 510 people per sq mile (197 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 56,827 sq miles (147,181 sq km)  
 Languages: Nepali\*, Maithili, Bhojpuri  
 Currency: Nepalese rupee = 100 paise



**CAMBODIA**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Phnom Penh  
 Population: 15.7 million / 225 people per sq mile (87 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 69,898 sq miles (181,035 sq km)  
 Languages: Khmer\*, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cham  
 Currency: Riel = 100 sen



**LAOS**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Vientiane  
 Population: 7 million / 77 people per sq mile (30 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 91,428 sq miles (236,800 sq km)  
 Languages: Lao\*, various local dialects, French  
 Currency: New kip = 100 att



**MYANMAR (BURMA)**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Nay Pyi Taw  
 Population: 56.9 million / 218 people per sq mile (84 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 261,228 sq miles (676,578 sq km)  
 Languages: Burmese\*  
 Currency: Kyat = 100 pyas



**THAILAND**  
*Southeastern Asia*  
 Capital: Bangkok  
 Population: 68.2 million / 344 people per sq mile (133 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 198,117 sq miles (513,120 sq km)  
 Languages: Thai\*, Burmese  
 Currency: Baht = 100 satangs



**VIETNAM**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Hanoi  
 Population: 95.3 million / 745 people per sq mile (288 people per sq km)  
 Languages: Vietnamese\*, Chinese, Khmer  
 Currency: Đông = 10 hao = 100 xu



**BRUNEI**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan  
 Population: 429,646 / 193 people per sq mile (75 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 2,226 sq miles (5,765 sq km)  
 Languages: Malay\*, English, Chinese  
 Currency: Brunei dollar = 100 cents



**EAST TIMOR**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Dili  
 Population: 1.2 million / 210 people per sq mile (81 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 3,756 sq miles (14,874 sq km)  
 Languages: Tetum\*, Indonesian, Portuguese\*  
 Currency: US dollar = 100 cents



**INDONESIA**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Jakarta  
 Population: 258 million / 351 people per sq mile (135 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 735,358 sq miles (1,904,569 sq km)  
 Languages: Bahasa Indonesia\*, more than 700 other languages are used  
 Currency: Rupiah = 100 sen



**MALAYSIA**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Kuala Lumpur  
 Population: 31 million / 243 people per sq mile (94 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 127,355 sq miles (329,847 sq km)  
 Languages: Bahasa Malaysia\*, Chinese\*, English, Tamil  
 Currency: Ringgit = 100 sen



**PHILIPPINES**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Manila  
 Population: 102.6 million / 886 people per sq mile (342 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 115,830 sq miles (300,000 sq km)  
 Languages: Filipino\*, English\*, Cebuano  
 Currency: Philippine Peso = 100 centavos



**SINGAPORE**  
*Southeast Asia*  
 Capital: Singapore  
 Population: 5.8 million / 21,552 people per sq mile (8,321 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 269 sq miles (697 sq km)  
 Languages: Malay\*, Mandarin\*, English\*, Tamil\*  
 Currency: Singapore dollar = 100 cents



**AUSTRALASIA AND OCEANIA**

**FIJI**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Suva  
 Population: 915,303 / 130 people per sq mile (50 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 7,055 sq miles (18,274 sq km)  
 Languages: Fijian\*, English\*, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telegu  
 Currency: Fijian dollar = 100 cents



**KIRIBATI**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Tarawa Atoll  
 Population: 106,925 / 342 people per sq mile (132 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 313 sq miles (811 sq km)  
 Languages: English\*, Kiribati  
 Currency: Australian dollar = 100 cents



**MARSHALL ISLANDS**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Majuro  
 Population: 73,376 / 1,050 people per sq mile (405 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 70 sq miles (181 sq km)  
 Languages: Marshallese\*, English\*  
 Currency: US dollar = 100 cents



**MICRONESIA**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Palikir  
 Population: 104,700 / 490 people per sq mile (189 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 271 sq miles (702 sq km)  
 Languages: English, Trukese, Pohnpeian, Mortlockese, Kosrean  
 Currency: US dollar = 100 cents



**NAURU**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: No official capital  
 Population: 9,591 / 1,183 people per sq mile (457 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 8 sq miles (21 sq km)  
 Languages: Nauruan\*, English, Kiribati, Chinese  
 Currency: Australian dollar = 100 cents



**PALAU**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Melekeok  
 Population: 21,347 / 121 people per sq mile (47 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 177 sq miles (459 sq km)  
 Languages: Palauan, English\*, Sonsorolese\*  
 Currency: US dollar = 100 cents



**PAPUA NEW GUINEA**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Port Moresby  
 Population: 6.8 million / 38 people per sq mile (15 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 178,703 sq miles (462,840 sq km)  
 Languages: Tok Pisin\*, English\*, Hiri Motu\*, over 800 native languages  
 Currency: Kina = 100 toea



**SAMOA**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Apia  
 Population: 198,930 / 182 people per sq mile (70 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 1,093 sq miles (2,831 sq km)  
 Languages: Samoan\*, English  
 Currency: Tala = 100 sene



**SOLOMON ISLANDS**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Honiara  
 Population: 635,000 / 57 people per sq mile (22 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 11,157 sq miles (28,896 sq km)  
 Languages: English\*, Melanesian Pidgin, 120 indigenous languages  
 Currency: Solomon Islands dollar = 100 cents



**TONGA**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Nuku'alofa  
 Population: 106,500 / 366 people per sq mile (141 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 288 sq miles (747 sq km)  
 Languages: Tongan\*, English  
 Currency: Pa'anga = 100 seniti



**TUVALU**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Funafuti Atoll  
 Population: 10,900 / 1,086 people per sq mile (419 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 10 sq miles (26 sq km)  
 Languages: Tuvaluan\*, English\*, Kiribati  
 Currency: Australian/Tuvaluan dollar = 100 cents



**VANUATU**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Port Vila  
 Population: 277,600 / 59 people per sq mile (23 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 4,706 sq miles (12,189 sq km)  
 Languages: Bislama\*, English\*, French\*  
 Currency: Vatu



**AUSTRALIA**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Canberra  
 Population: 22.8 million / 8 people per sq mile (3 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 2,988,902 sq miles (7,741,220 sq km)  
 Languages: English\*, Mandarin, Greek, Arabic, Italian, Aboriginal languages  
 Currency: Australian dollar = 100 cents



**NEW ZEALAND**  
*Australasia and Oceania*  
 Capital: Wellington  
 Population: 4.5 million / 43 people per sq mile (17 people per sq km)  
 Total area: 103,799 sq miles (268,838 sq km)  
 Languages: English\*, Maori\*  
 Currency: New Zealand dollar = 100 cents



# Glossary

## **Alkaline**

Describes something that contains high levels of salts, such as a lake.

## **Amerindian**

The peoples native to America, who lived there long before the arrival of European explorers and settlers.

## **Amphibious**

Term used to describe a cold-blooded animal that is able to live both on land and in water, such as frogs, toads, and salamanders.

## **Aquatic**

Animal or plant that lives in water.

## **Arachnid**

Type of animal, such as a spider or a scorpion, that has a two-part body and four pairs of legs.

## **Archipelago**

A group, or chain, of islands.

## **Arthropod**

An animal without a backbone but with a hard outer shell, and with legs that can bend in many places, such as crabs, spiders, and centipedes.

## **Asteroid**

A small body of rock or metal that circles the Sun, mainly between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

## **Atmosphere**

The layer of gases, including oxygen and nitrogen, that surrounds Earth and protects us from radiation and debris coming in from space.

## **Atoll**

A circular, or horseshoe-shaped, coral reef enclosing a shallow area of water (lagoon).

## **Biome**

A large area that has a particular climate, type of vegetation, and species of animals living in it.

## **Birth rate**

The number of children born in an area, usually measured in the number of live births per 1,000 individuals within a population, or the average number of children per woman in that area.

## **Boreal forest**

A type of coniferous forest—see taiga.

## **Broadleaf forest**

A type of forest that can be temperate (with trees such as oak) or tropical (with various types of palm trees).

## **Caldera**

A huge crater in a volcano, often formed by the collapse of the volcano's cone during an eruption.

## **Canyon**

A steep valley that has been carved through rock by a river.

## **Civil war**

A war between people living in the same country, because of political, religious, or racial differences.

## **Climate**

What the weather is usually like, over a long time, in a specific area.

## **Climate change**

When the climate is changing, due to Earth's atmosphere getting hotter because of human activity, such as pollution. Higher temperatures will affect weather systems, which in turn will affect the people, animals, and plants living in an area.

## **Coniferous**

A type of tree or shrub, such as pine or fir, that has needles instead of leaves. They are found in both temperate and boreal forests.

## **Continent**

One of the seven large landmasses on Earth: North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia and Oceania, and Antarctica.

## **Crust**

The hard, thin, outer shell of Earth.

## **Deciduous forest**

A type of broadleaf forest found in temperate regions.

## **Deforestation**

The cutting down of trees for timber or to clear the land for farming or for roads. It can lead to soil erosion.

## **Delta**

A low-lying, fan-shaped area at a river mouth, usually where it flows into the sea. It is formed by layers of sediment brought along by the river.

## **Democracy**

A system of ruling a country in which the people have a say, usually in the form of voting for who will be the country's leader (such as a president or prime minister).

## **Desert**

A very arid (dry) region that has little or no precipitation. Some are cold deserts, such as the barren areas of rock and ice in the Arctic and Antarctic.

## **Dictatorship**

The rule of a country by a person who often came to, or held on to, power without the vote of their people; the opposite of democracy.

## **Disputed territory**

An area, or country, that wants to be independent from another, but that has not been officially recognized by the original nation, or the United Nations (UN).

## **Diversity**

The variety of plants and animals in an ecosystem; or of different people living in an area.

## **Dormant**

Describes a volcano which is not extinct, but that has not erupted for a long time, although is likely to do so in the future.

## **Ecosystem**

How all living things in an area interact with each other, the climate, and the various habitats there.

## **Elevation**

The height of land above sea level.

## **Endemic**

An animal or plant that is native and particular to one specific area.

## **Equator**

The 0° line of latitude. It divides Earth into the northern and southern hemispheres.

## **Erosion**

The wearing down of the land surface by running water, waves, ice, wind, and weather.

## **Evolution**

How animals and plants change and develop over a long time, in order to adapt and survive.

## **Extinct**

Refers to an animal that no longer exists, due to overhunting or loss of habitat.

## **Fjord**

A long, narrow, and deep inlet of sea situated between steep, coastal mountain sides.

## **Geyser**

A fountain of hot water that erupts regularly as underground streams come into contact with hot rocks.

## **Glaciation**

When ice sheets and glaciers grow and how that changes the landscape.

## **Glacier**

A mass of ice made up of compacted and frozen snow, which moves slowly down a mountain, eroding and depositing rocks as it flows.

## **Gravity**

The pulling force that attracts objects to each other—it keeps us on Earth, and planets in their orbits.

## **Habitat**

The environment or place in which an animal or plant normally lives.

## **Hemisphere**

The northern hemisphere is the half of Earth that sits above the Equator; the southern hemisphere is the half of the globe that falls below it.

## **Hominin**

Humans, including the very first type of human ancestor, that first appeared in Africa about 7 million years ago.

## **Hurricane**

A violent, tropical storm, also known as a cyclone in the Indian Ocean, and as a typhoon in the Pacific Ocean.

**Iceberg**

A large, floating mass of ice that has broken off from a glacier, or ice shelf, with most of its body underwater.

**Ice sheet**

A permanent layer of ice that covers large areas of land, such as in Antarctica or Greenland.

**Ice shelf**

A permanent layer of ice that floats on water, but which is partly attached to land.

**Inca empire**

A powerful ancient empire located in the Andes mountains of South America, which was conquered by the Spanish in the 16th century.

**Indigenous**

A plant, animal, or people native to a geographical area.

**Infrastructure**

A term used to describe the things that make a country or region function, such as roads, transportation, communications, schools, and industry.

**Interstellar**

Means “between stars.”

**Invertebrate**

Animals that do not have a backbone, such as insects, crabs, and worms.

**Isthmus**

A narrow strip of land with water on either side that connects two larger landmasses.

**Lagoon**

A shallow stretch of coastal salt-water that is partly sheltered behind a barrier, such as a sandbank or coral reef; see atoll.

**Latitude**

A series of imaginary lines that run parallel to the Equator, measured in degrees north or south of it. The Equator is 0°, the North Pole 90°N, and the South Pole 90°S.

**Longitude**

As latitude, but giving the distance for how far east or west something is from 0° longitude in Greenwich, London, in the United Kingdom.

**Mammal**

Warm-blooded animals that give birth to babies that feed on milk.

**Mangrove**

Trees and shrubs that grow along muddy shores and riverbanks, often in salty water, and with many of their roots exposed.

**Marsupial**

A type of mammal, such as a kangaroo, that keeps its young in a pouch on its stomach until they can take care of themselves.

**Mayan empire**

An ancient civilization in South America that existed from around 2,000 BCE to the 16th century, when they were conquered by the Spanish.

**Metropolitan area**

The built-up, often densely populated area surrounding a city, including suburbs and nearby urban areas.

**Migration**

The movement of animals or people from one place to another, often to find food or to breed.

**Molten**

Rock or metal that has been heated to liquid form; lava is molten rock.

**Monsoon**

A seasonal wind in South and East Asia that brings heavy rains.

**Montane**

The type of biome (climate, plants, and wildlife) found in mountains.

**Nomad**

People who move around a region to find fresh pasture for their herds.

**Oasis**

A fertile, green area in a desert that usually gets its water from underground sources.

**Peninsula**

A thin strip of land that sticks out from the mainland into the ocean.

**Plain**

A flat, low-lying region of land.

**Plateau**

A flat area of land on a highland.

**Population density**

Describes how crowded or sparsely populated an area is, based on how many people live per square mile or square kilometer—it is worked out by dividing a country’s (or city’s) population by its area.

**Precipitation**

The moisture that falls from the atmosphere onto Earth, in the form of rain, snow, hail, or sleet.

**Prevailing winds**

Commonly occurring winds that blow in the same direction, and which influence the climate of a particular region.

**Rain forest**

Dense forests growing in tropical zones, with high rainfall, temperature, and humidity.

**Rift valley**

A long depression in Earth’s crust, formed by the sinking of rocks between two faults or plates.

**River basin**

The land into which water (usually in the form of rivers) gathers.

**Rural**

Relating to unbuilt areas, usually countryside; the opposite of urban.

**Sea ice**

The ice that forms when ocean water in the polar regions freezes.

**Steppe**

Large areas of dry grassland in the northern hemisphere—especially in southeast Europe and central Asia.

**Subcontinent**

A large landmass that is part of a continent, such as India (subcontinent) in Asia (continent).

**Subtropical**

An area or climate that is nearly tropical, located to the north or south of the tropics.

**Taiga**

The Russian word for a coniferous forest.

**Tectonic plates**

Huge interlocking plates that make up Earth’s surface. A plate boundary is the point at which plates meet, and where earthquakes often occur.

**Temperate**

The mild, variable climate found in areas between the tropics and cold polar regions.

**Tetrapod**

Any vertebrate (animal that has a spine) with four limbs (arms or legs).

**Time zone**

The world is split into 39 different time zones. Most are set whole hours ahead or behind Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)—the time at the Greenwich Meridian in London, UK. Some, however, are whole hours plus 30 or 45 minutes ahead or behind UTC.

**Trade wind**

A prevailing wind that blows toward the Equator, either from northeast or southeast.

**Trench**

A deep valley in the ocean floor, formed when tectonic plates collide.

**Tributary**

A stream or small river that feeds into a larger one.

**Tropical**

Referring to the climate or biomes in the areas just north and south of the Equator. These areas are characterized by heavy rainfall, high temperatures, and no clearly defined seasons.

**Tundra**

A biome in the very cold, northern parts of Europe, North America, and Asia, in which the ground never thaws beneath the surface (called permafrost).

**United Nations (UN)**

An organization of 193 states that work together to keep peace in the world, and make it better for all people who live here.

**UNESCO**

Part of the UN, UNESCO works for peace by helping people understand each other through their cultures. They have made a list of heritage sites that should be protected, ranging from natural landscapes to historic buildings.

**Urban**

Built up; relating to living in a town or a city.

**Urbanization**

A term that refers to both the growth of towns and cities, and to the number of people that move from rural to urban areas.

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## Climate data

Hijmans, R. J., S. E. Cameron, J. L. Parra, P. G. Jones and A. Jarvis, 2005. Very high resolution interpolated climate surfaces for global land areas.

## Population data

Center for International Earth Science Information Network—CIESIN—Columbia University. 2016. Gridded Population of the World, Version 4 (GPWv4): Population Density. Palisades, NY: NASA Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC).

## Paleogeography globes

Derived from original maps produced by Colorado Plateau Geosystems Inc.

## Landsat satellite data for feature spread 3D models

These data are distributed by the Land Processes Distributed Active Archive Center (LP DAAC), located at USGS/EROS, Sioux Falls, SD. <http://lpdaac.usgs.gov>

## Nighttime

Data courtesy Marc Imhoff of NASA GSFC and Christopher Elvidge of NOAA NGDC. Image by Craig Mayhew and Robert Simmon, NASA GSFC.

## Wildlife biomes data

WWF Terrestrial Ecoregions of the World (TEOW). Olson, D. M., Dinerstein, E., Wikramanayake, E. D., Burgess, N. D., Powell, G. V. N., Underwood, E. C., D'Amico, J. A., Itoua, I., Strand, H. E., Morrison, J. C., Loucks, C. J., Allnutt, T. F., Ricketts, T. H., Kura, Y., Lamoreux, J. F., Wettengel, W. W., Hedao, P., Kassem, K. R. 2001. Terrestrial ecoregions of the world: a new map of life on Earth. *Bioscience* 51(11):933-938.

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