

TOGO AT A GLANCE

POPULATION: 7,965,055 (July 2017 est.)

LANGUAGES: French (official), Ewe, Mina, Dagomba and Kabye

PREDOMINANT RELIGIONS: Christian, Islamic, Animist

TIME ZONE: Four hours ahead of Eastern Daylight Time (New York City)

TELEPHONE CODE: 228, country code

You'll find a slightly French twist to some things in Togo: You can buy baguettes, for example, in Lomé (the capital), and you can order them in French. But in general, the people who inhabit this tiny country on the coast of West Africa find most of their cultural expression closer to home. Togo offers sights and sounds that are truly West African: wonderful music, delicious spicy cuisine and friendly people.

COMPASSION IN TOGO

Compassion's ministry in Togo began in 2008. Today, more than 22,400 children are served by more than 95 Compassion-assisted child development centers throughout the country. Compassion's church-based child development centers are places of hope for impoverished children in Togo. Under the guidance of caring Christian adults, children's pressing needs for nutrition and medical attention are met. Children also receive tutoring to help with their academics. Health and hygiene lessons teach them to care for their own physical well-being, and positive social skills are modeled and encouraged.

WEATHER

The two dry seasons in Togo are August to early September, and November to April. Try to avoid the rainy seasons (May



through July, and late September to October). Although they aren't full-blown monsoons, it does rain enough to make things inconvenient. Year-round average highs are 78-87 degrees F / 25-30 degrees C and average lows are 65-75 F / 18-24 C. Central and northern Togo are generally warmer during the day and cooler at night than on the coast. Be prepared for wind-blown dust at any time of the year (dust is particularly noticeable in January and February), and be sure to bring a sweater for use in the evenings year-round.

CURRENCY

Togo's official currency is the *CFA franc* (XOF). Foreign currency can be difficult to change outside of Lomé. There are ATMs in Lomé, and banks and hotels in the capital city also change money. Beware of street moneychangers. Lomé is notorious for its skilled shortchange artists and masters of sleight-of-hand.

FOOD

Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating, choose meat that is cooked thoroughly, avoid local dairy products, and assume the water is unsafe (stick with prepackaged or boiled drinks).

SHOPPING

Shop for tie-dyed, batik and other fabrics, wood carvings (especially those made by the Ewe people), puppets, pottery, local paintings, gold items, shell jewelry and musical instruments (particularly the *xokudu*, a trumpet made from the fruit of a baobab tree). Lomé has numerous markets selling cloth, Togolese bells, copper bracelets and African beads. Prices are reasonable — bargaining is the rule. But don't bargain for an item unless you intend to buy it. Otherwise, the merchants can become quite annoyed with you. Don't buy anything made of ivory (it is illegal in the U.S.), and wait to buy CDs or cassettes of Togolese music at home for better production quality.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

The voltage used in Togo is 220V, and electrical outlets accommodate plug type C. (For up-to-date plug and outlet information, check whatplug.info and click on your destination country.) You may wish to take a universal plug adaptor, available in the luggage/travel section of most big-box stores.

DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** learn some French before you go.
- **Do** dress well if you're going out for the evening in Lomé. Many places have a dress code.



- **Don't** use your left hand for anything. It's considered unclean.
- **Do** notice the marble at Lomé's Hotel du 2 Février. The beautiful stone was all mined locally near Gnaoulou. And while you're at the hotel, do go up to the 35th floor for a great view of the capital.
- **Do** change dollars or traveler's checks in Lomé before heading up-country. Foreign currency is difficult to change farther north. In Lomé, visit only official currency-exchange outlets; beware of street money changers. Lomé is notorious for its skilled shortchange artists and masters of sleight-of-hand.
- **Do** try to be in Lomé during Cultural Week (the second week in April), as this time offers excellent displays of traditional music and culture.
- **Don't** linger outside the Presidential Palace, and don't even think of taking a picture. In general, don't take pictures of anything having to do with the military, no matter how tenuous the connection (including post offices).

DRESS

Clothing should be appropriate for warm weather. Jeans are acceptable for casual wear. Sandals or flip-flops are comfortable for this warm-weather country.

Women: Modest, loose-fitting tops (nothing form-fitting) are recommended; sleeveless tops are acceptable, but please cover your shoulders in places of worship; pants, capris, longer skirts and loose-fitting, casual dresses are recommended for women.

Men: Button shirts and polo shirts are recommended. T-shirts are allowed in casual settings. Long, non-denim pants are recommended for center visits and church services.

Both: Shorts are highly discouraged outside of beachside locations. A light jacket is recommended for cool evenings or rainy days.

Shoes: Closed-toe shoes are recommended during the day due to potential unsanitary or uneven terrain.

GENERAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

Leave at home all unnecessary credit cards, Social Security card, library cards and similar items you may routinely carry in your wallet. Carry items in front pockets, not back pockets. Do not display large sums of money in public; make visible only the amount of money that approximates your purchase. Never leave items with cash in them (purse, wallet, backpack, etc.) on a bus, car or any other location. Stay alert and be cautious at all times. Don't take safety and security for granted.

U.S. EMBASSY INFORMATION

Website: tg.usembassy.gov

Phone: (+228) 2261 5470

Address: Boulevard Eyadema, B.P. 852, Lomé, Togo

We strongly advise you to contact the CDC (www.cdc.gov) or check with your personal physician for more information about your specific health needs while traveling, including any recommendations for immunizations.

*All information taken from the World Factbook and
Compassion International.*

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

The official language of Togo is French. The country's secondary language is Mossi. Some common Burkinabé greetings include:

Hello	Bonjour
Nice to meet you	Enchanté
How are you?	Ç ava?
What is your name?	Tu t'appelles comment?
My name is.....	Je m'appelle (name)
How old are you?	Quel âge avez-vous?
Yes	Oui
No	No
Please	S'il vous plaît
Thank you	Merci
You're welcome	Je vous en prie
I do not speak French	Je ne parle pas français
Do you speak English?	Parlez-vous anglais?
I don't understand	Je ne comprends pas
You can do it!	Vous pouvez le faire!
I love you	Je t'aime
I am praying for you	Je prie pour vous

Jesus loves you

You are precious to God

God bless you

I believe in you

Tell me about your family

Good/okay

I need

How much?

Too expensive

Cheaper

Where is the bathroom?

Where is the church?

Where is the bank?

Where is the hotel?

Jésus vous aime

Vous êtes précieux pour Dieu

Que Dieu vous bénisse

Je crois en toi

Parlez-moi de votre famille

Bon

J'ai besoin d'...

Combien?

Trop cher

Moins cher

Où sont les toilettes?

Où est l'église?

Où est la banque?

Où se trouve l'hôtel?