

Contemporary **GHANA** on the rise...

Known as the "Gateway to Africa," this peaceful nation has the distinction of introducing many to the African continent's 21st Century standard of living, economic development and tourism.

Known as the "Gold Coast", the World Bank has named Ghana "one of the most friendliest nations in West Africa." A harmonious coastal nation with 24 million residents, Ghana has come a long way since its independence from the British in 1957. It is considered a "young nation on the rise." English is the official language and Twi, Fante and Dagaare, are the most widely spoken native languages. Christians make up 71% of the population, followed by Islam (17.6%). Ghana has a land mass size of about the state of Oregon.

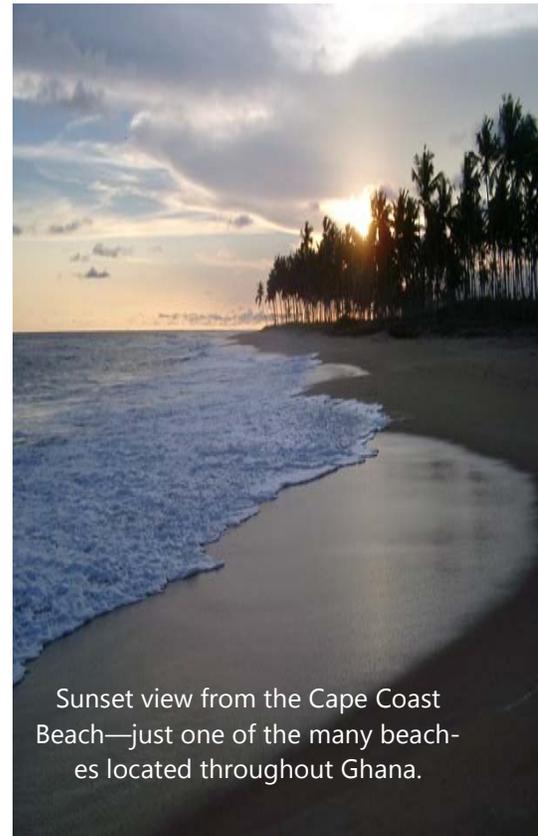
Accra, (pronounced "Ah-krah") is Ghana's capital and largest city with two million residents.



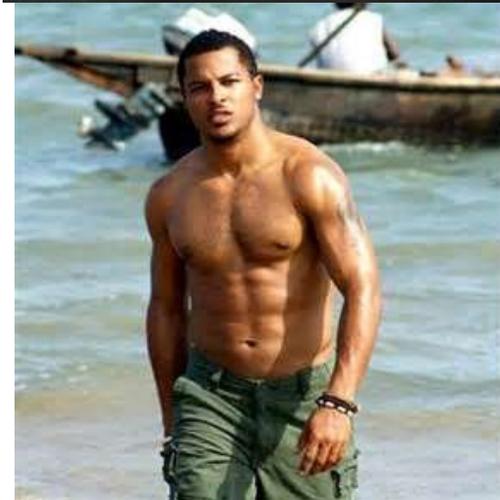
Growing Economy: Ghana has one of the fastest growing economies in the world and the fastest growing in Africa. With the recent finding of offshore oil, gold exportation, growing telecoms, mining and transportation industries, the MasterCard African Cities Growth Index identified Accra as having the highest economic growth potential on the continent between 2012-2017.

Investment Opportunities: The 1994 Ghana Investment Promotion Act guarantees the freedom for non-Ghanaians to establish and run enterprises in lucrative areas such as hospitality; natural gas; hydropower projects; film, radio and television; fruit and vegetable farming; food processing, pharmaceuticals; and information technology. American brands with a

presence in Ghana include: S.C. Johnson & Sons, Coca-Cola, Pfizer, Holiday Inn, Nielsen, Star-Kist, Nike, Puma, Sony, Shoprite, KFC and Purina. New York University (NYU) has a satellite campus, and the University of Georgia has a summer abroad program. **Entertainment Industry:** Sixty-percent (60%) of Ghana's population are made up of young people 15-35 years of age. This generation has grown up being influenced by American and European television, and in turn, has helped evolve Ghana's film and music business into a multi-billion dollar industry. Ghallywood has become a viable film producing entity and movies are purchased throughout Africa, Europe, the Caribbean and the USA. Hiplife, which mixes Hip Hop, dancehall and reggae music is a growing genre. Other musical tastes vary from American country & western, R&B and Reggae. In recent years, the following artists have performed to sold-out crowds: Stevie Wonder, Hugh Masekela, Jay Z, Beyonce, Chris Brown, Shaggy, Boyz 2 Men, Kevin Lyttle, Wayne Wonder, Akon, and Beanie Man.



Sunset view from the Cape Coast Beach—just one of the many beaches located throughout Ghana.



Ghallywood Star, Van Vicker



The People of Ghana are governed by a President elect and Parliament. Ghanaians have friendly dispositions, both to one another and visitors, regardless of race or nationality. Racism is nonexistent. Ghanaians are very educationally-driven, religious-oriented and have a strong belief in the spirit of the ancestors and God. Ghanaians rarely use profanity (if at all), especially in the presence of women and children. Women are treated like queens and carry themselves respectively, both in their dress, mannerisms and speech. Ghana has an abundance of exceptionally looking single men who pride themselves on being gentlemen.



Giuseppina Baafi
Miss Ghana 2013



Students at Assembly,
Aduman Senior High
School, Kumasi



Older people are revered. Children are well-disciplined, can sit quietly for hours, and are both fearful and respectful of adults. Children are required to wear uniforms in all the schools and all girls must wear their hair short for discipline purposes. Ghanaians dress in both traditional African attire, as well as American and European clothing. Drugs are illegal in Ghana and there are severe penalties for narcotic drug use or distribution.

How Ghanaians Live: Sixty-seven (67%) of Ghanaians live in rural areas full of greenery, limited transportation, no indoor plumbing and many have to walk for miles to get clean water. The urban life differs tremendously. In the major cities, there are many apartments, and small to luxury homes at affordable prices.

Pictured Right: **Modern Homes in Accra**

The difference between life in Ghana and life in America is that here, people are satisfied...people have meaningful relationships and share love, laughter, and conversations, even with strangers."

Kaylin LeMelle-Thomas



Expatriates in Ghana: With some of the easiest immigration rules in Africa, it is estimated that 40% of Ghana's population are foreign-born. The expat community is a growing, diverse community. In recent years, the largest expatriates have included workers from China who are building their own china towns—complete with housing, restaurants and schools. Lebanese traders, have been in the country for three generations, have been joined by people from Britain, India, Canada, and the USA. African Americans have been relocating to Ghana since the 1960s, at the invitation of its first president, the late Kwame Nkrumah. African Diaspora members have a "right of abode" in Ghana, echoing Israel's offer of automatic citizenship for Jews. It is estimated that nearly 3,000 African Americans reside in Ghana, and more are relocating every year, in particular, retirees, according to the African American Association of Ghana, founded in 1991. Ghana is also home to a large number of Jamaicans and Rastafarians including Bob Marley's widow, Rita Marley. On average, one can live a luxurious lifestyle in Ghana on \$30K a year which includes exceptional housing, an automobile, household help and private school tuition.



GHANA's INTERESTING FACTS

- The word Ghana means, "Warrior King."
- The first president, the late **Kwame Nkrumah** (1909-1972) graduated from Lincoln University (HBCU) and received his Master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania.
- USA First Lady, Michelle Obama believes the Cape Coast to be her ancestral home.
- Poet, Maya Angelou has lived in Ghana and has taught at the University of Ghana.



Akwaaba!

Welcome!

Things to Do in Ghana

Ghana is ranked 6th on the Frommer's list of 50 destinations to visit in 2012, and over 1 million do so each year. Ghana has a lot to offer. Its beauty and intrigue lies in everyday life and culture. From palm-lined beaches to visiting museums, taking a day safari, to poolside jazz, Ghana never gets boring.

Traveling to Ghana requires a valid passport, VISA and yellow fever vaccination. There are direct flights from New York City into the Kotoka International Airport. Flights from Atlanta, Washington, DC and Denver allow you to make a day visiting layover cities of NYC, London, or Amsterdam. (Delta's number flight in the world is to West Africa).



Atlanta visitor holds fried plantains chips from a street vendor.

Other carriers include American, United, British Airways, and Virgin Atlantic.

Weather: Tropical and humid with no real distinctions between seasons.

Visitors are advised to bring anti-malaria medication (Malaria can be fatal) and mosquito repellent. Coolest month is August (avg high-80 degrees); Hottest months are February and March (avg high-88 degrees).

Internet and Cell Phones: With the 4th largest internet service in Africa, and 87th fastest in the world, WiFi service is available in most hotels and Internet Cafes. USA purchased cell phones need to be unlocked by the carriers. Cell phones can also be purchased in Ghana for as little as \$10.

How much money will I need for travel? Paper currency is the Cedi (pronounced "CD") and coins are pesewas (pronounced, "Pesos"). Taxis, admission fees, etc., are cheap—a budget of \$15-\$20 per day may be suffice. Cash is the way to go. Currency exchange is easy at banks or check cashing places. Traveler's cheques are accepted, but a hassle to cash. Credit card fraud is rampant in Ghana, visitors are cautioned against using credit or debit cards. **Shopping:** Ghana's gold goes for about 3%-6% less than USA prices. Ghana is the 2nd largest exporters of gold from Africa and is currently ranked #10 in the world for production. Gold is only sold by licensed brokers in the smelted form (bars). Other shopping options include the Accra Mall (designer American and European fashion), the Kumasi National Cultural Center and street vendors selling everything from candy to souvenirs.



Pictured:
5 star, Movenpick Hotel—Accra;
Below: Guest House for Rent in Accra

Hotels and Lodging: Varies from 2-star to 5-star resorts. Hotel rooms are pricey in Ghana and range from less than \$100 per night to over \$400. Hostels



and spacious guest houses, are also available for both short and long term stays— some complete with maid and butler service. Going cheap? Possible power outages, sporadic hot water and a location far from the city center.

Traveling around Ghana:

Driving is busy and hectic! Public transportation is called the TroTro bus and there is a rail line, both are used primarily by natives. Traffic jams are the norm, and extended travel time should be incorporated into daily plans. Visitors are not advised to drive themselves. Road side assistance is almost non-existent. You can rent from AVIS or hire a driver. Travel at night, particularly outside of Accra and Kumasi is hazardous, due to poor street lighting.

"Traveling to Ghana brings one a sense of instant peace. The sun, the air, the people are all magical. There is so much to do, see, and embrace. It is like a Caribbean island mixed with an American or European small city, yet staunchly African." - SJ

"West Africa vacations are to Europeans, what the Caribbean is to Americans." SJ



Cuisine: Ghana's indigenous food is very similar to Cajun spicy foods in New Orleans, American Soul Food, and Caribbean dishes and offers a healthy mix of meats, produce, fruits and vegetables. Visitors can also

find a growing number of Chinese and American eateries, including KFC. Tea is preferred over coffee. Visitors are often surprised by Ghana's range of locally and traditionally produced alcoholic beverages including Palm Wine and Akpeteshie, which is used at ceremonies as libation where a few drops are sprinkled or poured on the ground to appease the Gods. Coca Cola and their Fanta brand is the #1 soft drink.



Beaches: Ghana is home to some of the world's most untouched beaches, with white sandy beaches located in "down south" Ghana. There are over 20 beaches just in Accra alone. The most popular are: Labadi Beach (*also has a five star hotel with a casino, every week there is a beach party*); Coco Beach; Next Door Beach Resort (*a rocky beach*); Akuma Village Beach (*reggae night every Friday*); Osikan Beach (*no swimming but great view from the rocky hills*) and Bojo Beach (*only island beach, sandwiched between a river & the sea*).

Nightlife and Cultural Celebrations: Ghana has a thriving nightlife. There are a wide range of bars, cafes and night clubs all over Ghana which play a wide-range of music from country and western, Hip Hop, Pop, R&B and Reggae. Traditional cultural ceremonies include African dance, drumming and naming ceremonies.

SJ taking part in traditional Ashanti cultural celebration with an Ashanti Chief, Queen Mothers and the Afigya Kwabre District, Kumasi



Accra is the final resting place of **Dr. W.E.B. DuBois**, one of the founders of the NAACP and who is known for his prolific work on Pan

Africanism. Dr. DuBois who became a naturalized citizen of Ghana, lived out his final years there. No visit would be complete without a visit to his memorial center and former home located in Accra's Cantonments area.

"A New KUMASI, to our destination"

Formerly known as the "Garden City," **Kumasi** (*pronounced, Coo-Ma-Si*) is Ghana's 2nd largest city with 1.5 million residents. It may also be the greenest city in the world. Kumasi is the perfect place if you are looking for authentic African culture away from the bustling urban center of Accra. Here you will find the mighty Ashanti empire and Kente cloth origin which you can



purchase at the largest outdoor market in West Africa.

In 2007, Kumasi became a sister city to Atlanta



Top left: Ashanti Golden Stool
Middle: Ashanti King Palace

Right: A visitor to the Kakum National Park in Cape Coast, walks across the only canopy walkway in Africa.



Slave Castles and Forts: *No visit to West Africa is complete without visiting the birthplace of the Atlantic Slave Trade.* Ghana has some 40 slave lodges, forts and castles. The two widely visited include the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle which are extremely popular destinations for African Americans tourists seeking to reconnect with their heritage. The Cape Coast castle held more enslaved Africans captive than any other in West Africa. Elmina Castle, was the first slave-trading post in Sub-Saharan Africa.



IN EVERLASTING MEMORY
OF THE ANGUISH OF OUR ANCESTORS
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MAY THOSE WHO RETURN FIND THEIR ROOTS
MAY HUMANITY NEVER AGAIN PERPETRATE
SUCH INJUSTICE AGAINST HUMANITY
WE, THE LIVING, VOW TO UPHOLD THIS



About the Author, Simone Joye

Born in NYC, Simone Joye is an international consultant and the founder and Executive Director of Young People Matter (YPM). Simone's biological roots can be traced to Nigeria and the Caribbean. In Ghana, she is also known as Nana Gyamfuaa Amonu ("The Precious One"). She has been traveling to West Africa since 1992 and hosts group travel to Ghana (considered her second home).