

AFRICA · CULTURE · HIKING · SACRED SITES · OFF THE BEATEN PATH

 Togo

Koutammakou's mud tower-houses shelter a UNESCO-listed way of life still lived today, the forested hills around Kpalimé are made for walking, and Lake Togo and Lomé's fetish market reveal the Vodun traditions of the coast. Small and easy to cross, Togo combines naturally with neighbouring Ghana and Benin on a West African overland trip.

 **The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to parts of Togo.**
Read the latest FCDO travel advice before planning a trip. Your travel insurance may be invalid if you travel against FCDO advice.
FCDO advice last updated 15 December 2025.

 CAPITAL Lomé	 CURRENCY West African CFA franc (XOF) £1 ≈ FCFA 781	 LANGUAGE French, Ewe Kabyè	 BEST TIME Nov–Feb
 DAILY BUDGET £30–£150 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, E 220V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 9h 30m via Paris, Brussels or Addis Ababa ~£600–£1,000 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+0 standard time

Togo is a long, narrow sliver of West Africa, a long day's drive from the Atlantic to the Burkina Faso border, and a single highway, the N1, links most of what visitors come for. Trips usually start in Lomé, on the coast right beside the Ghanaian border, take in Lake Togo and the old colonial port of Aného, then head inland to the cooler, forested plateau around Kpalimé and Badou. From there the road runs north through Sokodé and Kara to the Tamberma tower-houses of Koutammakou, and many travellers continue across the border into Benin.

Togo sees few foreign tourists, so costs are low and the welcome is curious rather than commercial, but facilities outside Lomé are basic. French is essential away from the capital's hotels. The south is a heartland of Vodun, or voodoo, and shrines, ceremonies and fetish markets are part of everyday religious life rather than shows for visitors. Lomé's Grand Marché is famous for the 'Nana Benz', women traders who grew rich on wax-print cloth. It suits overlanders combining Ghana, Togo and Benin, and anyone curious about West African culture.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

ARCHITECTURE

Koutammakou

In the Batammariba country of the north-east, families still live in takienta: fortress-like, two-storey mud tower-houses with granaries on the roof. The UNESCO-listed landscape continues into Benin; visit with a local guide from the villages.
- 2

NATURE

Kpalimé and Mont Agou

The coffee- and cocoa-growing hills around Kpalimé are Togo's best walking country: climb Mont Agou, the country's highest peak at 986 metres, swim below the Kpimé waterfall and look for butterflies in the Kloto forest.

3

CULTURE

Lake Togo and Togoville

Cross the lake by pirogue from Agbodrafo to Togoville, where the 1884 treaty making Togo a German protectorate was signed, to see Vodun shrines alongside a cathedral and the town's colourful colonial-era buildings.

4

SACRED SITE

Akodessewa Fetish Market

Stalls piled with dried animal heads, skins and carved figures supply traditional healers and Vodun priests in Lomé; a resident féticheur explains remedies and talismans, for a fee. Fascinating, though not for the squeamish.

5

NATURE

Akloa Falls

Near Badou in the Plateaux region, a short, steep forest walk through cocoa plantations leads to the Akloa waterfall, which tumbles over mossy rocks into a pool cool enough for a swim; best after the rains.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Lomé

≈ 2.2 million people

Togo's coastal capital: browse the Grand Marché's wax-print cloth, visit the Akodessewa fetish market and the gardens of the restored Palais de Lomé, then eat grilled fish by the beach road at dusk.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Sokodé

≈ 200,000 people

The main town of the largely Muslim Tem country, with a busy market; a useful overnight stop on the N1 north rather than a destination in itself.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Kara

≈ 190,000 people

A planned, orderly northern city in Kabiye country, the base for Koutammakou and the surrounding hill villages, and in July for Evala, the region's famous wrestling initiation.

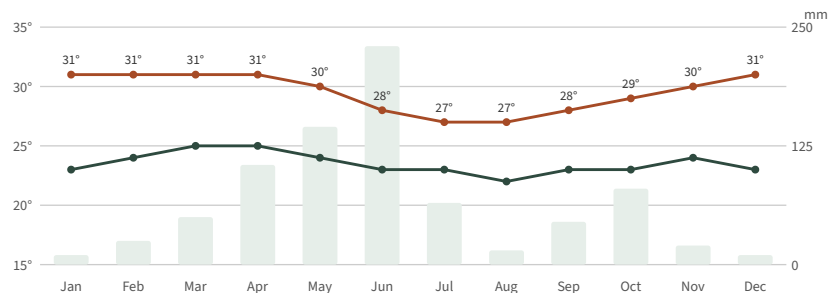
Figures are approximate. Grand Lomé's is from the 2022 census; Sokodé and Kara are UN urban-area estimates, are close in size, and sources disagree on which is larger.

When to go to Togo

Best time: **Nov–Feb.**

**Average climate in Lomé**

— High °C
 — Low °C
 ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jul	Evala Each July young Kabiye men around Kara go through Evala, a week of traditional wrestling bouts marking their initiation into adulthood, cheered on by drummers and big crowds.
Sep	Epe Ekpe The Guin new-year festival at Glidji, near Aného, peaks in September when priests reveal the colour of a sacred stone, said to foretell the fortunes of the year ahead.

How much does Togo cost?

SHOESTRING £30 per person / day ≈ FCFA 23,424 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £70 per person / day ≈ FCFA 54,657 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £150 per person / day ≈ FCFA 117,121 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Fufu with groundnut soup Pounded yam, beaten in a mortar until smooth and elastic, eaten by hand with a rich peanut soup of chicken, goat or fish; the classic Togolese meal.	Ablo Spongy, slightly sweet steamed cakes of fermented maize and rice dough, sold at roadside stalls and eaten with fried fish and hot pepper sauce.	Gboma dessi A thick stew of gboma leaves cooked with tomato, onion, smoked fish or meat and palm oil, served with akoumé, a stiff maize dough.
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Getting around

Shared bush taxis and minibuses leave Lomé's gares routières when full and run up the N1 to Kara and Dapaong; the journey to Kara takes most of a day. In towns, motorbike taxis called zémidjans are everywhere, and in Lomé the Gozem app books motorbikes and cars at set prices. There are no passenger trains, and hiring a car with a driver is the easiest way to reach Koutammakou.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  C E 220V — bring a UK-to-C/E adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Ambulance: 8200 Fire: 118 Police: 117 or 177 Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +228	TIME ZONE UTC+0 (standard time)
TAP WATER Not safe — drink bottled or treated water	DRIVING On the right

TIPPING

Not expected in local eateries; leave 5–10% in smarter restaurants, and tip guides and drivers who have looked after you well.

ETIQUETTE

Greet people, especially elders, before making any request, and use your right hand to eat, give and receive. Always ask before photographing people, shrines or ceremonies.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Gnassingbé Eyadéma International Airport (LFW), Lomé

Visas & entry for Togo

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

You must have a visa to visit Togo. A single-entry tourist visa is valid for 15 days. You must apply for a visa at least 6 days before you plan to arrive in the country. You cannot get a visa on arrival.

To stay longer (or to work or study, for business travel or for other reasons), you must meet the Togolese government's entry requirements.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A Tetanus Typhoid Yellow fever

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya Dengue Hepatitis B Measles Meningococcal disease Polio Rabies Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required for all travellers (usually over 9 months or 1 year old). There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in Togo: antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Togo

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 1 Nov 2026

All Saints' Day

Fri 25 Dec 2026

Christmas Day

Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Mon 8 Feb 2027	First Day of Ramadan (date may shift)
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Tue 27 Apr 2027	Independence Day
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Thu 6 May 2027	Ascension Day
Sun 16 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Mon 17 May 2027	Pentecost Monday
Mon 21 Jun 2027	Martyrs' Day
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Assumption Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in French

ENGLISH	FRENCH	SAY IT
Hello	Bonjour	<i>bon-ZHOOR</i>
Thank you	Merci	<i>mair-SEE</i>
Please	S'il vous plaît	<i>seel voo PLAY</i>
Excuse me	Excusez-moi	<i>ex-KEW-zay MWAH</i>
How much is this?	C'est combien ?	<i>say kom-BYAN</i>

Know before you go

Lomé sits right on the Ghanaian border and Cotonou is only a few hours east by road, so Togo slots easily into a Ghana–Togo–Benin overland route.

Bring euros to change: the CFA franc is pegged to the euro, so rates are predictable, and euros are the easiest currency to exchange outside Lomé.

Ask a travel clinic about yellow fever vaccination and antimalarials well before you travel, and carry your vaccination certificate, which may be checked on arrival.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.