

# PROFILE OF CAMEROON

The name Cameroon was derived from "Rio de Camarões" (the River of Prawns). "Rio de Camarões" was the name that the Portuguese gave to the river that is now known as River Wouri. The Portuguese explorers gave the river this name in the 14th century, due to its abundance of prawns (shrimp) and crayfish. The name "Camarões" was later adapted to be "Cameroon".

Cameroon was originally colonized by the French and British. These two colonies finally merged in 1961 to form the present country.

Cameroon's flag has 3 different vertical colors and one star. Each color has a different meaning, green is for the lavish vegetation, the red represents independence, and yellow represents sunshine.

When the flag was first created there were two stars. The two stars represented the French and the British parts of Cameroon. Then when Cameroon became a unitary state, the second star was dropped.



The people of Cameroon are very peace loving, so the country has generally enjoyed political stability.

Cameroon has one of the highest literacy rates in Africa. However, the country's progress is hampered by a level of corruption that is among the highest in the world. Major exports include crude oil, cocoa, coffee, cotton, and timber. Other exports include oil-palm products, tea, rubber, peanuts, bananas, and fresh vegetables, as well as factory products such as aluminum, textiles, and plastics.

English and French are the official languages of Cameroon, but there are over 200 different languages spoken in Cameroon (languages that are as different as English is to German).

Cameroon is often referred to as "Africa in Miniature" because of the fact that the whole of Africa (its cultures and climates) are represented in Cameroon. The landscape varies from beaches, mountains and rainforests in the south, to savannas and deserts in the north.



Cameroon is remarkably diverse in its cultural diversity as well. Each of Cameroon's ethnic groups has its own unique culture of dress and customs. Typical celebrations include births, deaths, plantings, harvests, and religious rituals.

Cameroon has freedom of religion. The religions practiced in Cameroon include: Christian Protestants and Catholics, Muslims, Pagan, and Animists. There are also a variety of native indigenous cultural religious practices, some of which include witchcraft.

Traditional housing styles make use of locally available materials and vary from temporary wood-and-leaf shelters, mud-brick with thatched roof homes, or cemented homes with tin roofs.

Cameroon has two seasons: rainy season and dry season. Rainy season lasts from about May until September. Then from October until April there it is very dry with no rain but lots of dust.

Cameroon has the tallest mountain in West Africa, Mount Cameroon, and is home to the second wettest place in the world which records annual rainfall of about 400 inches.

Cameroon is famous for their soccer team. They were the first African country to reach the Quarter-Finals of the World Cup and have won the African Cup of Nations four times, 1984, 1988, 2000 and 2002.

Samuel Eto'o Phillis has become a top Cameroonian football player. He is now the world's highest paid football player, and some reports say that he could very soon become the highest paid sportsman in the world at \$500,000 a week (after taxes). This is just his salary, though, as his deal with Russian club Anzhi Makhachkala is also believed to include handy performance-based bonuses, like 20,000 euros for every goal and 10,000 euros for each assist.

