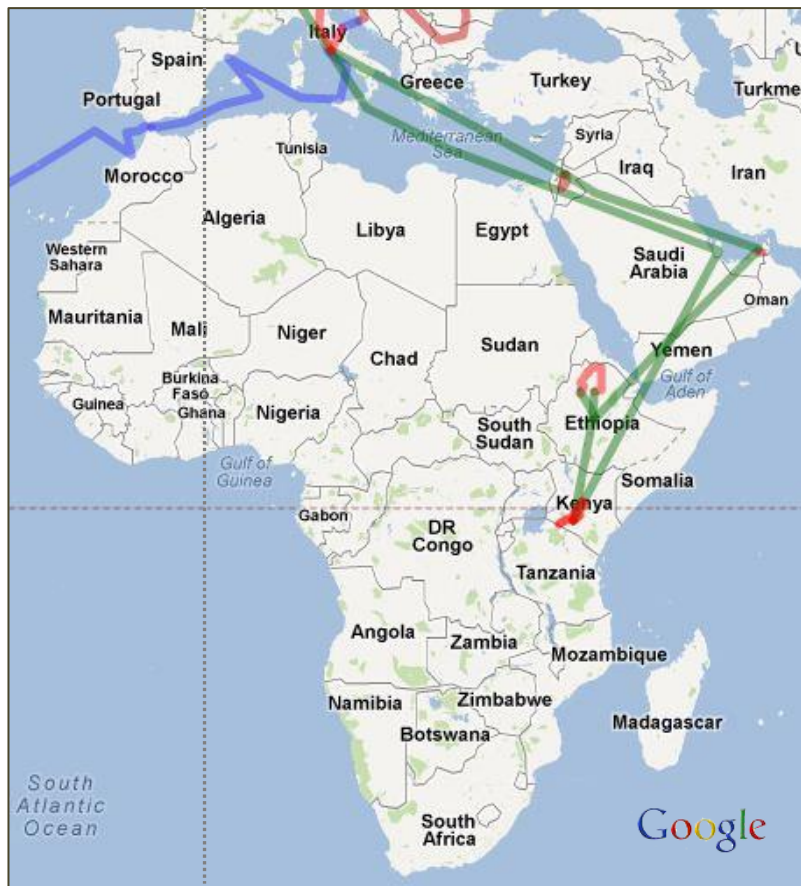




Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World

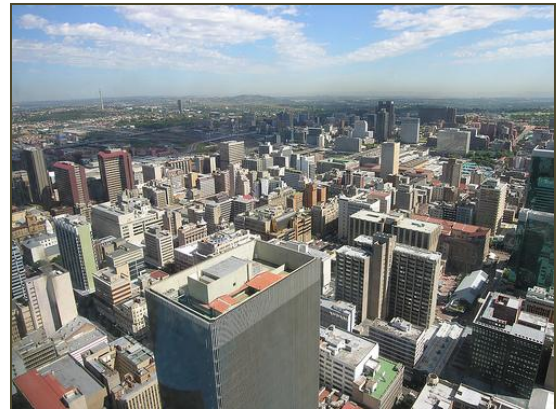


Africa – An Overview

- Darren and Sandy plan to spend a little less than two months in Africa. Above is a map of the African continent and our route. See page 4 for our plans.
- The prime meridian, which is the imaginary line that separates the world into Eastern and Western Hemispheres, runs vertically through Africa. Another imaginary line runs horizontally through Africa – the Equator (see the lines on the map above.)
- We have traveled approximately 37,218 miles (59 897 kilometers) from our starting point in California.

People and Culture

- Africa consists of 55 countries and has an estimated population of more than 1 billion people.
- Africa is home to 20 of the world's 50 poorest countries. More than 50 percent of the people in Sub-Saharan Africa live on less than US\$ 1.25 a day.
- From 1995 to 2005, Africa's rate of economic growth increased, averaging 5% in 2005. Some countries have experienced still higher growth rates due to an increase in oil extraction. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has 70% of the world's coltan. Most mobile phones in the world contain coltan.
- Most Africans adhere to either Islam (more prevalent in the north and east) or Christianity (more prevalent in the sub-Saharan region). Many adherents of both religions also practice aspects of traditional African religions.
- In most of Africa, marriage is more a union between two families than it is a union between a husband and wife. Marriage is undertaken for many reasons, but the primary ones are to provide legitimate successors to status and inheritors of property rights and to form alliances and ties between clans.
- Football (soccer) is the most popular sport in Africa.

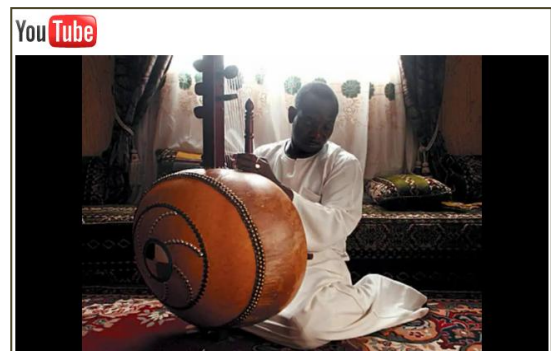


Modern Johannesburg, South Africa
(source: [Flickr/Mister-E](#))

Colonial Africa

The Scramble for Africa, also known as the Race for Africa or Partition of Africa was a process of invasion, occupation, colonization and annexation of African territory by European powers during the New Imperialism period, between 1881 and World War I in 1914. France and Britain received the biggest swathes, with Germany, Portugal, Italy, Spain and Belgium picking up the rest. Many of the borders from the colonial period remain in place today.

source: [Wikipedia.org](#)



Click above to listen to Toumani Diabate play the Kora as you watch an African art slideshow (8:51).



Amboseli National Park. Mount Kilimanjaro in background (source: [Flickr/Chow Yun-Slim](#))

Great Rift Valley

The Great Rift Valley is a deep depression on the earth's surface, approximately 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers) in length. It extends from the Red Sea to Mozambique. The Great Rift Valley was created by a series of huge volcanic eruptions centuries back. Many of Africa's highest mountains front the Rift Valley including Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest of the continent at 19,341 feet (5,895 meters).

source: [Worldatlas.com](#)



Sahara Desert from Space (source: [Nasa.gov](#))

Nature and Environment

- Africa is the world's second-largest continent, after Asia, covering 11.6 million square miles (30 million square kilometers) and accounting for 23% of the total land area on earth. Africa is three times the size of the continental United States.
- Covering almost one-third of the continent, the Sahara is the largest desert in the world at approximately 3.5 million square miles (9 million square kilometers) in size. A much smaller desert exists in the south of the continent called the Kalahari Desert.
- Africa has five major river systems. The top three include the Nile, the Congo, and the Niger. The Nile is the longest river in the world running about 4,130 miles (6,650 kilometers) in length. It starts in Lake Victoria at Ripon Falls and drains into the Mediterranean Sea.
- Africa has large wild populations of large carnivores (such as lions, hyenas, and cheetahs) and herbivores (such as buffalo, deer, elephants, camels, and giraffes). It is also home to a variety of jungle animals, including snakes and primates, and aquatic life, such as crocodiles and amphibians. Africa has over 3,000 protected areas, with 198 marine protected areas, 50 biosphere reserves and 80 wetlands reserves.

Our Plans

- While in Africa, we plan to visit Kenya and Ethiopia. We will also spend a day in Morocco while sailing between Europe and South America in December.
- We will be taking two treks – a walking safari in Kenya and a hike in the Simian Mountains in Ethiopia. We will then fly to Jordan to trek before returning to Europe.
- What would you like to know about Africa? Send us your questions and we will try to include them!

More Information

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toumani_Diabate
- http://www.undp.org/cpr/documents/fastfact_africa_Mar08.pdf
- <http://www.everyculture.com/Africa-Middle-East/Introduction-to-Africa-Marriage.html>
- <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/afInd.htm>
- <http://africa.mrdonn.org/geography.html>

Madagascar

Madagascar, off the East coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean, is the largest island in Africa and the 4th largest island in the world. Madagascar is just over 1,000 miles (1,580 kilometers) long and 350 miles (570 kilometers) wide.



sources: About.com, Wikipedia.org

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