

# CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC



**Country Dialling Code (Tel/Fax): ++243**

**Office National du Tourisme:** BP 9502 2a/2b avenue des Orangers, Kinshasa  
Gomber Tel: (12) 30070

**Capital:** Kinshasa GMT + 1

**Background:** Since 1994 the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC; formerly called Zaire) has been rent by ethnic strife and civil war, touched off by a massive inflow of refugees from the fighting in Rwanda and Burundi. Troops from Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia have intervened in this devastating conflict. A cease-fire was signed on 10 July 1999, but skirmishing continues.

**Location:** Central Africa, northeast of Angola

**Map References:** Africa

**Climate:** tropical; hot and humid in equatorial river basin; cooler and drier in southern highlands; cooler and wetter in eastern highlands; north of Equator - wet season April to October, dry season December to February; south of Equator - wet season November to March, dry season April to October

**Terrain:** vast central basin is a low-lying plateau; mountains in east

**Natural Resources:** cobalt, copper, cadmium, petroleum, industrial and gem diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, germanium, uranium, radium, bauxite, iron ore, coal, hydropower, timber

**Population:** 51,964,999

**Nationality:** noun: Congolese (singular and plural) adjective: Congolese or Congo

**Ethnic Groups:** over 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes - Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up about 45% of the population

**Religions:** Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20%, Kimbanguist 10%, Muslim 10%, other syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs 10%

**Languages:** French (official), Lingala (a lingua franca trade language), Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba

**Economy:** The economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo - a nation endowed with vast potential wealth - has declined drastically since the mid-1980s. The new government instituted a tight fiscal policy that initially curbed inflation and currency depreciation, but these small gains were quickly reversed when the foreign-backed rebellion in the eastern part of the country began in August 1998. The war has dramatically reduced government revenue, and increased external debt. Foreign businesses have curtailed operations due to uncertainty about the outcome of the conflict and because of increased government harassment and restrictions. Poor infrastructure, an uncertain legal framework, corruption, and lack of openness in government economic policy and financial operations remain a brake on investment and growth. A number of IMF and World Bank missions have met with the new government to help it develop a coherent economic plan but associated reforms are on hold. Assuming moderate peace, annual growth is likely to increase to nearly 5% in 2000-01, but inflation will continue to be a problem.

**Industries:** mining, mineral processing, consumer products (including textiles, footwear, cigarettes, processed foods and beverages), cement, diamonds

**Currency:** Congolese franc (CF)

**Railways:** total: 5,138 km (1995); note - severely reduced route-distance in use because of damage to facilities by civil strife narrow gauge: 3,987 km 1.067-m gauge (858 km electrified); 125 km 1.000-m gauge; 1,026 km 0.600-m gauge

**Highways:** total: 157,000 km paved: NA km (including 30 km of expressways) unpaved: NA km (1996 est.)

**Waterways:** 15,000 km including the Congo, its tributaries, and unconnected lakes

**Ports and Harbors:** Banana, Boma, Bukavu, Bumba, Goma, Kalemie, Kindu, Kinshasa, Kisangani, Matadi, Mbandaka

**Airports:** 232 (1999 est.) Airports - with paved runways: total: 24 over 3,047 m: 4 2,438 to 3,047 m: 31,524 to 2,437 m: 15 914 to 1,523 m: 2 (1999 est.) Airports - with

unpaved runways: total: 208 1,524 to 2,437 m: 20 914 to 1,523 m: 96 under 914 m: 92 (1999 est.)

**Visa:** Required by all.

**Duty Free:** goods permitted: 100 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 500g of tobacco, 1 bottle of alcoholic beverages, a reasonable amount of perfume for personal use.

**Health:** a yellow fever certificate is required from travellers over one year of age. Malaria risk exists throughout the year. All water should be regarded as potentially contaminated.

## HOTELS•MOTELS•INNS

### KINSHASA

**BEATRICE HOTEL**, Kinshasa, République Démocratique du Congo, tél : 243 81 25 35 000, [info@beatricehotel.com](mailto:info@beatricehotel.com), <http://www.beatricehotel.com>

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**GUEST HOUSE SAN PEDRO KINSHASA**, Avenue 18 Parcelles Nr 16, Quartier, Ma campagne, Kinshasa, [info@sanpedro18p.com](mailto:info@sanpedro18p.com), Tél : 243 0 819714444, 896364990, <http://www.sanpedro18p.com>

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**RWINDI**

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