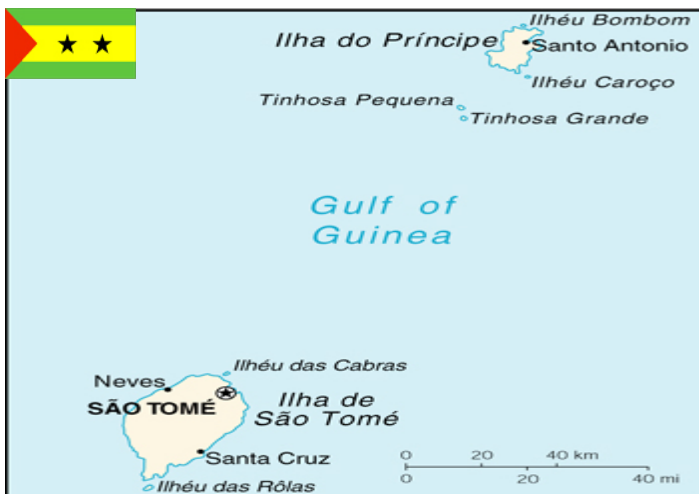


SAO TOME & PRINCIPE

HOTELS•MOTELS•INNS

**Country Dialling Code (Tel/Fax): ++239**

Tourism Office: CP40, Avenue Marginal 12 de Julho, São Tomé & Príncipe Tel: (12) 21542 Fax: (12) 22970

Capital: São Tomé **Time:** GMT

Background: Discovered and claimed by Portugal in the late 15th century, the islands' sugar-based economy gave way to coffee and cocoa in the 19th century - all grown with plantation slave labor, a form of which lingered into the 20th century. Although independence was achieved in 1975, democratic reforms were not instituted until the late 1980s. The first free elections were held in 1991.

Location: Western Africa, islands in the Gulf of Guinea, straddling the Equator, west of Gabon

Map References: Africa

Area: total: 1,001 sq km, land: 1,001 sq km, water: 0 sq km

Climate: tropical; hot, humid; one rainy season (October to May)

Terrain: volcanic, mountainous

Natural Resources: fish, hydropower

Population: 159,883 (July 2000 est.)

Nationality: noun: Sao Tomean(s), adjective: Sao Tomean

Ethnic Groups: mestico, angolares (descendants of Angolan slaves), forros (descendants of freed slaves), servicais (contract laborers from Angola, Mozambique, and Cape Verde), tongas (children of servicais born on the islands), Europeans (primarily Portuguese)

Religions: Christian 80% (Roman Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, Seventh-Day Adventist)

Languages: Portuguese (official)

Economy: This small poor island economy has become increasingly dependent on cocoa since independence 25 years ago. However, cocoa production has substantially declined because of drought and mismanagement. The resulting shortage of cocoa for export has created a persistent balance-of-payments problem. Sao Tome has to import all fuels, most manufactured goods, consumer goods, and a significant amount of food. Over the years, it has been unable to service its external debt and has had to depend on concessional aid and debt rescheduling. Considerable potential exists for development of a tourist industry, and the government has taken steps to expand facilities in recent years. The government also has attempted to reduce price controls and subsidies, but economic growth has remained sluggish. Sao Tome is also optimistic that significant petroleum discoveries are forthcoming in its territorial waters in the oil-rich waters of the Gulf of Guinea. Corruption scandals continue to weaken the economy.

Industries: light construction, textiles, soap, beer; fish processing; timber

Currency: 1 dobra (Db) = 100 centimos

Highways: total: 320 km, paved: 218 km, unpaved: 102 km (1996 est.)

Ports and Harbors: Santo Antonio, Sao Tome

Airports: 2 (1999 est.) Airports - with paved runways: total: 2, 1,524 to 2,437 m: 1, 914 to 1,523 m: 1 (1999 est.)

Visa: required by all.

Duty Free: reasonable quantities of tobacco products and perfume (opened).

Health: a yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from all travellers arriving from infected areas. Malaria risk exists all year throughout the country. All water should be regarded as being potentially contaminated.

SAO TOME

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AIRLINES/HELICOPTERS/AIRPORTS

SAO TOME INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, Sao Tome & Principe, CP 703, Sao Tome, Tel: +239 (0)12 21877/8, +239 (0)12 22063, Fax: (Enasa) +239 (0)12 21154

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