



Djibouti

POP 920,000 / 🗺️ 253

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Mukbassa Central – Chez Youssouf (p559)
- ➔ Café de la Gare (p559)
- ➔ La Terrasse (p559)
- ➔ Hôtel-Restaurant Le Golfe (p561)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Le Héron Auberge (p558)
- ➔ Atlantic Hotel (p558)
- ➔ Hôtel Village Vacances Les Sables Blancs (p561)
- ➔ Campement Touristique de la Forêt du Day (p562)
- ➔ Campement Touristique d'Asboley (p561)

Why Go?

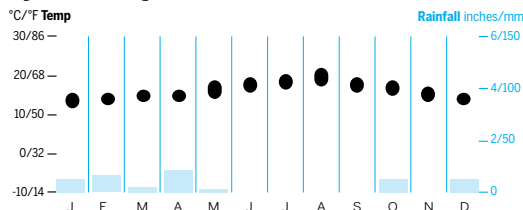
This tiny speck of a country packs a big punch. What it lacks in size, it more than makes up for in beauty. Few countries in the world, with the possible exception of Iceland, offer such weird landscapes – think salt lakes, extinct volcanoes, sunken plains, limestone chimneys belching out puffs of steam, basaltic plateaus and majestic canyons. Outdoorsy types will enjoy a good mix of land and water activities, including hiking, diving and whale-shark spotting in the Gulf of Tadjoura.

Barring Djibouti City, the country is refreshingly devoid of large-scale development. It's all about ecotourism, with some sustainable stays in the hinterland that provide a fascinating glimpse into the life of nomadic tribes.

Travelling independently around Djibouti may not come cheap, but despite the high cost of living, you'll surely leave this little corner of Africa with new experiences and wonderful memories.

When to Go

Djibouti City



May–Sep Some like it hot...some like it *hot*.

Oct & Feb–Apr Shoulder seasons are not a bad time to visit. Calm waters for diving.

Nov–Jan Coolest months; perfect for outdoor activities. Whale sharks make their annual visit.

DJIBOUTI CITY

POP 610,000

Djibouti's capital is evolving at a fast pace, and there's a palpable sense of change in the air. Thanks to its geostrategic importance and its busy port, Djibouti City has been transformed

from a sleepy capital to a thriving place. Yet under its veneer of urban bustle, the city remains a down-to-earth place. Traditionally robed Afar tribesmen, stalwart GIs, colourfully dressed Somali ladies and frazzled businessmen with the latest mobile phones stuck to their ear all jostle side by side.



Djibouti Highlights

- 1 Djibouti City** (p555)
Catching local vibes while wandering through the animated streets of the capital and enjoying its culinary delights.
- 2 Lac Assal** (p560)
Descending to the lowest point on the African continent at 155m below sea level.

- 3 Lac Abbé** (p560)
Wandering flabbergasted in a Martian landscape, with hundreds of spikelike limestone chimneys.
- 4 Whale-shark spotting** (p557)
Sighting and swimming with whale sharks from November to January in the Gulf of Tadjoura.
- 5 Plage des Sables Blancs** (p561)
Unwinding

on Djibouti's most scenic beach.

- 6 Diving** (p557)
Exploring some superb shipwrecks in the Gulf of Tadjoura.
- 7 Goda Mountains** (p561)
Taking a guided walk amid spectacular mountain scenery and spending a night in a traditional *campement touristique* (tourist camp).