

Liberia

📍 231 / POP 4.1 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Fresh seafood on Buchanan beach (p227)
- ➔ Ministry of Fruit (p223)
- ➔ Sharing a bowl of palm butter upcountry

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Camping beneath Robertsport's cotton tree (p227)
- ➔ Mamba Point Hotel (p227)
- ➔ Libassa Eco-Lodge (p227)

Why Go?

It wasn't long ago that Liberians talked with obvious nostalgia of 'normal days'. Now, over a decade after the war has ended, 'normal days' are back in this gorgeous green land.

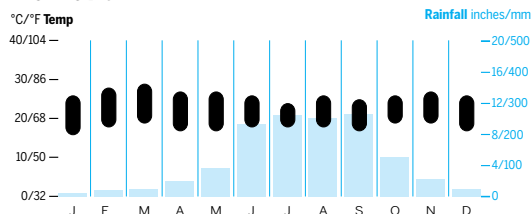
They can be seen in the Liberian designer who's launched a fashion store in Monrovia; the former refugee who runs a motorbike-taxi business; the Liberian surfer who's touring West Africa and the salesman investing in ecotourism.

You might be among his customers, leaning back in a string hammock on the edge of a forest singing with tropical birds. Or you might visit Monrovia, exploring the relics of Liberia's rich history and the American influence that still shapes it. Sapu National Park is one of the most stunning patches of rainforest left in West Africa, while the sands of pretty Robertsport are shingled with fishing canoes and huge granite gems.

Today's 'normal days' are the spark that will light your travels in Liberia.

When to Go

Monrovia



Jan–May This is the hot, dry season, so head to the beaches. The mercury can easily top 32°C.

Jun–Oct Spectacular storms and impressive surf, but country roads are impassable.

Oct–Dec A touch of harmattan breeze from the Sahel occasionally cools the air.

MONROVIA

POP 1.8 MILLION

Monrovia has been everything over the decades – a splendid African capital brimming with elegant stores and faces, a party city monitored by sheriffs wearing secondhand US police uniforms, a war zone marred by bullet holes and a broken-hearted city struggling to climb to its feet. Now aid workers are packing their bags, Liberians are return-

ing from the US and Europe and the city is forging a fresh identity.

Walk along Broad St, Monrovia's main boulevard, and you'll hear the original beat of locally brewed hip-co and the gentle rhythm of Liberian English. You'll see the architectural ghosts of Monrovia's past and the uniformed schoolchildren of its future. You'll watch entrepreneurs climb into sleek, low-slung cars, market men sell coconuts from rusty wheelbarrows and models sashay



LIBERIA MONROVIA

Liberia Highlights

- 1 Gaining a history lesson walking around the Liberian capital **Monrovia** (p221).
- 2 Hitting the long, bumpy road to **Harper** (p228), a town blessed with southern American architecture and an end-of-the-line feel.
- 3 Exploring the habitat of the endangered pygmy hippo, camping beneath the forest canopy and listening to the sounds of the rainforest at **Sapo National Park** (p228).
- 4 Riding the waves with Liberian surfers, running your hands through the phosphorescent swell and eating fresh lobster in the shade of the cotton tree in **Robertsport** (p227).