



Sierra Leone

By. Amber Smith

History

The first inhabitants of Sierra Leone were the Bulom people, followed by the Mende and the Temne in the 15th century and after that the Fulani. The Portuguese first explored the land and gave it their name, which means 'lion mountains'. In 1787, the town of Freetown, which is on the coast of Sierra Leone, was ceded to English settlers as a home for discharged blacks from British Armed Forces and for runaway slaves from London. In 1808, it became a British colony and on April 27, 1961, Sierra Leone became an independent nation.

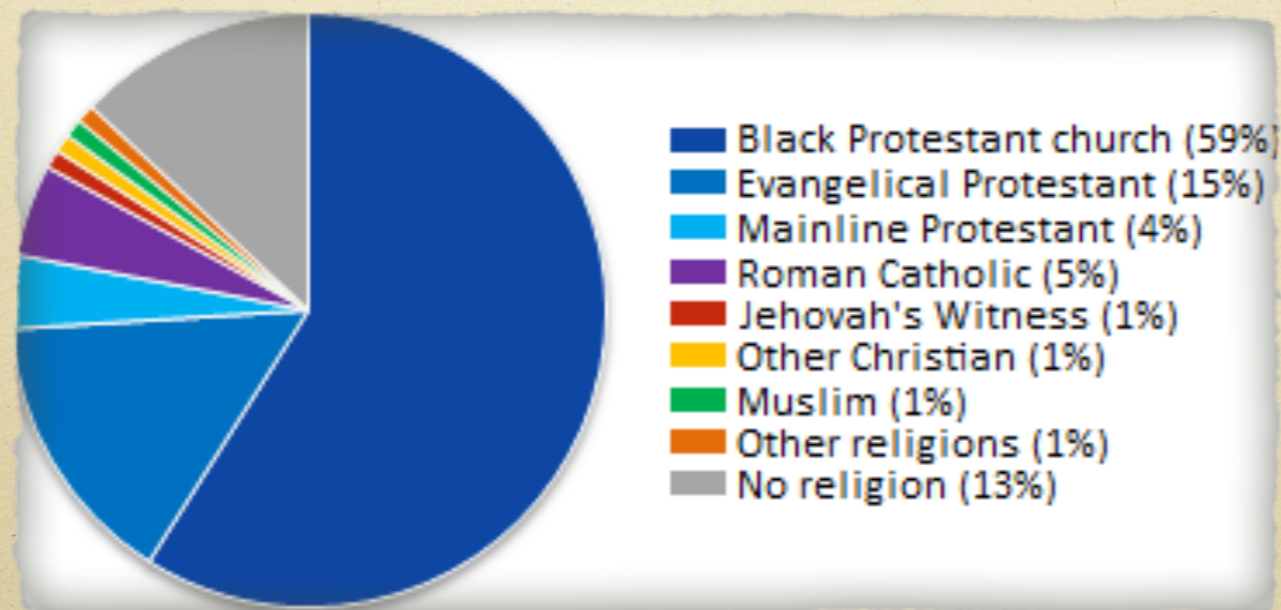
Civil War

- In May 1997, a violent military coup ousted President Kabbah's civilian government. The leader of the coup, Lieutenant Koroma, began spreading terror, destroying the economy and killing enemies. The Commonwealth of Nations demanded Kabbah's reinstatement and ECOMOG intervened. After ten months in exile, Kabbah resumed rule over Sierra Leone on March 10, 1998. Kabbah, pressured by the U.S. and Nigeria, agrees to a power-sharing agreement with Sankoh in July 1999. The conflict was officially declared over in January 2002. President Kabbah was reelected in May of 2002.



Religion of Sierra Leone

- The major religions of Sierra Leone are 55% Muslim, 40% Christianity and 5% other, with many practicing a mixture of Muslim or Christianity with traditional indigenous beliefs.



People of Sierra Leone

- Even though the country is small, it has a wide range of ethnic groups. It is home to many kinds of people, including Temnes, Lokos, Korankos, Mandingos, Susus, Limbas, Mendes, Kissis, Konos, Fullas, Vais, Yalonkas, Sherbros, Kros, Krims and the Creoles.

Culture of Sierra Leone

- A unique blend of cultural traditions call Sierra Leone home. Their traditions and beliefs are widely practiced and respected. A variety of things that express the colorful society. At different times, different groups perform rituals and ceremonies. Religious beliefs and practices are a part of everyday life and there are many historical sights, monuments and relics to be seen. In Sierra Leone, life is taken at an easy pace and people there are friendly and are know for their hospitality.



Languages of Sierra Leone

- English is the official language, yet there is also Krio, which comes from the the freed slaves called the Creole people, and once slavery was abolished, they returned to Sierra Leone. It is widely spoken in Freetown and to a lesser degree in rural places.

Food of Sierra Leone

➤ The restaurant scene in Freetown offers international cuisine, like European and Chinese. African restaurants offer a taste of the continent, but for a taste of Salone, local is the way to go. Rice is accompanied by plassas (sauce) including cassava leaf, groundnut soup, binch or stew with chicken, beef and/or fish and generous portions are served. Beef and chicken dishes are widely served, but fish is the main dish. Street food includes sizzling goat and beef skewers. Freshly picked fruit, like bananas and papaya are big. For drinks, Palm wine, which is commonly known as the wine "from God to man". Oil is drawn from palm trees and it is a natural, cheap low-alcohol drink favored in villages.



Family Structure in Sierra Leone

The house consists of the traditional family (mom, dad, brothers and sisters) plus extended family, including grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins all living under the same roof. One of the parents has the responsibility of helping the family financially and it could be either mom or dad. Men are the dominant figures in the home and without the knowledge of the wife, can make decisions. Individuals can eat meals on their own time, due to the fact that most homes don't have a dining room. It's uncommon to allow family members to their individual time with themselves, hanging out with friends or just simply relaxing. Time is usually spent together with family and there isn't much time spent alone.

Dress in Sierra Leone

- Girls wear dresses or skirts with a nice shirt, with their hair wrapped in a cloth. Guys wear pants with a long shirt and shoes of some kind. Their wardrobe is practically like ours, except their designs and patterns are native to their culture.

