



*From the MixCache.com library*

SAMPLE COPY

# Nigeria

MixCache.com

SAMPLE COPY

## Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1** The Land and Its Climate: Nigeria's Geographic Diversity
- **Chapter 2** Natural Resources: From Oil to Agriculture
- **Chapter 3** The Ancient Kingdoms: Nigeria Before Colonialism
- **Chapter 4** Colonial Conquest and British Rule
- **Chapter 5** Paths to Independence
- **Chapter 6** The Nigerian Civil War: Causes and Consequences
- **Chapter 7** The Era of Military Rule
- **Chapter 8** Return to Democracy and Political Evolution
- **Chapter 9** Nigeria's Federal Structure and Government Today
- **Chapter 10** Demographic Diversity: Ethnic Groups and Languages
- **Chapter 11** Religion and Spiritual Life in Nigeria
- **Chapter 12** Culture, Arts, and Literature
- **Chapter 13** Nigerian Cuisine: A Taste of Tradition
- **Chapter 14** Music, Film, and the Rise of Nollywood
- **Chapter 15** Education: Systems, Challenges, and Progress
- **Chapter 16** Healthcare: Systems, Issues, and Reforms
- **Chapter 17** The Economy: Petroleum, Industry, and Beyond
- **Chapter 18** Urbanization and City Life
- **Chapter 19** Rural Nigeria: Agriculture and Changing Lifestyles
- **Chapter 20** Environment and Sustainability Challenges
- **Chapter 21** Security and Conflict: Issues Past and Present
- **Chapter 22** Women, Youth, and Social Change
- **Chapter 23** Nigeria's Foreign Relations and Regional Leadership
- **Chapter 24** Planning Your Visit: Travel, Tourism, and Practicalities
- **Chapter 25** Nigeria's Future: Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

## Introduction

Nigeria, often called the “Giant of Africa”, is a country of remarkable complexity, vibrancy, and resilience. As Africa’s most populous nation and home to more than 250 ethnic groups, Nigeria is a portrait in diversity—a tapestry woven through centuries of history, rich cultural expression, and dynamic change. Bounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the south and sharing land borders with Benin, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, Nigeria stands at the crossroads of Africa, both geographically and symbolically.

The nation’s story begins deep in antiquity, with ancient civilizations such as the Nok, Oyo, Benin, and Nri leaving a lasting imprint on the land and its people. Across the centuries, Nigeria has been shaped by waves of migration, trade, conquest, and religious influence. The arrival of Islam through trans-Saharan trade routes, Christianity with Portuguese explorers, and eventually British colonial rule each added new dimensions to the country’s evolving identity. Since gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria has weathered civil war, military coups, and the challenges of democracy, emerging each time with a renewed commitment to unity and progress.

Today, Nigeria is perhaps best known to the world for its outsized presence in music, film, literature, and commerce. Its globally influential Nollywood film industry, rich musical heritage, and dynamic cities such as Lagos and Abuja bear witness to a culture that is as modern and innovative as it is traditional and rooted. Yet beneath the surface, challenges persist: poverty, uneven development, a fast-growing population, environmental pressures, and security threats pose daunting obstacles to the realization of Nigeria’s full potential.

At the heart of Nigeria’s ongoing transformation are its people—entrepreneurial, creative, communal, and fiercely proud of their varied origins. Whether in rural communities practicing age-old customs or in the bustling metropolises that set trends across Africa, Nigerians embody a vitality and optimism that offers hope for the future. Their resilience is seen in the fight for better governance, in grassroots innovations, and in the push for educational and economic opportunities.

This book explores the many facets of Nigeria: its majestic landscapes and natural wealth; its historical legacies and cultural traditions; the realities of everyday life and the aspirations that shape its future. In these pages, you’ll find a candid portrait of a country that defies easy categorization—a nation that, while grappling with profound difficulties, exudes an undeniable and contagious energy.

Whether you are approaching Nigeria as a visitor, a student, or simply an interested observer, “Nigeria: Portrait of a Country” invites you to look beyond the headlines.

Here you will discover the stories, the people, and the dreams that make Nigeria so extraordinary—past, present, and future.

SAMPLE COPY

## **CHAPTER ONE: The Land and Its Climate: Nigeria's Geographic Diversity**

Nigeria, a sprawling nation in West Africa, presents a fascinating study in geographical contrasts. Stretching across 923,770 square kilometers (356,669 square miles), it's a country that encompasses a remarkable array of landscapes, from sandy coastlines along the Gulf of Guinea to arid expanses bordering the Sahara. This vastness, roughly equivalent to the combined areas of France, Germany, and Italy, contributes significantly to its rich biodiversity and varied human experiences.

The country's 853-kilometer (530-mile) coastline, kissed by the Atlantic Ocean, marks its southern boundary. Here, the landscape is typically low-lying and heavily influenced by the Niger River Delta, a vast network of waterways, mangroves, and swamps that is one of the largest in the world. As one travels northward, the terrain gradually rises, transitioning through rolling hills and plateaus before flattening out into extensive plains.

Central Nigeria is characterized by these undulating hills and elevated plateaus, providing a distinct topographical shift from the coastal plains. These elevated areas are often dissected by wide, fertile valleys carved by the nation's two dominant rivers: the Niger and its major tributary, the Benue. These riverine plains are remarkably flat, creating extensive floodplains that are crucial for agriculture and support diverse ecosystems. The Niger River itself, the third-longest river in Africa, acts as a vital artery, flowing north-easterly then curving south to meet the Benue near Lokoja, before emptying into the Atlantic.

The most dramatic geographical features are found along Nigeria's southeastern border with Cameroon. Here, the land rises sharply into mountainous terrain, home to Chappal Waddi. Also known as Gangirwal, meaning 'Mountain of Death' in some local languages, this peak stands as Nigeria's highest point. This rugged region offers a stark contrast to the rest of the country's generally gentler topography, with its steeper gradients and unique ecological zones.

Given its considerable size and latitudinal spread, Nigeria experiences a predominantly tropical climate, but one that is far from uniform. The country is broadly divided into three distinct climatic zones, each with its own rhythm of seasons and characteristic weather patterns. Average temperatures across Nigeria generally hover between a comfortable 21°C and a warmer 35°C, though extremes are not uncommon.

The southern reaches of Nigeria, including the coastal areas and the Niger Delta, fall under a tropical monsoon climate. This zone is characterized by a long and intense rainy season that typically extends from March to October. Rainfall here is exceptionally heavy, often exceeding 2,000 millimeters annually. In some parts of the Niger Delta, the annual precipitation can even surpass 4,000 millimeters, leading to lush vegetation and a perpetually verdant landscape. The air in this region is consistently humid, with an annual mean humidity of 88% around cities like Lagos, making for a perpetually moist atmosphere.

Moving inland to the central regions, Nigeria transitions into a tropical savanna climate. Here, the two main seasons are more clearly defined: a distinct rainy season from April to September and a pronounced dry season from December to March. The annual rainfall in this zone averages around 1,200 millimeters, less than the south but still substantial enough to support extensive grasslands and scattered woodlands. The dry season in the central belt is notably influenced by the Harmattan, a dry, dusty trade wind that blows south from the Sahara Desert. This wind brings with it cooler nights, hazy days, and a significant drop in humidity, often coating surfaces in a fine reddish dust.

Further north, Nigeria enters its driest zone, characterized by a Sahelian hot and semi-arid climate. Rain is a rare commodity here, falling only for a brief period from June to September, with annual totals ranging from a meager 500 millimeters to 750 millimeters. The rest of the year is marked by intense heat and extreme dryness. This region experiences a high degree of annual variation in rainfall, a precarious situation that can lead to either devastating floods when rains are unexpectedly heavy or prolonged droughts when they fail, posing significant challenges for agriculture and water resources. The highest temperatures in Nigeria are typically recorded in this northern zone during the dry season, often between February and April, with temperatures occasionally soaring to a scorching 44.5°C.

The interplay of these diverse geographical features and climatic zones creates a mosaic of ecosystems across Nigeria. From the dense mangrove swamps and rainforests of the south, through the expansive savannas of the central belt, to the semi-desert conditions of the far north, the land supports a remarkable variety of plant and animal life. This environmental diversity has, in turn, shaped the livelihoods, cultures, and settlement patterns of Nigeria's many ethnic groups, influencing everything from agricultural practices to architectural styles. Understanding this fundamental relationship between the land and its people is key to appreciating the complexities and dynamism of Nigeria as a nation.

---

*This is a sample preview. Purchase the book to read the full content.*

Visit [MixCache.com](https://MixCache.com) to purchase the complete book.

SAMPLE COPY