

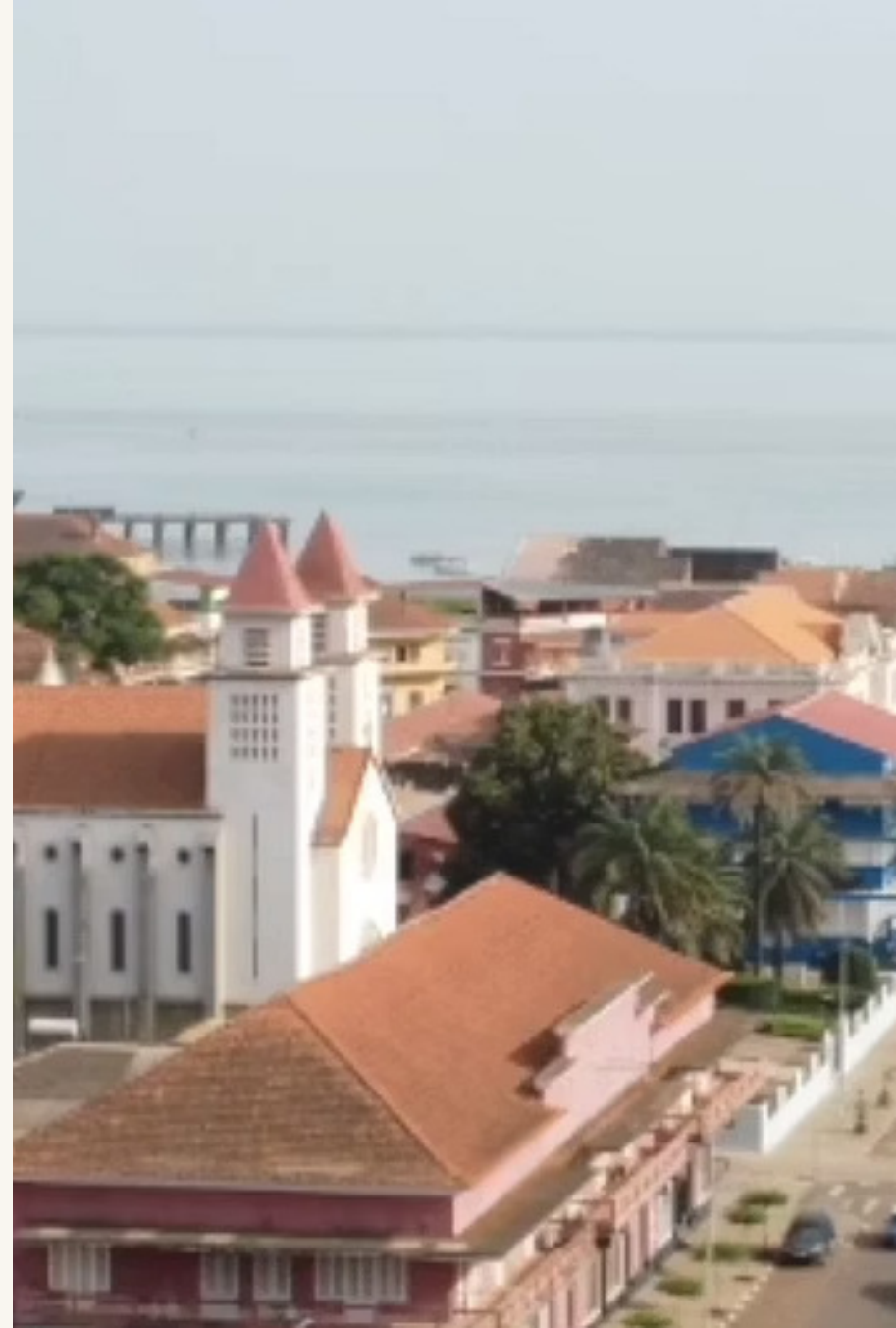
# HISTORY OF GUINEA-BISSAU



# BISSAU: History and Heritage of Guinea-Bissau

The city of **Bissau**, the capital of **Guinea-Bissau**, has a **rich** and fascinating **history** dating back to its founding in the **17th century**. Originally established as a **Portuguese trading post** and a **fortress** in **1687**, its **purpose** was to **consolidate Portugal's** control in the region and **facilitate** trade, including the **slave trade**.

During the **colonial era**, Bissau became a **strategic centre** for Portuguese **administration** in **West Africa**. After **Guinea-Bissau's independence** in **1973**, the city **became** the capital of the **new independent state**, transforming into the **political, economic and cultural centre** of the **country**.







# Colonial Origins and Transition to Capital

1

1687

Founding as a Portuguese trading post and fortress

2

20th Century

Replaces Bolama as the capital due to its more favourable location

3

1973-1974

Independence and establishment as the capital of the new state

In the early **20th century**, Bissau **replaced** Bolama as the capital of Portuguese Guinea due to its **more favourable** location and its **development** as an **important** commercial **port**. The **struggle** for independence led by the African Party for the Independence of **Guinea and Cape Verde** culminated in 1973, marking a **crucial point** in the **history** of the city and the country.

# Historic Buildings of Bissau



## Bissau Cathedral

An imposing colonial-era building that reflects the country's religious history. Its architecture combines European elements with adaptations to the tropical climate, creating a unique place of worship that has witnessed important historical events.



## Presidential Palace

Although not always open to the public, this colonial building is an architectural symbol of the city. Its design reflects the transition from colonial power to independent government, maintaining historical elements while serving as the centre of current political power.



## Heroes' Square

Heroes' Square represents the civic heart of Bissau. This emblematic space is dedicated to the key figures who led the country's struggle for independence. With its commemorative monuments and open design, the square not only honours the past but also serves as a gathering point for national events and public celebrations.



## Bandím Market

Bandím Market is the largest and liveliest open-air market in Bissau. This bustling commercial centre is the economic heart of the city, where local residents and visitors can find a wide variety of products. The market is not only a place of commercial exchange but also a social space where one can experience the authentic culture and way of life of Guinea-Bissau.

# Bolama: The First Capital



## Early Geography and History

**Bolama**, an island in the Bijagós archipelago, was **inhabited** by the **Bijagós** before **colonisation**. They resisted **British attempts** at settlement in the **18th century**.



## Colonial Dispute

After a **territorial dispute** between **Portugal** and the **United Kingdom**, US President **Ulysses S. Grant** awarded **sovereignty** to Portugal in **1870**.



## Era as Capital

It was the **first capital** of Portuguese Guinea from **1879 to 1941**. The **city grew** with colonial architecture, but its **unhealthy climate** led to the **relocation** of the capital to **Bissau**.



## Current Legacy

Today, **Bolama** is a place of **nostalgic ruins** and **natural beauty**, a silent witness to its colonial past and an **interesting destination** for **lovers of history and nature**.



# Historic Sites of Bolama

## Historic Centre

The former Governor's Palace, once a symbol of power, now lies in ruins and overgrown by vegetation. The colonial streets and abandoned administrative buildings tell the story of a glorious past now reclaimed by nature.

## Old Port

The point of arrival to the island, with views of the ocean and the neighbouring island of Bubaque. This port was crucial for trade and communication during the colonial era, connecting Bolama to the rest of the world.

## Monument to Ulysses S. Grant

A bust dedicated to the former US President, who in 1870 ruled in favour of Portugal in the territorial dispute with the United Kingdom, thus determining the colonial future of the island and its role in the history of Guinea-Bissau.

The historic sites of Bolama offer a fascinating window into Guinea-Bissau's colonial past. Every corner of this former capital holds stories of imperial ambition, territorial disputes, and the inevitable passage of time that has transformed symbols of power into evocative ruins.



# Cacheu: The First European Settlement



## Founded in the 16th Century

One of the first Portuguese settlements in West Africa



## Strategic Commercial Centre

Its location on the Cacheu River facilitated trade with the interior



## Historic Legacy

It preserves vestiges such as the Cacheu Fort, a witness to its colonial past

**Cacheu**, located on the **northern** coast of Guinea-Bissau, was an important **centre of the transatlantic slave trade**. Its strategic position allowed the Portuguese to establish a base for colonial **expansion** in the region. Today, the city preserves important historical monuments such as the Cacheu Fort and Church, which remind us of this complex past and its role in shaping the national identity of Guinea-Bissau.