



Vanuatu

Joined the Commonwealth 1980 - visited by the Queen in 1974



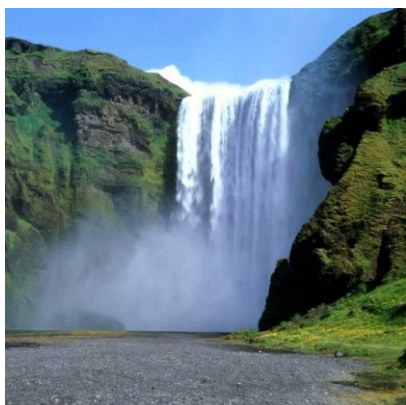
Vanuatu is a small island nation in the South Pacific

Pop: (2013) 253,000 Capital: Port Vila Area: 12,190 sq km

Vanuatu is a 900km Y-shaped archipelago consisting of a double chain of about 40 mountainous islands and 40 islets of volcanic and coral origin. Some of the islands have active volcanoes but all of them are steep sided and often rise straight from the sea. About 65 of them are inhabited. Lying within the cyclone belt, the climate is oceanic and tropical.

Agriculture, which is mainly subsistence, is only possible on the narrow coastal plains. Crops such as copra, coconut oil, kava, timber, tea and coffee are produced for export but, due to Vanuatu's remote and isolated location, transport costs are high. The economy also depends on tourism and off-shore financial services. Considered one of the most romantic destinations in the South Pacific and an unspoilt natural paradise, Vanuatu is popular for weddings and honeymoons.

Among the 11 species of bat is the white flying fox. The rich bird life includes the incubator bird which leaves its eggs to incubate in hot volcanic soil, the young birds emerging fully fledged.



Vanuatu has a plentiful supply of fresh water

Many streams are precipitous and fast flowing with waterfalls along their courses

Cascade Waterfall, Vila, Vanuatu

