

GUYANE FRANÇAISE



STATUS:	Not an independent nation, but it a Latin American place; it is an overseas department of France; hence, citizenship is French, and therefore French Guianese have European passports.
NAME:	Guyane Française (French Guiana); “guyane” means “land of many waters”.
POPULATION:	260,000 (2016)
CAPITAL:	Cayenne (pop. 107,000)
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:	French; there is a regional Créole and six Amerindian languages are spoken and four Maroon creole languages.
GOVERNMENT:	Democracy of France; 2 arrondissements; the President of France appoints a Guianese prefect; and there is an elected Assemblée de Guyane; plus two deputies in the French National Assembly.
ECONOMY:	11 th largest in South America
PER CAPITA INCOME:	Highest in South America
ETHNIC GROUPS:	Creole 65%; 14% European; Maroon 11%; Chinese 4%; Hmong 2%; Amerindian 4%; uncontacted Wayampi (unknown number)
RELIGIONS:	Roman Catholic 95%; Maroon and Amerindian religions 5%.
LIFE EXPECTANCY:	men, 65; women, 71
LITERACY:	88%
MONEY:	Euro (E.U.)
INDUSTRIES:	Space industry; fishing; timber; gold mining
INTERNET CODE:	.fr (same as France)

HISTORY:

1000-1500	Amerindians
1763	First French settlement (failed)
1809-1814	Part of Portuguese empire
1852-1953	Penal colony on Devil’s Island (Île du Diable) for catching butterflies; only 10% of convicts survived.
1946	Became integral part of France and, with France joined the European Union and adopted the euro as its official currency.

- 1954 When France withdrew from Indochina at the end of the Indochina war, France resettled loyal Hmong people in Guyane Française.
- 1964 France established a major space station replacing the one France had had in Algeria; the economy soared as a result.

MAJOR INTELLECTUALS:

Novel: Henri Charrière (French convict), *Papillon* (butterfly), 1969: basis for American film *Papillon* with Duston Hoffman.