



Senegal

Status: Presidential Republic in West Africa
Area: 75,955 sq. miles
Population: 14,320,055 (2016 est.)
Currency: 100 Centimes = 1 CFA-Franc (popularly known as a "See-Fa"). 610 See-Fa = US\$1

The Republic of Senegal is the western-most country on the African continent, located between the Sahara Desert in the north and sub-Saharan rain forests to the south. Islam was introduced in the 10th century and today it is the predominant religion.

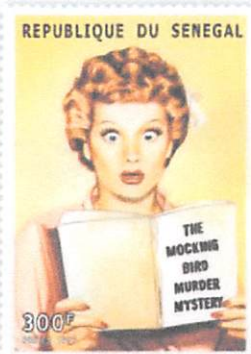
Portuguese navigators reached Senegal in 1444–45 and established several major trading factories in the area. In the 17th century larger European states seeking part of the growing slave trade displaced the Portuguese. After the defeat of Napoleon, the British recognized French dominance in Senegal and it became the base for French expansion up the Senegal River.



An 1892 overprinted French Colonies stamp for Senegal, Scott 35.



In 1906, Senegal received its own stamps, Scott 68.



Hollywood actors, including Lucille Ball, appear on panes of 1999 souvenir sheets, Scott 1427.

Initially, penetration into the interior was left largely to the initiative of individual military leaders. To gain more control over this expansion, in 1894 Paris created French West Africa under a governor general located in the Senegalese capital. As French rule was consolidated over West Africa, Senegal enjoyed a special position among the other colonies.

In 1859, France issued stamps for general use in its colonies, including Senegal. In 1887, France began to issue stamps specifically for use in Senegal. The colony had its own stamps until World War II. After the Free French replaced the Vichy administrators during the war, it was decided to replace stamps for the individual colonies with issues for French West Africa. In 1943, Senegalese and Mauritanian stamps were issued for use throughout French West Africa. Issues for the individual colonies were discontinued.

Nationalism grew in post-war Senegal, fueled in part by Senegalese troops returning from the European theater. The French granted Senegal — an overseas territory under the 1946 constitution — self-governing status in 1958. On April 4, 1959, Senegal was joined with the poorer French Sudan to create the Federation of Mali, with the federation receiving independence on June 20, 1960. Its first stamps appeared on November 7. The federation, like so many of the artificial post-colonial political creations, broke up quickly, on August 20, 1960. Separate Senegalese stamps appeared later that year.

Today, the Senegal post office appears to function well. Very few people in Senegal send or receive letters. Businesses and some individuals have post office boxes. When a letter arrives at a post office for an individual who does not have a post office box, facteurs will take it to their home or to the headman of their village.

All new issues seem to be placed on general sale. There is a well-marked — but unused — philatelic window in the main Dakar post office. On my visit, through a Wolof-speaking guide, I learned that philatelic sales were in the unmarked office of a senior official in a back hallway. There, stamps are kept in stock books in a safe.

It was an odd assortment of stamps issued between 1996 and 2012. No more recent issues were available. However, regular post office windows had other stamps, including some quite recent issues, for sale to customers. In contrast to the experience in some other countries, all of the cards mailed from Senegal seem to have reached their destinations.



The independent Mali Federation lasted but two months in 1960 before Senegal and Sudan separated. Mali, Scott 1, issued in November 1959.



In 2002, two sets of 21 stamps feature women from the Peulh and Linguère communities, Scott 1488.



A common design Airplane airmail stamp of 1942, Scott C25.