

Average temperature in Bawku exceeds 100

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The average temperature in the first two months was between 100 degrees Fahrenheit and 115. And it took him at least three weeks to get used to it.

"I kept drinking gallons and gallons of water at first and I sweated something terrible."

He couldn't stay in the sun for any length of time and it

got so torridly hot between 12 and 2 p.m. that he'd have to take some time off to sleep. "The heat sucks the energy right out of your body."

The dry season, as it is called, also brought with it sandstorms "...like something out of a western movie..." where you could not see 30 feet in front of you.

Fortunately the "monsoon" or "rainy season", brought with it cooler days. The rains began four weeks late and reached their peak during the last month of his stay.

Downpours halted construction but the worker returned eagerly to the job as soon as the rain settled to a drizzle.

Bawku, on the whole, is an agricultural type of village. The staple crops are millet, ground nuts or peanuts, guinea corn and a few vegetables. There is an unusually large amount of European cattle, some guinea fowl and goats.

The markets are many and they are not designed for the tourist, as there are no tourists in the area and the white population is around 25 people, but for the practical purpose of the people. They operate every three days.

On the weekends, Dan travelled to different markets. The foods he ate were mostly dried rice, goat meat and guinea fowl. There were also some vegetables and fruit, mainly oranges.

The meals were prepared from scratch. The animals are bought at the market, slaughtered and the meat is prepared and cooked. The fruits and vegetables are freshly picked, trimmed, cooked or prepared. Needless to say most educated people have cooks.

Large families are a rule in the agricultural class. Children mean security to the parents in their old age when they can't work. Children will support them and the more they have the better they will live, later on. So women give birth almost every two years. But the health conditions are such that the mortality rate in Bawku that one out of every two



A day at the market.

What's your excuse?

You could have gone water skiing or swimming or to a dance at night. Instead you've spent the entire day moping around the house feeling sorry for yourself. And why? Just because it was one of those difficult times? How silly. A lot of girls are out there enjoying themselves under the same circumstances. They use Tampax tampons.

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children will die by the time he reaches the age of six.

As you can see health conditions are deplorable in Bawku. Students living in compounds will come down with dysentery and intestinal infection. Doctors in the mobile health clinics must travel from village to village just to cure the children. But in the agricultural rural area, people tend to hang on to traditional Ju-Ju medicine.

They live in compounds which are groups of several round-shaped houses: one for the chief of the family, one for the wives and children (the number of which will depend on the income of the head) and some for the parents and grandparents.

You will easily see three or four generations living in the same compound. Elderly people have a great deal of influence in the family. The grandparents have the last say in all matters.

Women have a very tough life. The man is, without any doubt supreme. He calls the shots and the woman has to obey or else she is beaten. This is especially true of the less educated people.

They have a great social life: lots of talking, a very witty conversation, lots of spontaneous gatherings with "talking drums." And there are, as all over Ghana, the famous Pito bars where they serve the

local drink, Pito, and goat meat.

There is a great responsibility on the shoulders of the children of the family. They must take care of the younger ones while mother is in the field or preparing dinner.

As far as education is concerned, most of it is very easy. There are secondary schools but the technical school only opened in 1967. There is a problem though, there are not enough high-level schools to meet the demands and only the privileged and the rich can complete their education.

There is also a language problem as there are at least three major languages apart from Pigeon English and French. They are Kusel, Hausa, and Moshi. Dan also had that problem, but, he said, "whenever I wouldn't understand something, I would smile and try to explain myself in Pigeon English. Worked everytime."

"The Ghanians have a great deal of natural logic, a great ability to see through people. Very little escapes their deep searching eyes."

Also something very noticeable: the great comradeship between men. "Holding hands with your best friend is a very normal thing for people to do in Bawku."

Movies are also quite a thing in Bawku. They are mostly

shown outdoors and the expression of feeling is free-flowing. "Everybody will get up and cheer for the good guy and against the bad guy. Screams and stomping don't cease during the movie."

Dan says he feels there has been a change of pace in his life. "I have slowed down. I have learned how to talk to people, to communicate in terms of being more sociable. I have learned to confront people."

"I have made many close friends in such a short time, I will surely go back someday if only for a vacation." He had malaria before he left and dysentery during his flight back to Canada because he was not accustomed to the native food. He had trouble adapting to the western food.

He also had to get used to the fast pace of life, the anonymity of crowds, the cold weather, the choice of foods the speeding cars, the street lights, electricity - the push-button civilization.

How convenient! But "... nobody tells you hello in the streets anymore..."

Stay tuned, the next article, which is the last of this series, will tell you all you wanted to know on Crossroads but didn't know whom to ask.

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