

DEC 2023

# With love, from Edo

Koyo!! [Benin] Obokhian!! [Esan] Abee!! [Afemai] Hello [English]

*December = Igue  
festival & musical  
concerts*



Shallipopi Homecoming Concert, Benin:  
Friday 29th December 2023



**BUMPER EDITION**

*Month of Celebration*

# PUBLISHER'S SCRIPT



## *Unforgettable December*

As the holiday spirit twinkles in the air, the Edo State Tourism Agency extends warm wishes to you during this joyous season.

In this month's edition, we can't wait to take you on a captivating ride through some of the most exciting tourism activities celebrating Edo State.



**Managing Director,  
Edo State Tourism Agency**

In a noteworthy event which took place on Saturday December 16, the Edo State Tourism Agency was honoured to host some of Nigeria's biggest Afrobeats artistes during its inaugural ESTA Mega Concert. The venue was the prestigious Victor Uwaifo Hub, located at Airport Road, Benin City.

The crowd was wowed by performances from various artistes including *Wizdom 247 Comedian*, *DJ Sose*, *Goya Menor* and *Influence Akaba*. The Ijebu of Africa aka *Flavour* and World Best aka *Patoranking* also revealed their magic on stage. As expected, our ever vibrant *MC Edo Pikin* kept the hype alive till it was lights out. Needless to say, the night was a **blast! ✨**

Following the very successful mega concert, was the National Jazz Festival which held on Friday 22nd December. Hosted by Jazz Kulture (a group of local and international jazz artistes), in collaboration with the ESTA, it was the icing on the celebration cake. How captivating it was, to watch Yinka Davies, the talented Afro jazz guru, put a spin on one of Victor Uwaifo's greatest hits, "Guitar Boy".

I hope your December has been one to remember as well. As you identify your resolutions and embrace your desires for 2024, may the New year bring you moments of warmth and the gift of good health.

Enjoy your read.

With love,

***Obehi***





## Coral Beads: The African connection (Not a coincidence)

Coral beads in Nigeria, particularly within the Edo culture, transcend mere ornamentation; they embody a captivating narrative of cultural pride and historical legacy, woven into the very fabric of the Edo culture. These beads are not just worn—they are celebrated, revered, and hold deep significance, especially during celebrations and festivals such as traditional weddings and coronations.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, coral beads made their way to Benin City, the capital of Edo State, courtesy of the Portuguese traders. They often brought them from the Mediterranean and the Red Sea through established trade routes such as the Trans-Saharan trade route. However, folklore suggests that the beads were stolen from the "goddess of the sea" at Ughoton (Gwatto) and brought to Benin.

Rapidly becoming symbols of royalty and wealth, firm coral beads became exclusively reserved for the Oba and the nobility including the queens, chiefs, and other influential figures. They are used to adorn Obas on grand occasions, reflecting not just their status but also the spiritual and familial connections they hold. One such grand occasion involving coral beads is the Ugie Ivie Festival, which is celebrated every year by the Benin people. This festival is a way of connecting with the ancestors and the spirit world. During the festival, no one is allowed to wear coral beads except the Oba and his entourage.

Beyond the grandeur of festivals and celebrations, the cultural significance of coral beads seamlessly extends to more personal events, particularly weddings. For Edo brides, adorning themselves with coral beads is a profound homage to their heritage and a tangible link to their ancestors. The intricate arrangement of beads in their hair forms the regal Okuku crown, symbolizing beauty and dignity. Necklaces (Ivie-uru) signify loyalty, bracelets (Ivie-obo) represent fertility, and every piece, from earrings (Emi-ehorivie) to handbags (Ekpa-ivie), tells a unique part of their story. The most popular are red, pink, orange and black corals which are used in jewelry.

Beyond the borders of Edo culture, coral beads find resonance among various Nigerian ethnic groups, each incorporating them with distinctive significance. Among the Igbo people of the South-East, coral beads are adorned as symbols of nobility and prestige, adding an elegant touch to traditional attire. In the South-West, the Yoruba people use coral beads as markers of sophistication and refinement, enhancing their ceremonial regalia. Heading North, the Hausa people embrace coral beads as tokens of love and affection, weaving them into expressions of cultural identity.

In essence, coral beads in Nigeria are not just symbols; they are storytellers, whispering tales of a vibrant culture, rich history, and timeless beauty that connect the past with the present. Beyond their role as beautiful jewellery, these beads carry profound meaning, becoming a source of pride and joy for Nigerian brides who gracefully adorn themselves on their special day.



# The importance of gold jewelry in the midst of the festivities

## From jewelry to bling bling, with roots in Edo

As the ember months usher in a season of vibrant festivities across Africa, the spotlight turns to the timeless significance of jewelry. Among the various types of jewelry that stand out, gold takes center stage, playing a pivotal role locally and in the broader global market. This precious metal, revered for centuries, holds a universal allure that transcends geographical boundaries. India has been widely recognized for its extensive use of gold for jewelry. This is because gold holds immense cultural and religious significance in Indian traditions, and is deeply embedded in the country's cultural fabric. Various festivals in India, such as Diwali and Akshaya Tritiya, are considered auspicious for buying and gifting gold. As such, there is a surge in gold purchases for both personal use and gifts.

Similarly, in most African countries, gold plays a central role in various rites of passage and ceremonial events. Weddings, initiations, and funerals involve the exchange or wearing of elaborate gold adornments, such as necklaces, bracelets, and rings, serving as a visual proclamation of affluence and the everlasting commitment of marriage due to its lasting nature. Also, gold artifacts are sometimes buried with individuals as part of burial customs, reflecting a belief in the continuity of wealth and status beyond the earthly realm.

Many ancient cultures associated gold with gods and the divine, considering it a symbol of purity and immortality. From the ancient civilizations of Egypt to the gold-rich regions of West Africa, the precious metal has been a symbol of wealth, power, and divine connection. The renowned wealth of Mali and Ghana in medieval times was, in large part, due to the abundance of gold, which fueled thriving trade routes and established these regions as epicenters of economic influence.

The use of gold in African society is so greatly revered that the craftsmanship of gold is considered an art form in itself. Whether it is the intricate filigree work of the Ashanti people or the symbolic designs of the Tuareg, gold jewelry serves as a canvas for cultural expression. Each piece tells a story, reflecting the unique identity and traditions of the community that crafted it.

For this reason, artists like Chris Aire have dedicated their lives to creating art in the form of gold jewellery with their efforts greatly paying off. Chris Aire, born in Nigeria and raised in Lagos, is a renowned jewellery designer and entrepreneur who has made a significant impact in the world of luxury and high-end jewellery. His journey to success is a testament to his artistic vision, passion for craftsmanship, and commitment to blending African heritage with contemporary elegance. His achievements serve as an inspiration for aspiring designers and underscore the potential for cultural influences to resonate on the international stage.



In essence, the use of gold in African society extends far beyond its monetary value; it is a cultural touchstone that enriches ceremonies, preserves heritage, and embodies the enduring spirit of African civilizations.



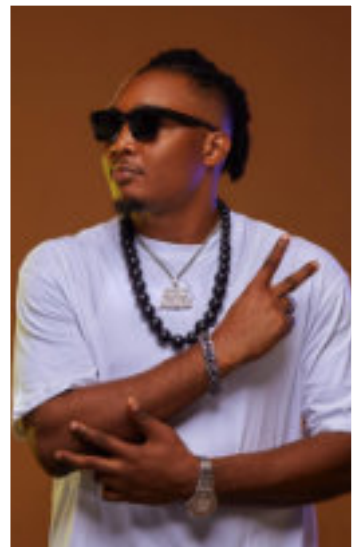
*End of Year Tourism Bazaar -  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2023*



*At the Deputy High Commission of Canada, Lagos State*



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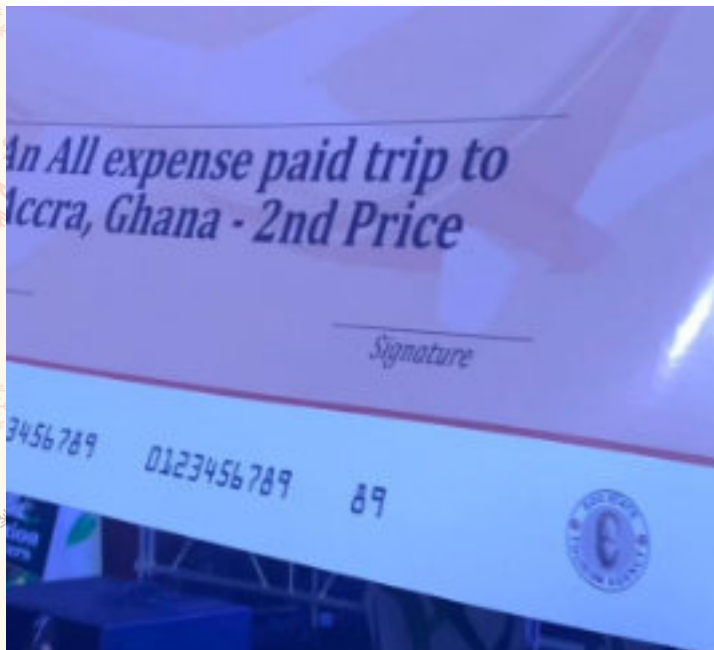
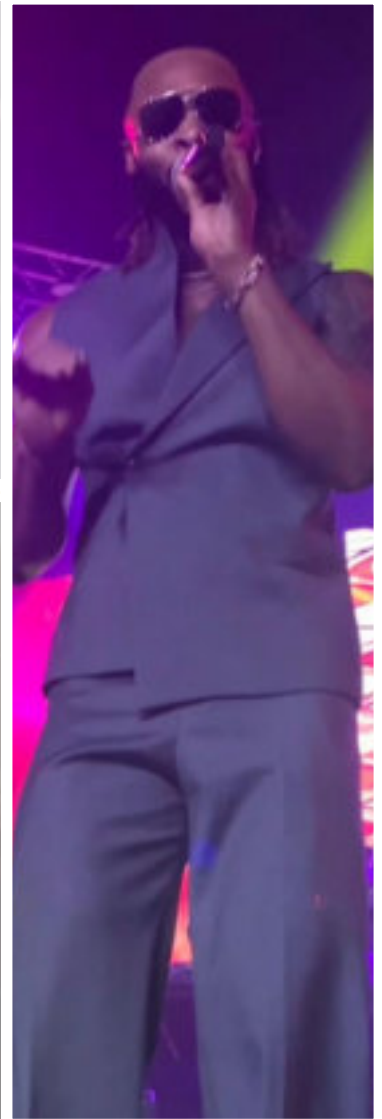
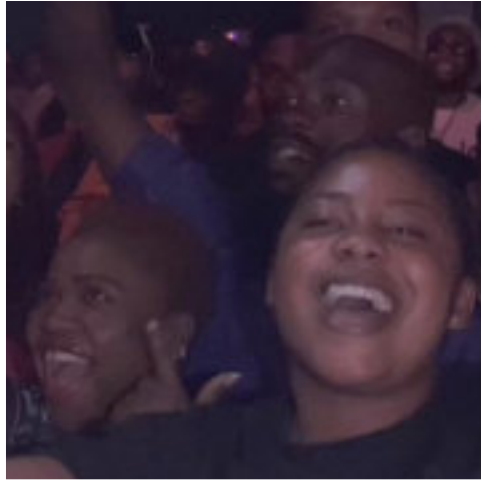


*ESTA Mega Concert:*





*ESTA Mega Concert:*





*National Jazz Festival, Benin City*  
*Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2023*



**With Yinka Davies**



**MC EFXE**



**With Prof. John Ogene, a saxophonist and Yinka Davies**



**With Jazz singer, Jennifer Jumbo**

# Dignity of Labour (Poem)

“Nigerian youths are lazy”

No Sir, think again

You cannot create a desert and expect it to rain

With the deplorable standard of leadership

It is best if our youths refrain

For the labour of our heroes past has  
consistently been in vain

And the judiciary which has become a total  
mystery

Learned in taking off the blindfold

Their mastery of technicality never gets old

Our Justices, who have thrown their wigs to the  
pigs and given their gowns to clowns

I doubt that their 30 pieces of silver came with a  
warranty of peace

After all, seed time and harvest shall never cease

A totalitarian government,

is what your indiscretions promote

What do you tell your children?

My learned colleague, what was the essence of  
your oath?

## Words of the Elders are Wise Words

Udin non gha man  
egho; ovbie okherhe ra  
na ron ren.

### English Translation

The palm-nut that will  
blossom into an  
evergreen palm-tree  
can be identified and  
spotted out at the  
budding spring.

“I’m a man of character”

But that’s for others to decide

Perform your duties honorably

Must you rule and divide?

Character is constant

In life and in profession

You are what you believe, speak and  
demonstrate

Stay focused and keep the vision

Why do you need others to prostrate?

Minimum wage is to receive a wage at the  
minimum

Why most states refuse to implement is such a  
phenomenon

They prioritize vehicles for those who are meant  
to serve

But human life and dignity, they fail to preserve

Nigeria, our beloved country

Where things work together for good, mostly for  
the favoured

A place where integrity is scarce and dignity is  
laboured.



Written by Obehi



# ENTERTAINMENT

## EVENTS



### GRIMINPAN FESTIVAL

Celebrating peace and fruitfulness in the land

January

### UNEHE FESTIVAL

This is a yearly night masquerade festival in Edo

February

### Ovia Festival

This festival is dedicated to the celebration of peace and progress in Edo State

December

## WORD PUZZLE

### AFRICAN COUNTRIES

S	O	Z	Z	P	V	W	S	Y	G	D	C	Y	S	W
H	N	M	J	W	K	T	O	D	T	L	R	C	A	L
V	K	O	W	L	D	L	N	R	A	L	G	E	N	Y
B	J	Z	W	A	Q	H	A	D	E	E	I	P	T	P
B	R	N	A	V	D	D	P	W	L	G	B	I	A	I
P	I	V	Q	I	I	U	E	O	H	O	L	I	J	E
N	I	I	S	T	L	J	L	T	L	I	G	U	E	S
C	W	N	I	S	O	A	E	H	B	R	H	T	E	I
G	A	O	K	E	B	E	I	A	X	R	T	A	W	P
O	N	S	D	F	N	T	R	R	G	W	R	R	C	F
Z	B	U	F	X	C	U	G	Y	A	W	E	A	H	Q
I	X	A	K	L	D	B	Z	S	D	D	E	C	M	P
K	N	L	Y	T	I	N	A	I	T	S	I	R	H	C
I	B	C	N	E	E	T	R	U	O	F	X	N	E	H
P	O	R	T	U	G	U	E	S	E	W	N	X	C	V

BEADS  
CLAUS  
DURABILITY  
IGUE  
PINK  
SANTA  
TRADITION

CHRISTIANITY  
CNIDARIA  
FESTIVAL  
JEWELRY  
PORTUGUESE  
SNOW  
TREE

EIGHTEEN  
FOURTEEN  
GOLD  
CARAT  
PLUTOMANIAS

## QUIZ

1

What unique red coral grows in bush-like formations in the Mediterranean Sea and the East Sea?

2

Shallipopi fans generally go by what name?

3

Which carat of yellow gold is most popularly used by Nigerians?

## LINGO

Bini

English

Ayedun

There is enjoyment in life

### **Important Notice**

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