

ANGOLA

Popular Republic 1975



ANGOLA

Masks
1976

Workers' Day
1976

Independence
1975



Map Overprinted
1976



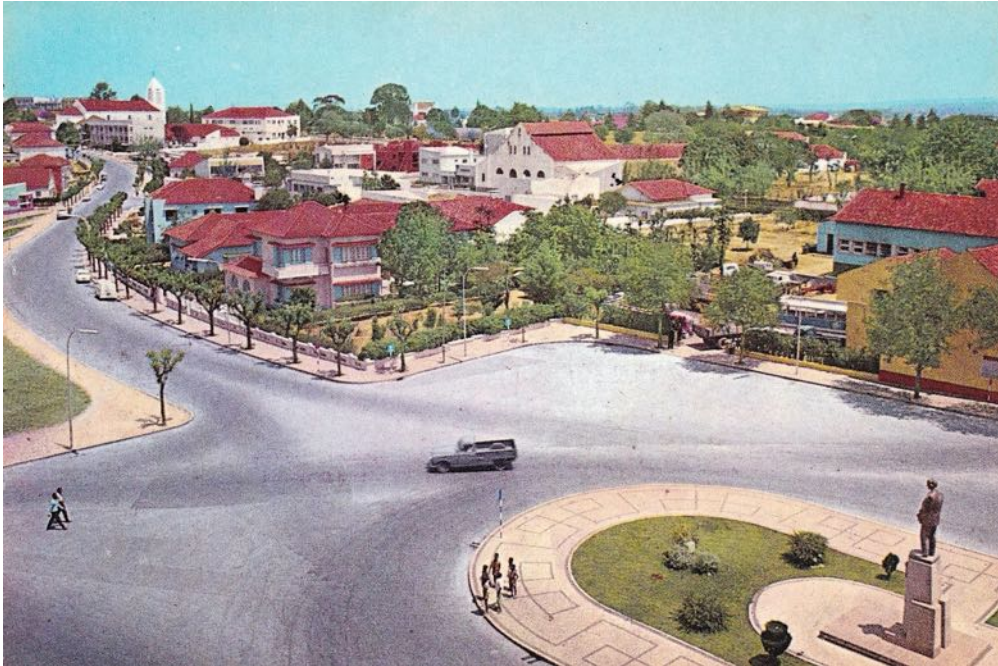
Map and Shells Stamps Overprinted
1977



Angola

Introductory Notes

For the Stamp Issues of the Popular Republic



GENERAL ISSUES

Angola's independence in 1975 was celebrated with the issue of a single stamp printed in Lisbon - 500.000 copies were produced. The Angolan postal service, later to take up the title "Correios de Angola", CA, continued a conservative and well run service through the early years of independence, but the civil war, Marxist economics, and corruption slowly eroded the coverage and effectiveness of CA.

The postal service initially limited the sales of higher denomination stamps to stop the flight of currency from the country. A normal stamp issuing policy ensued with a nice range of stamps issued each year up to 1995. These stamps were mainly printed in Portugal and tended to be of high quality. First Day Covers and postal stationery were produced locally and information sheets published and distributed to the Philatelic trade. The last stamps produced to frank letters was the commemorative set to celebrate the Kung People of Angola in 1995. Due to inflation, a Pottery set of service labels were produced, 1st class 2nd class normal and air mail. The cost of postage was paid separately. These labels were slowly replaced by printed franked labels. Stamps could still be applied, but later could not be included in the cost of postage. Stamps, mint and used, FDC and used covers up to 1995 are freely available.

The agency stamp issues that followed were not intended for postal use. Some of these issues, those related to Angolan life, were available from the philatelic counter at Luanda Central PO, but were not issued to do postal service. Collectors do not try to collect used Angolan stamps beyond the Kung People issue. It's amazing that CA was able to maintain an effective postal service at all, given the severity of the civil war, again hotting up in the late 90's, and this with two major devaluations of the Angolan currency.

The House of Questa took over the production and distribution of Angolan stamps in 1995. This company, based in England, began producing a glut of stamps and miniature sheets, often with little, or no Angolan interest. Only the sets with Angolan interest ended up at the Luanda Central post office. Some First Day Covers were produced but they are hard to find, used on cover less so. From 1995 to 2001, the House of Questa produced some 630 stamps and 70 miniature sheets. This glut of issues scared off many collectors, making them easily available for those who want to collect them today. Many serious collectors just ignore this rubbish, although in comparison to most other African countries, including former Portuguese colonies, Angola's philatelic output is saintly.

In 2001, Afinsa of Portugal took over the agency role for Angola and reduced the number of issues produced each year, while increasing the quality. So, Angola was again issuing quality stamps for collectors. Many issues were available on First Day Cover with a special cancel, but again, rarely found on cover. The number of FDC produced were limited, and so collectors are happy if they can get one or two of them. Most collectors keep their collection of FDC, as with used stamps, to 1975-1995. By the time Afinsa took over in 2001, the 1995 ceramic art issue was now only rarely used with mechanical franking and mechanical franked labels dominant.

Both the end of the UNITA insurgency in 2002 and the adoption of a winner-take-all form of capitalism, restored the nations finances, although not for the poor, but at least there was peace.

In 2006 Afinsa collapsed, due to financial mismanagement, and CA used Stamperija, a Lithuanian company, Carter Security Printing in France, and Joh Enschede to continue to produce stamps for philatelic purposes. So, during this period, some very impressive sets were issued, although some are hard to source. This is particularly so from 2011 to 2017. During this period CA issued a series of high-quality stamps for the philatelic market, year books, first day covers and illustrated covers, and postal stationery. Yet, all the old links to the philatelic market had been broken years earlier and they failed to promote renewed interest in Angolan stamps. It became increasingly uneconomic to produce new issues for a shrinking philatelic market. This is a shame, because the issues over this period were of high quality, and related to the life of Angola and Africa as a whole, even though they didn't see postal service. Some are difficult to source.

After the civil war, there were some 50 post offices throughout Angola, 10 in Luanda. Small villages held a post box at the nearest post office. There was no door-to-door delivery outside the main centres. Added to this inconvenience, postal services were expensive, and increasingly so. Africans are quick to take up technology and so prioritised the purchase of devices for communication and financial transactions. Increasingly, the postal service withered, struggling to adjust to the new technologies and to compete with commercial parcel delivery services and couriers.

The damage done to collectors during the first agency period had caused an exodus of Angolan collectors and thus, a reduced sale of new stamp issues. By 2008 the production run of a commemorative stamp was down to 7.000 copies, and by 2011, 5.000 stamps and 3.000 commemorative sheets.

This led to the Second Agency period, 2018-19 when issues produced by Stamperija, Lithuania, hit the market. These present as a mint sheet + 4 stamps illustrating every African animal you can think of, and then some (threw in a dinosaur for good measure) plus a few trains and ships for the kidies. They are well produced, but virtually print on demand amounting to some 30 sets, Scott 1420-1569. A similar format ensued in 2019, some 57 sets

of 4 stamps + 1 souvenir sheet, Scott 1576-?, covering the usual thematic topics. The sets are in plentiful supply, but overpriced. My personal view is that these issues should be ignored, treated as a rip-off, given that some 87 sets of stamps were issued in the period of one year. The only issues of this period with any relevance are a seasonal set of personalised stamps, Scott 1570-1573, a UNESCO issue for the Luanda Biennial Pan African Forum, a sheetlet of 4 + 1 souvenir sheet, 2019, and possibly the MS and sheetlet celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Moon landing (if it takes your fancy!). Like the many forgeries of Angola and Cabinda, collectors will often purchase examples when offered at a low price. Some 2018/19 sets are found CTO, rubbish of course (definitely not a Luanda cancel), but can serve as useful examples of these issues. Probably produced (illegally??) to get rid of unsold stock. A price of 2 Euros sees them out. The Stamperija contract was most likely set for 5 years, but thankfully Correios de Angola took control and ended the glut of issues. It is worth noting that none of the issues have been listed by the Universal Postal Union as authorised by Correios de Angola. To my knowledge, they were not available for purchase in Angola. They were authorised by Correios de Angola, but not authorised to do postal service.



It is worth remembering that compared with Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, or Sao Tome Principe, the Stamperija agency mass production for Angola only lasted a year; theirs is endless.

Stamp issues from the Correios de Angola since then have been very limited. Like many countries, the Covid pandemic severely damaged the postal service, forcing the closure of many post offices. The production of stamps is no longer profitable, as is the provision of a local mail service. CA is now a local and overseas courier and parcel delivery service. Postal authorities around the world focus on parcel delivery now and happily watch their local letter delivery service wither on the vine.

Issues since 2019:

2020, None

2021, Flora, the Baobab Flower, set of 3 + 1 souvenir sheet; The 3 issues are available as an 8 stamp sheetlet with a central no-value label. A colourful Year Book was produced for this issue.

2021, Suspension of Sport due to Covid 19, 2 stamps, 2 souvenir sheets. + Sheetlet, booklet, postal card, and imperf.



2021, Covid Pandemic, 1 set of 4, 1 set of 2, each with souvenir sheet + Sheetlet, booklet, postal card, and imperf. These issues, The Struggle Against Variants of Sars, and a Tribute to Covid Health Workers, were joint issue with many African countries, including former Portuguese territories, SaoTome and Principe, Guinea Bissau, and Mozambique. Stamperija is the source. Official UPU authorisation is lacking, ie., same status as 2018/19.

2021, Dubai Expo 2020, 1 sheetlet of 4 + 1 souvenir sheet.

2022 /23, None

- 2024, The carnation revolution in Portugal, a pair of stamps issued in conjunction with Portugal and Cape Verde (it is interesting to note that Cape Verde has continued to this day with a conservative stamp issuing policy).
- 2025, 25 years of AICEP, Portugal, Cape Verde, Macau, Guinea Bissau (stamp + miniature sheet) and Brazil. The proposed Angolan issue didn't Eventuate.
- 2025, July 5, The 50th Anniversary of the Independence of Cape Verde. A pair of stamps issued along with Cape Verde and Portugal.
- 2025, November 11. Although a design competition was initiated by CA, the proposed Angolan Independence issue didn't appear.

INFORMATION ON COLLECTING MODERN ANGOLAN STAMP ISSUES

Other than the usual commercial stamp catalogues, the definitive source of information on the stamp issues of Angola since 1975 is the catalogues produced by ENCTA, Empresa Nacional de Correios e Telegrafos de Angola: Angola Republic Postal Stamps, 1975-2003, and Catalogue of Angola Postal Stamps, 2004-2008. Although the English versions are somewhat crudely translated, they carry all the key information on each issue, date, printer and print numbers, but without stamp identification. These books are now out of print but



can be obtained second hand through online outlets like Abe Books. Correios e Telegrafos also published information sheets in English and Portuguese on stamp issues from 1983 to 88 (image courtesy of Moderne Angola-Philatelie), and in later years a series of Year Books (2010-15), colourfully produced with some technical information. Both the information sheets and year-books come up for sale on Delcampe from time to time.

The must-have catalogue for those collecting the post-Independence stamps of Angola is Antonio Romao's *Catalogo Especializado Selos Palop*, simply known as Palop, Vol.I 2008 and vol.II, 2011, although it is not as technical as the AFINSA Palop, 1998. Palop covers the former Portuguese colonies of Africa. It is very helpful in identifying the many errors found in the independence overprints, as well as some early advertising labels and tax stamps.

One of the best sources of information on post independent Angolan stamps is the free digital magazine "Modern Angolan Philately" (Moderne Angola-Philatelie) published by the editor in German (translate with Google) Reinhard Kuchler,

< reinhardkuechler@yahoo.de >.

PORTUGUESE ANGOLA OVERPRINTS

Three major overprint errors occur on the 1976 10\$00 map "Day of the Stamp" issue on each full sheet of 100 stamps.

- REP POPULAR: repeated, replacing DIA DO SELO
- 15 Junho 1976: repeated, replacing REP POPULAR
- REP POPULAR: repeated, replacing 15 Junho 1976

Some sheets of the 20c Map issue received the same overprint, possibly as a test run, or a desire to dispose of unused stock. Either way, the CA Philatelic Department made good use of them selling them to collectors, with some used on philatelic covers. They are not found on mail as such,



because of their low value. This stamp is very hard to find, but it is best to regard it as an anomaly. It is generally not listed as a stamp issued to do postal service.

An overprint, often classified as a forgery, although more likely a rejected test run on a low value stamp, best classified as printer's waste. It is found on the \$30 shell stamps in both red and black, INDEPENDENCIA / 11 Nov 75. It seems that a shell issue was intended for release at independence, but in the end, it was found more appropriate to issue a special stamp for the occasion. It is rarely offered for sale.



For a full list of the minor overprint errors found in these stamps, see 1975-80 General Issues. This type of o/p error, misplaced, inverted, doubled, broken bars, are best classified as printer's waste and as such, are not regarded as a true printing error. Other stocks of colonial stamps were intended for overprint, eg., Minerals, 4\$50, 6\$, 10\$, Native women, \$15, 7\$50, 15\$, Meteorology, 1\$, but they never eventuated. The list of Colonial Angolan stamps overprinted are as follows:

1976. Map overprint: DIA DOS SELOS, 15 Junho 1976, REP. POPULAR, DE
10e

1976 Sport overprint: S Silvestre Rep. Popular de
15e

1977. Map and Shells: Republica Popular de
20e
25e
30e
50e

1980 Stamp Centenary: Republica Popular de
2.50e
4.50e

1981 Satellite. Bar only
2e

1981 Shells. Bar only
1e
1.5e
2e
3.5e
4e
5e
6e
7e
10e
25e
30e

HARD TO SOURCE ISSUES

1976, The 20c Map overprint – see above.

1976, National Reconstruction tax, 1st overprint set - 5kz, in two types, 10 and 15kz. These served a similar function to the colonial *Assistencia* stamps. They were not used for postage, but as a postal tax used on certain days to raise funds for the reconstruction of Angola after the colonial war. The prime function of these stamps was stamp-duty on financial transactions. They were replaced the next year, so their short life makes them hard to find. 1977/8 a new set of fiscal stamps was issued, with the 0.5, 1, 2 and 2.50kz used as a postal tax. The 50c and 1Kz are easily sourced. The 1978 fiscal set was itself replaced in the early 2000s.



1980, Issued for the 1st National Congress of the MPLA in Luanda, in three values, 5, 20 and 100Kz. The stamps were a limited print-run by the Angolan National Press for the MPLA as a fundraising / promotional label to be attached to letters. Although listed by Palop, they are not an official Angolan postal issue and could not properly do postal service (even though creative examples exist!!). They are not listed as authorised by CA for postal use.



In 1994, two sets were issued celebrating the Anniversary of the investiture of President Eduardo Dos Santos, ES.676-677, and 678-679, these were released, but then withdrawn. The first set, bearing images of the president on a red background, is often not included in catalogues, or printed stamp pages. This set is commonly listed for sale and usually sells for around \$25 US.



In 2004, the South African Postal Operators Association (South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Swaziland, Malawi and Angola) produced an 8 stamp sheetlet of birds in hexagonal format. The Angolan issue was officially released on October 11, but there was a dispute over payment between the printer Joh Enschede and Correios de Angolan, with the issue withdrawn and the remaining sheetlets destroyed. The sheetlet is often not listed in commercial catalogues, although it is listed in *Catalogo de Selos Postais Angolanes, 2004/2008*, Correios de Angola. It sells for over a hundred dollars, but it is unclear whether it is as rare as originally thought. It all depends on how many sheets were actually saved from destruction - time will tell!



The 1995 gold leaf Rotary anniversary issue, Scott 937, has a market price usually around \$50 (all prices given are estimates and are in US dollars), but is easily sourced.

Due to the quantity of thematic agency material, many collectors gave up saving the new Issues of Angola. This increased the supply of pre 2001 independence stamps on the market and suppressed prices, but conversely affected the production runs of post 2001

stamps, producing the opposite price effect. Many sets covering the years 2001 to 2017 are difficult to find.

2006, Michel 1776. Commemorative issue for the paralympic Jose Sayovo, is a little hard to find but not expensive. The print run of 5,000 was too low, given the topic.

2006, Michel 1768-71. Domestic animals, issued for Lubrapex. Sets issued for Lubrapex are sought after by Portuguese collectors and so the 5,000 print run was not large enough to meet demand. Again, not expensive and listed for sale sooner or later.

2006, Michel BL 117. Souvenir Sheet for the National Bank is in very short supply, the reason is unknown.

2008, Michel 1817-9. Mangroves along the Rio Chiloango River, hard to find, but not expensive.

2009, Michel 1820-1. Neto anniversary. The Souvenir sheet is easy to source, but the associated pair of stamps is hard to find, but not expensive.

The most expensive stamp of this period is the 2012 AICEP Portuguese language omnibus issues from Portugal, Brazil and the former Portuguese colonies and printed for the AICEP organisation. These occasional issues have become popular with Portuguese collectors who like to buy a full set to link in with the Portuguese issue. The first AICEP combined issue was in 1997, a mint sheet, "The Long Necked Bird", from Mozambique, and an overprinted parrot issue from Sao Tome Principe.



The 2012 set is the highpoint and is highly sought after. The release of the stamps was spasmodic and the numbers printed was not enough to meet the growing demand for these issues. The East Timor example was issued locally, as a collector happily discovered when he visited the Dili Post office - it is now not as expensive. The scarcity of the Angolan issue is likely down to the stock sold at Luanda Central PO to locals as memorabilia, so further limiting supply to the philatelic market. The Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome stamps are very expensive (topping \$100), with the Cape Verde and Macau issues not as expensive.

FIRST DAY COVERS

Through to 1995 and the commemorative issue, The Kung Tribe of Angola, first day covers were produced in large numbers and are freely available today. They are mainly of standard size, decorative, with a special cancel. For most collectors, 1995 is usually the end of any attempt to gain a FDC for every issue.

From 1995 to 2001, the House of Questa took over the production and distribution of new issues. Only a few FDCs were produced for these issues, eg., Aviation, 1999. Some issues relevant to Angola were cancelled with the Luanda Philatelic canceller for private collectors, eg., WWF Birds 1999.

In 2001 AFINSA became the new agent for Angola, with a special first day cancel design available for most issues, and applied to an undecorated standard sized CA cover. Some covers are more common than others.

The Stamperija 2006 plus issues, standard and large sized decorative covers were produced for their issues, cancelled with their own fake cancel.

From 2011 to 2017, CA took back control of the production and distribution of Angolan stamps. Special large sized FDC envelopes with a special cancel were made available, but the small number produced makes them hard to source today.

In 2018-19, Stamperija took over agency responsibilities, and along with the glut of new issues, they produced large sized decorative envelopes with their fake standard first day of issue cancel (not at Luanda cancel). They are expensive, but in philatelic terms, worthless.

A standard size FDC is available for the 2024 Carnation Revolution issue and the Cape Verde 50th Independence issue.



House of Questa 1995-2001.



Luanda Philatelic Cancel 2008



AFINSA 2001-2006



Stamperidja 2006 +



Correios de Angola 2006-11



Stamperidja 2018-19

FAKES

Since 1999 fake issues for Angola and Cabinda have flooded the market. The original culprit was identified as a former executive of Gibbons who went rogue and set up a printing operation using a well-known stamp producer in England (or so the story goes!!!). Today, fake issues flood out of central Europe. They stand out like a sore thumb and are rubbish. The solution is simple, work with a reputable catalogue.



VALUE FIGURES ON ANGOLAN STAMPS

After Angola became independent, the Escudo was replaced by the Kwanza (Kz) at par. Due to the financial mismanagement of the MPLA government and the civil war, inflation became a problem. In 1995 the Kwanza was replaced by the Novo Kwanza at 1000 to 1. Then in 1999 the Novo Kwanza was replaced by the Kwanza Reajustado at 1 Million to 1. This is evident on the values of stamps issued at this period and by the necessity of CA to end normal postal stamp production and hand over the issue of new stamps to the House of Questa. These stamps were produced to raise money for the country and served only a philatelic purpose rather than for the franking of normal mail. Only some issues were sold at the Philatelic counter at Luanda Central and found their way onto covers.

