

## Cotonou's unlikely sex shop

Antaras Adjibi's sex shop in the heart of Cotonou is an unlikely enterprise in Benin, a west African country steeped in tradition and religion. Nearly half of the population is Christian, almost 28% is Muslim, while more than 11% practise Vodun, or Voodoo. There are a few online businesses in Benin which sell sex accessories, but boutiques specialising in the products are uncommon. In neighbouring Nigeria, sex shops are growing in popularity in Lagos, but are rare outside of cities. **'Sexuality is still taboo in Africa, particularly in Benin,'** Adjibi said. **CNN** reports that she opened her store Abasik in 2013 with the aim of changing that. Following the launch, she was invited to speak on a local radio station about the importance of women's sexual pleasure. The backlash was immediate. Veronique Tognifode, a gynaecologist and obstetrician from Cotonou, who works with the Association for Education, Sexuality and Health in Africa, says taboos associated with sex, and speaking about sexuality, are slowly changing in Benin. 'The goal is to promote responsible sexuality, but it's also a way to generate more communication around sexuality so they are given answers without taboo,' Tognifode said.