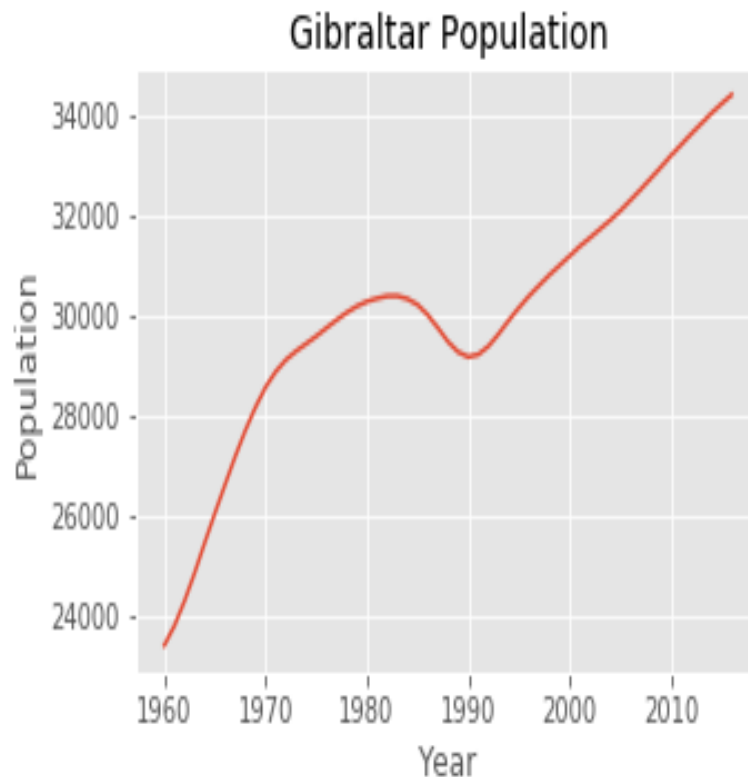


Gibraltar



Gibraltar (; Spanish pronunciation: [xiβalˈta]) is a British Overseas Territory located at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula. It has an area of 6.7 km² (2.6 sq mi) and is bordered to the north by Spain. The landscape is dominated by the Rock of Gibraltar at the foot of which is a densely populated city area, home to over 30,000 people, primarily Gibraltarians. In 1704, Anglo-Dutch forces captured Gibraltar from Spain during the War of the Spanish Succession on behalf of the Habsburg claim to the Spanish throne. The territory was ceded to Great Britain in perpetuity under the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. During World War II it was an important base for the Royal Navy as it controlled the entrance and exit to the Mediterranean Sea, which is only 8 miles (13 km) wide at this naval "choke point". It remains strategically important to this day, with half the world's seaborne trade passing through the strait. Today Gibraltar's economy is based largely on tourism, online gambling, financial services and cargo ship refuelling. The sovereignty of Gibraltar is a major point of contention in Anglo-Spanish relations as Spain asserts a claim to the territory. Gibraltarians overwhelmingly rejected proposals for Spanish sovereignty in the 1967 referendum, and the idea of shared sovereignty in 2002. Under the Gibraltar constitution of 2006, Gibraltar governs its own affairs, though some powers, such as defence and foreign relations, remain the responsibility of the British government.

== Name == The name Gibraltar is the Spanish derivation of the Arabic name Jabal Ḡīrīq meaning "Mountain of Tariq". It refers to the Rock of Gibraltar, which was named after the Umayyad general Tariq ibn-Ziyad who led the initial incursion into Iberia in advance of the main Umayyad force in 711 under the command of Umayyad Caliph Al-Walid I. Earlier, it was known as Mons Calpe, a name of Phoenician origin and one of the Pillars of Hercules.

== History ==

=== Early history === Evidence of Neanderthal habitation in Gibraltar has been discovered at Gorham's Cave. Within recorded history, the first inhabitants were the Phoenicians, around 950 BC. Subsequently, Gibraltar became known as one of the Pillars of Hercules, after the Greek legend of the creation of the Strait of Gibraltar by Heracles. The Carthaginians and Romans also established semi-permanent settlements. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, Gibraltar came briefly under the control of the Vandals, who crossed into Africa at the invitation of

Boniface, the Count (or commander) of the territory. The area later formed part of the Visigothic Kingdom of Hispania from 414 AD until the Islamic conquest of Iberia in 711 AD. === Settlement === In 1160, the Almohad Sultan Abd al-Mu'min ordered that a permanent settlement, including a castle, be built. It received the name of Medinat al-Fath (City of the Victory). On completion of the works in the town, the Sultan crossed the Strait to look at the works and stayed in Gibraltar for two months. The Tower of Homage of the Moorish Castle remains standing today. From 1274 onwards, the town was fought over and captured by the Nasrids of Granada (in 1237 and 1374), the Marinids of Morocco (in 1274 and 1333) and the kings of Castile (in 1309). In 1462, Gibraltar was finally captured by Juan Alonso de Guzmán, 1st Duke of Medina Sidonia. After the conquest, King Enrique IV of Castile Henry IV of Castile assumed the additional title of King of Gibraltar, establishing it as part of the comarca of the Campo Llano de Gibraltar. Six years later, Gibraltar was restored to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who sold it in 1474 to a group of 4350 conversos (Christian converts from Judaism) from Cordova and Seville and in exchange for maintaining the garrison of the town for two years, after which time they were expelled, returning to their home towns or moving on to other parts of Spain. In 1501, Gibraltar passed back to the Spanish Crown, and Isabella I of Castile issued a Royal Warrant granting Gibraltar the coat of arms that it still uses today. In 1704, during the War of the Spanish Succession, a combined Anglo-Dutch fleet, representing the Grand Alliance, captured the town of Gibraltar on behalf of the Archduke Charles of Austria in his campaign to become King of Spain. The occupation of the town by Alliance forces caused the exodus of the population to the surrounding area of the Campo de Gibraltar. As the Alliance's campaign faltered, the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht was negotiated and ceded control of Gibraltar to Britain to secure Britain's withdrawal from the war. Unsuccessful attempts by Spanish monarchs to regain Gibraltar were made with the siege of 1727 and again with the Great Siege of Gibraltar (1779 to 1783), during the American War of Independence. Gibraltar became a key base for the Royal Navy and played an important role prior to the Battle of Trafalgar (21 October 1805) and during the Crimean War of 1854–56, because of its strategic location. Its strategic value increased with the opening of the Suez Canal, as it lay on the sea route between the UK and the British Empire east of Suez. In the later 19th century, there were major investments in improving the fortifications and the port. === Modern history === During the Second World War, Gibraltar's civilian population was evacuated (mainly to London, but also to parts of Morocco, Madeira and Jamaica) and the Rock was strengthened as a fortress. The naval base and the ships based there played a key role in the provisioning and supply of the island of Malta during its long siege. As well as frequent short runs (known as 'Club Runs') towards Malta to fly off aircraft reinforcements (initially Hurricanes but later, notably from the USN aircraft carrier Wasp, Spitfires), the critical Operation Pedestal convoy was run from Gibraltar in August 1942. This resupplied the island at a critical time in the face of concentrated air attacks from German and Italian forces. Spanish dictator Francisco Franco's reluctance to allow the German Army onto Spanish soil frustrated a German plan to capture the Rock, codenamed Operation Felix. In the 1950s, Franco renewed Spain's claim to sovereignty over Gibraltar and restricted movement between Gibraltar and Spain. Gibraltarians voted overwhelmingly to remain under British sovereignty in the Gibraltar sovereignty referendum, 1967, which led to the passing of the Gibraltar Constitution Order in 1969. In response, Spain completely closed the border with Gibraltar and severed all communication links. The border with Spain was partially reopened in 1982 and fully reopened in 1985 before Spain's accession to the European Community. In a referendum held in 2002, Gibraltarians rejected by an overwhelming majority (98%) a proposal of shared sovereignty on which Spain and Britain were said to have reached "broad agreement". The British government has committed itself to respecting the Gibraltarians' wishes. A new Constitution Order was approved in referendum in 2006. A process of tripartite negotiations started in 2006 between Spain, Gibraltar and the UK, ending some restrictions and dealing with disputes in some specific areas such as air movements, customs procedures, telecommunications, pensions and cultural exchange. In the British referendum on membership of the European Union 96% of Gibraltarians voted to remain on an 82% turnout. Spain renewed calls for joint Spanish–British control of the peninsula, which were strongly rebuffed by Gibraltar's Chief Minister. == Governance == Under its current constitution, Gibraltar has almost complete internal self-governance through a parliament elected for a term of up to four years. The unicameral parliament presently consists of 17 elected members, and the Speaker who is not elected, but appointed by a resolution of the parliament. The government consists of 10 elected members. The head of state is the British monarch, currently Queen Elizabeth II, who is represented by the Governor of Gibraltar. The governor enacts day-to-day matters on the advice of the Gibraltar Parliament, but is responsible to the British government in respect of defence, foreign policy, internal

security and general good governance. Judicial and other appointments are made on behalf of the monarch in consultation with the head of the elected government. The 2011 election was contested by the Gibraltar Social Democrats (GSD), Gibraltar Socialist Labour Party (GSLP)-Gibraltar Liberal Party (GLP) Alliance and the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP). The PDP is a new party, formed in 2006 and fielded candidates in the 2007 election, but none were elected. The head of government is the Chief Minister (as of December 2011, Fabian Picardo). All local political parties oppose any transfer of sovereignty to Spain, instead supporting self-determination. The main UK opposition parties also support this policy, and it is British government policy not to engage in talks about the sovereignty of Gibraltar without the consent of the people of Gibraltar. Gibraltar is part of the European Union, having joined through the European Communities Act 1972 (UK), which gave effect to the Treaty of Accession 1972, as a dependent territory of the United Kingdom under what was then article 227(4) of the Treaty Establishing the European Community covering special member state territories, with exemption from some areas such as the European Union Customs Union, Common Agricultural Policy and the Schengen Area. It is the only British Overseas Territory which is part of the European Union. After a 10-year campaign for the right to vote in European elections, since 2004 the people of Gibraltar have participated in elections for the European Parliament as part of the South West England constituency. On 23 June 2016 Gibraltar voted along with the United Kingdom in the EU referendum; 96% of its population voted to remain, but the overall United Kingdom result gave a 51.9% majority to leaving the EU. Gibraltar was nominated to be included on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories by the United Kingdom when the list was created in 1946 and has been listed ever since. The government of Gibraltar has actively worked to have Gibraltar removed from the list, and in 2008 the British government declared Gibraltar's continued presence on the list an anachronism. Gibraltar is not a member of the Commonwealth of Nations but was granted Associate Membership of the Commonwealth Foundation in 2004. Gibraltar has competed in the Commonwealth Games since 1958.

== Geography == Gibraltar's territory covers 6.7 square kilometres (2.6 sq mi) and shares a 1.2-kilometre (0.75 mi) land border with Spain. The town of La Línea de la Concepción, a municipality of the province of Cádiz, lies on the Spanish side of the border. The Spanish hinterland forms the comarca of Campo de Gibraltar (literally "Countryside of Gibraltar"). The shoreline measures 12 kilometres (7.5 mi) in length. There are two coasts ("Sides") of Gibraltar: the East Side, which contains the settlements of Sandy Bay and Catalan Bay; and the Westside, where the vast majority of the population lives. Gibraltar has no administrative divisions but is divided into seven Major Residential Areas. Having negligible natural resources and few natural freshwater resources, limited to natural wells in the north, until recently Gibraltar used large concrete and/or natural rock water catchments to collect rainwater. Fresh water from the boreholes is supplemented by two desalination plants: a reverse osmosis plant, constructed in a tunnel within the rock, and a multi-stage flash distillation plant at North Mole. Gibraltar's terrain consists of the 426-metre-high (1,398 ft) Rock of Gibraltar made of Jurassic limestone, and the narrow coastal lowland surrounding it. It contains many tunnelled roads, most of which are still operated by the military and closed to the general public. === Climate === Gibraltar has a Mediterranean climate (Köppen climate classification Csa), with mild, rainy winters and warm, dry summers. As is the case for nearby Algeciras and Tarifa, summers are significantly cooler and annual temperature more constant than other cities on the southern coast of the Iberian peninsula because of its position on the Strait of Gibraltar. Rain occurs mainly in winter, with summer being generally dry. Its average annual temperature is about 22 °C (72 °F) as a daily high and 15 °C (59 °F) as the overnight low. In the coldest month, January, the high temperature averages 16.3 °C (61.3 °F) and the overnight low is 11 °C (52 °F) and the average sea temperature is 16 °C (61 °F). In the warmest month, August, the daily high temperature is 25 °C (77 °F), the overnight low is 20 °C (68 °F), and the average sea temperature is 22 °C (72 °F). === Flora and fauna === Over 500 different species of flowering plants grow on the Rock. Gibraltar is the only place in Europe where the Gibraltar candytuft (*Iberis gibraltarica*) is found growing in the wild; the plant is otherwise native to North Africa. It is the symbol of the Upper Rock nature reserve. Olive and pine trees are among the most common of those growing around the Rock. Most of the Rock's upper area is covered by a nature reserve which is home to around 230 Barbary macaques, the famous "apes" of Gibraltar, which are actually monkeys. These are the only wild apes or monkeys found in Europe. This species, known scientifically as *Macaca sylvanus*, is listed as endangered by the IUCN Red List and is declining. Three-quarters of the world population live in the Middle Atlas mountains of Morocco. Recent genetic studies and historical documents point to their presence on the Rock before its capture by the British, having possibly been introduced during the Islamic period. A superstition analogous to that of the ravens at the Tower of London states that if the

apes ever leave, so will the British. In 1944, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, was so concerned about the dwindling population of apes that he sent a message to the Colonial Secretary requesting that something be done about the situation. Other mammals found in Gibraltar include rabbits, foxes and bats. Dolphins and whales are frequently seen in the Bay of Gibraltar. Migrating birds are very common and Gibraltar is home to the only Barbary partridges found on the European continent. In 1991, Graham Watson, Gibraltar's MEP, highlighted conservationists' fears that urban development, tourism and invasive plant species were threatening Gibraltar's own plants as well as birds and bat species. === Environment === In May 2016 a report by the World Health Organization showed that Gibraltar had the worst air quality in any British territory. The report concentrated on PM10 and PM2.5 pollutants in the air. == Economy == The British military traditionally dominated Gibraltar's economy, with the naval dockyard providing the bulk of economic activity. This, however, has diminished over the last 20 years, and is estimated to account for only 7 percent of the local economy, compared to over 60 percent in 1984. Today, Gibraltar's economy is dominated by four main sectors: financial services, online gambling, shipping, and tourism, which includes duty-free retail sales to visitors. The territory also has a small manufacturing sector, with one company supplying ambulances produced from converted SUV vehicles to the United Nations and other agencies. In the early 2000s, many bookmakers and online gaming operators moved to Gibraltar to benefit from operating in a regulated jurisdiction with a favourable corporate tax regime. This corporate tax regime for non-resident controlled companies was phased out by January 2011 and replaced by a still favourable fixed corporate tax rate of 10 percent. Tourism is also a significant industry. Gibraltar is a popular port for cruise ships and attracts day visitors from resorts in Spain. The Rock is a popular tourist attraction, particularly among British tourists and residents in the southern coast of Spain. It is also a popular shopping destination, and all goods and services are VAT free, but may be subject to Gibraltar taxes. Many of the large British high street chains have branches or franchises in Gibraltar including Morrisons, Marks & Spencer and Mothercare. Branches and franchises of international retailers such as Tommy Hilfiger and Sunglass Hut are also present in Gibraltar, as is the Spanish clothing company Mango. A number of British and international banks have operations based in Gibraltar. Jyske Bank claims to be the oldest bank in the country, based on Jyske's acquisition in 1987 of Banco Galliano, which began operations in Gibraltar in 1855. An ancestor of Barclays, the Anglo-Egyptian Bank, entered in 1888, and Credit Foncier (now Crédit Agricole) entered in 1920. In 1967, Gibraltar enacted the Companies (Taxation and Concessions) Ordinance (now an Act), which provided for special tax treatment for international business. This was one of the factors leading to the growth of professional services such as private banking and captive insurance management. Gibraltar has several attractive attributes as a financial centre, including a common law legal system and access to the EU single market in financial services. The Financial Services Commission (FSC), which was established by an ordinance in 1989 (now an Act) that took effect in 1991, regulates the finance sector. In 1997, the Department of Trade and Industry established its Gibraltar Finance Centre (GFC) Division to facilitate the development the financial sector development. As of 2012, Gibraltar has 0.103 Big Four accounting firm offices per 1,000 population, the second highest in the world after the British Virgin Islands, and 0.6 banks per 1,000 people, the fifth most banks per capita in the world. As of 2017, there is very significant uncertainty on continuing access to the EU single market after the forthcoming Brexit. The currency of Gibraltar is the Gibraltar pound, issued by the Government of Gibraltar under the terms of the 1934 Currency Notes Act. These banknotes are legal tender in Gibraltar alongside Bank of England banknotes. In a currency board arrangement, these notes are issued against reserves of sterling. Clearing and settlement of funds is conducted in sterling. Coins in circulation follow British denominations but have separate designs. Unofficially, most retail outlets in Gibraltar accept the euro, though some payphones and the Royal Gibraltar Post Office, along with all other government offices, do not. == Demographics == Gibraltar is one of the most densely populated territories in the world, with a usually-resident population in 2012 of 32,194 equivalent to approximately 4,959 inhabitants per square kilometre (12,840/sq mi). The growing demand for space is being increasingly met by land reclamation; reclaimed land currently comprises approximately one tenth of the territory's total area. === Ethnic groups === The demographics of Gibraltar reflect the many European and other economic migrants who came to the Rock over 300 years, after almost all of the Spanish population left in 1704. Origin of surnames in the electoral roll by percentage is: British (27%), Spanish (26%, mostly Andalusian but also some 2% Menorcan), Genoese and other Italian (15%), Portuguese (15%), and Maltese (8%). There are also small (less than 1%) populations of other groups such as Moroccans, French, Austrians, Chinese, Japanese, Polish and Danish. (*) Includes all nationalities different from

Gibraltarian, UK and other British and Moroccan. === Language === The official language of Gibraltar is English, and is used by the government and in schools. Most locals are bilingual, also speaking Spanish. However, because of the varied mix of ethnic groups which reside there, other languages are also spoken on the Rock. Berber and Arabic are spoken by the Moroccan community, as are Hindi and Sindhi by the Indian and the Pakistani communities. Maltese is spoken by some families of Maltese descent. Gibraltarians often converse in Llanito (pronounced [laˈnito]), a vernacular unique to Gibraltar. It is based on Andalusian Spanish with a strong mixture of British English and elements from languages such as Maltese, Portuguese, Genoese Italian and Haketia (a Judaeo-Spanish dialect). Llanito also often involves code-switching to English and Spanish. Gibraltarians often call themselves Llanitos. === Religion === According to the 2012 census, approximately 72.1% of Gibraltarians are Roman Catholics. The 16th century Saint Mary the Crowned is the cathedral church of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Gibraltar, and also the oldest Catholic church in the territory. Other Christian denominations include the Church of England (7.7%), whose Cathedral of the Holy Trinity is the cathedral of the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe; the Gibraltar Methodist Church, Church of Scotland, various Pentecostal and independent churches mostly influenced by the House Church and Charismatic movements, as well as a Plymouth Brethren congregation. Several of these congregations are represented by the Gibraltar Evangelical Alliance. There is also a ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and two congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. 7.1% advised that they have no religion. The Gibraltar Secular Humanist Society also holds regular meetings. The third religion in size is Islam (3.6% of the population). There is also an established Hindu population (2%), members of the Bahá'í Faith and a long-established Jewish community, which, at 763 persons, accounts for 2.4% of the population. As a share of the total population, this is the second-largest Jewish population in the world, trailing only Israel. There are four functioning Orthodox synagogues in Gibraltar and several kosher establishments. == Education == Education in Gibraltar generally follows the English model, operating within a three tier system. Schools in Gibraltar use the Key Stage modular approach to teach the National Curriculum. Gibraltar has 15 state schools, two private schools and a college of further education, Gibraltar College. Government secondary schools are Bayside Comprehensive School for boys and Westside School for girls, and Prior Park School Gibraltar is an independent coeducational secondary school. On 31 March 2015 the government of Gibraltar announced the adoption of the University of Gibraltar Act and The University of Gibraltar opened in September 2015. Previously, there were no facilities in Gibraltar for full-time higher education, and consequently, all Gibraltarian students studied elsewhere at degree level or its equivalent and also for certain non-degree courses. The Government of Gibraltar operates a scholarship/grant system to provide funding for students studying in the United Kingdom. All Gibraltarian students used to follow the UK student loans procedure, applying for a loan from the Student Loans Company which was then reimbursed in full by the Government of Gibraltar. In August 2010, this system was replaced by the direct payment by the government of grants and tuition fees. The overwhelming majority of Gibraltarians continue their studies at university level. == Health care == All Gibraltarians are entitled to health care in public wards and clinics at the St Bernard hospital and primary health care centre. All other British citizens are also entitled to free-of-charge treatment on the Rock on presentation of a valid British passport during stays of up to 30 days. Other EU nationals are equally entitled to treatment on presentation of a valid European Health Insurance Card. Dental treatment and prescribed medicines are free of charge for Gibraltarian students and pensioners. The Gibraltar Health Authority is funded through the Gibraltar Group Practice Medical Scheme. It employs around 900 people, handling 37,000 A&E attendances, 40,000 outpatient appointments, and 90,000 GP visits a year. Some specialist care is provided by visiting consultants and in UK and Spanish hospitals. First-line medical and nursing services are provided at the Primary Care Centre, which has 16 GPs, with more specialised services available at St Bernard's Hospital, a 210-bed civilian hospital opened in 2005. Psychiatric care is provided by King George V Hospital. == Culture == The culture of Gibraltar reflects Gibraltarians' diverse origins. While there are Spanish (mostly from nearby Andalusia) and British influences, the ethnic origins of most Gibraltarians are not confined to these ethnicities. Other ethnicities include Genoese, Maltese, Portuguese, and German. A few other Gibraltar residents are Jewish of Sephardic origin, Moroccan, or Indians. British influence remains strong, with English being the language of government, commerce, education and the media. Gibraltar's first sovereignty referendum is celebrated annually on Gibraltar National Day (10 September). It is a public holiday, during which most Gibraltarians dress in their national colours of red and white. Until 2016, the tradition had been to also release 30,000 similarly coloured balloons, which represented the people of Gibraltar. However, this tradition has now been

ended because of the threat that it poses to wildlife, particularly marine. The 300th anniversary of Gibraltar's capture was celebrated in 2004 on Tercentenary Day (4 August), when in recognition of and with thanks for its long association with Gibraltar, the Royal Navy was given the Freedom of the City of Gibraltar and a human chain of Gibraltarians dressed in red, white and blue, linked hands to encircle the Rock. On 4 June 2012, the Gibraltar Diamond Jubilee Flotilla, inspired by the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant, celebrated sixty years of the Queen's reign. The Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation operates a television and radio station on UHF, VHF and medium-wave. The radio service is also internet-streamed. Special events and the daily news bulletin are streamed in video. The other local radio service is operated by the British Forces Broadcasting Service which also provides a limited cable television network to HM Forces. The largest and most frequently published newspaper is the Gibraltar Chronicle, Gibraltar's oldest established daily newspaper and the world's second oldest English language newspaper to have been in print continuously with daily editions six days a week. Panorama is published on weekdays, and 7 Days, The New People, and Gibsport are weekly. Native Gibraltarians have produced some literature of note. The first in fiction was probably Héctor Licudi's 1929 novel *Barbarita*, written in Spanish, chronicling the largely autobiographical adventures of a young Gibraltarian man. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, several anthologies of poetry were published by Leopoldo Sanguinetti, Albert Joseph Patron and Alberto Pizzarello. The 1960s were largely dominated by the theatrical works of Elio Cruz and his two highly acclaimed Spanish language plays *La Lola se va pá Londres* and *Connie con cama camera en el comedor*. In the 1990s, the Gibraltarian man-of-letters Mario Arroyo published *Profiles* (1994), a series of bilingual meditations on love, loneliness and death. Trino Cruz is a bilingual poet originally writing English but now mainly in Spanish, who also translates Maghreb poetry. Of late there have been works by the essayist Mary Chiappe, such as her volume of essays *Cabbages and Kings* (2006) and by M. G. Sanchez, author of the books *Rock Black: Ten Gibraltarian Stories* (2008) and *Diary of a Victorian Colonial* (2009). Mary Chiappe and Sam Benady have also published a series of detective books centred on the character of the nineteenth-century Gibraltarian sleuth Bresciano. Musicians from Gibraltar include Charles Ramirez, the first guitarist invited to play with the Royal College of Music Orchestra, successful rock bands like Breed 77, Melon Diesel and Taxi, while Gibraltarian bassist Glen Diani played for Irish/British nu metal group One Minute Silence. Albert Hammond had top 10 hits in the UK and US and has written many songs for international artists such as Whitney Houston, Tina Turner and Julio Iglesias. Gibraltarian cuisine is the result of a long relationship between the Andalusian Spaniards and the British, as well as the many foreigners who made Gibraltar their home over the past three centuries. The culinary influences include those from Malta, Genoa, Portugal, Andalusia and Britain. This marriage of tastes has given Gibraltar an eclectic mix of Mediterranean and British cuisine. Profiteroles, a French choux pastry ball with a sweet filling of whipped cream, is considered to be Gibraltar's national dish. These are often served after a meal including Calentita, a baked bread-like dish made with chickpea flour, water, olive oil, salt and pepper. == Sport == In 2007, there were 18 Gibraltar sports associations with official recognition from their respective international governing bodies. Others have submitted applications for recognition which are being considered. The government supports the many sporting associations financially. Gibraltar also competes in the bi-annual Island Games, which it hosted in 1995. Football is a popular sport in Gibraltar. The Gibraltar Football Association applied for full membership of UEFA, but their bid was turned down in 2007 in a contentious decision. Gibraltar was confirmed as UEFA's 54th member on 24 May 2013 as a result of Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) arbitration and played in Euro 2016 qualifications. Their first match was a 0–0 draw against Slovakia. Subsequently, Gibraltar applied for FIFA membership but this bid was also turned down. On 2 May 2016 the CAS upheld the appeal filed by the Gibraltar Football Association regarding its request to become a full-time member of FIFA. CAS ordered FIFA to stop blocking Gibraltar's application for membership and allow it "without delay". Cricket enjoys popularity in Gibraltar. The Gibraltar national cricket team won the European Cricket Championship Division Two in 2000 and 2002. Rugby union is fairly popular and one of the fastest growing team sports, Gibraltar Rugby Union Football Union applied for membership of Europe's governing body for rugby. Gibraltar is believed to be the birthplace of the rugby variant Tag Rugby. The Gibraltar Rifle Association (GRA) was Gibraltar's most successful team at the 2009 Island Games, earning four gold medals. Darts is also a popular sport, with the Gibraltar Darts Association (a full member of World Darts Federation since 1977) running leagues and other regular tournaments. In 2010, Gibraltar hosted and won the Mediterranean Cup, competing against France, Italy, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus. == Communications == Gibraltar has a digital telephone exchange supported by a fibre optic and copper infrastructure; the telephone operator Gibtelecom also operates a GSM network.

Internet connectivity is available across the fixed network. Gibraltar's top-level domain code is .gi. International Direct Dialling (IDD) is provided, and Gibraltar was allocated the access code +350 by the International Telecommunication Union. This has been universally valid since 10 February 2007, when the telecom dispute was resolved. == Transport == Within Gibraltar, the main form of transport is the car. Motorcycles are also very popular and there is a good modern bus service. Unlike in the UK and other British territories, traffic drives on the right and speed limits are in km/h, as the territory shares a land border with Spain. There is a Gibraltar Cable Car that runs from ground level to the top of the Rock, with an intermediate station at Apes' Den. Restrictions on transport introduced by Spanish dictator Francisco Franco closed the land frontier in 1969 and also prohibited any air or ferry connections. In 1982, the land border was reopened. As the result of an agreement signed in Córdoba on 18 September 2006 between Gibraltar, the United Kingdom and Spain, the Spanish government agreed to relax border controls at the frontier that have plagued locals for decades; in return, Britain paid increased pensions to Spanish workers who lost their jobs when Franco closed the border. Telecommunication restrictions were lifted in February 2007 and air links with Spain were restored in December 2006. The border control is the only road border control between two EU members that is expected to remain indefinitely (Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania have border controls which are expected to be removed around 2020), however Britain plans to leave the EU. Motorists and pedestrians crossing the border with Spain are occasionally subjected to very long delays. Spain has occasionally closed the border during disputes or incidents involving the Gibraltar authorities, such as the Aurora cruise ship incident and when fishermen from the Spanish fishing vessel Piraña were arrested for illegal fishing in Gibraltar waters. === Air === As of 2017, Gibraltar maintains regular flight connections with London, Manchester and Bristol in the UK, and with Casablanca and Tangier in Morocco. GB Airways operated a service between Gibraltar and London and other cities for many years. The airline initially flew under the name "Gibraltar Airways". In 1989, and in anticipation of service to cities outside the UK, Gibraltar Airways changed its name to GB Airways with the belief that a new name would incur fewer political problems. As a franchise, the airline operated flights in full British Airways livery. In 2007, GB Airways was purchased by easyJet, which began operating flights under their name in April 2008 when British Airways re-introduced flights to Gibraltar under their name. EasyJet have since added Bristol and Manchester and also operated flights to Liverpool between 2011 and 2012. Until entering administration in October 2017, Monarch Airlines operated the largest number of flights between the United Kingdom and Gibraltar, with scheduled services between Gibraltar and Luton, London Gatwick, Birmingham and Manchester. The Spanish national airline, Iberia, operated a daily service to Madrid which ceased for lack of demand. In May 2009, Ándalus Líneas Aéreas opened a Spanish service, which also ceased operations in March 2010. An annual return charter flight to Malta is operated by Maltese national airline, Air Malta. Gibraltar International Airport is unusual not only because of its proximity to the city centre resulting in the airport terminal being within walking distance of much of Gibraltar but also because the runway intersects Winston Churchill Avenue, the main north-south street, requiring movable barricades to close when aircraft land or depart. New roads and a tunnel, which will end the need to stop road traffic when aircraft use the runway, were planned to coincide with the building of a new airport terminal building with an originally estimated completion date of 2009, although it has not been completed because of delays. The most popular alternative airport for Gibraltar is Málaga Airport in Spain, some 120 kilometres (75 mi) to the east, which offers a wide range of destinations, second to Jerez Airport which is closer to Gibraltar. In addition, the Algeciras Heliport across the bay offers scheduled services to Ceuta. === Sea === Gibraltar Cruise Terminal receives a large number of visits from cruise ships. The Strait of Gibraltar is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. Passenger and cargo ships anchor in the Gibraltar Harbour. Also, a ferry links Gibraltar with Tangier in Morocco. The ferry between Gibraltar and Algeciras, which had been halted in 1969 when Franco severed communications with Gibraltar, was finally reopened on 16 December 2009, served by the Spanish company Transcoma. Ferries by FRS running twice a week from Gibraltar to Tanger-Med port provide access to the Moroccan railway system. === Rail === While railway track extends to the outskirts of La Línea from an aborted rail expansion project in the 1970s, the closest railway station in Spain is San Roque station, accessible via buses from La Línea. == Water supply and sanitation == Water supply and sanitation in Gibraltar have been major concerns for its inhabitants throughout its history. There are no rivers, streams, or large bodies of water on the peninsula. Gibraltar's water supply was formerly provided by a combination of an aqueduct, wells, and the use of cisterns, barrels and earthenware pots to capture rainwater. This became increasingly inadequate as Gibraltar's population grew in the 18th and 19th centuries and lethal diseases such as cholera and yellow fever began to

spread. In the late 19th century, a Sanitary Commission instigated major improvements which saw the introduction of large-scale desalination and the use of giant water catchments covering over 2.5 million square feet (nearly 250,000 m²). Today Gibraltar's supply of drinking water comes entirely from desalination, with a separate supply of saltwater for sanitary purposes. Both supplies are delivered from huge underground reservoirs excavated under the Rock of Gibraltar. == Police == The Royal Gibraltar Police (RGP) and Gibraltar Customs are Gibraltar's principal civilian law enforcement agencies. Outside the United Kingdom, the RGP is the oldest police force of the former British Empire, formed shortly after the creation of London's Metropolitan Police in 1829 when Gibraltar was declared a crown colony on 25 June 1830. In general, the Gibraltar force follows British police models in its dress and its mostly male constables and sergeants on foot patrol wear the traditional custodian helmet, the headgear of the British "bobby on the beat". The helmet is traditionally made of cork covered outside by felt or serge-like material that matches the tunic. The vehicles also appear virtually identical to typical UK police vehicles, but are left hand drive. The force, whose name received the prefix "Royal" in 1992, currently numbers over 220 officers divided into a number of units. These include the CID, drug squad, special branch, firearms, scene of crime examiners, traffic, marine and operations units, sections or departments. On 24 September 2015, the Freedom of the City of Gibraltar was conferred upon the RGP by the Mayor, Adolfo Canepa. == Armed forces == Gibraltar's defence is the responsibility of the United Kingdom tri-services British Forces Gibraltar. In January 2007, the Ministry of Defence announced that the private company Serco would provide services to the base. The announcement resulted in the affected trade unions striking. The Royal Gibraltar Regiment provides the army garrison with a detachment of the British Army, based at Devils Tower Camp. The regiment was originally a part-time reserve force until the British Army placed it on a permanent footing in 1990. The regiment includes full-time and part-time soldiers recruited from Gibraltar as well as British Army regulars posted from other regiments. The Royal Navy maintains a squadron at the Rock. The squadron is responsible for the security and integrity of British Gibraltar Territorial Waters (BGTW). The shore establishment at Gibraltar is called HMS Rooke after Sir George Rooke, who captured the Rock for Archduke Charles (pretender to the Spanish throne) in 1704. The naval air base was named HMS Cormorant. Gibraltar's strategic position provides an important facility for the Royal Navy and Britain's allies. British and US nuclear submarines frequently visit the Z berths at Gibraltar. A Z berth provides the facility for nuclear submarines to visit for operational or recreational purposes and for non-nuclear repairs. During the Falklands War, an Argentine plan to attack British shipping in the harbour using frogmen (Operation Algeciras) was foiled. The naval base also played a part in supporting the task force sent by Britain to recover the Falklands. The Royal Air Force station at Gibraltar forms part of Headquarters British Forces Gibraltar. Although aircraft are no longer permanently stationed at RAF Gibraltar, a variety of RAF aircraft make regular visits and the airfield also houses a section from the Met Office. Gibraltar has an important role in UKSIGINT and provides a vital strategic part of the United Kingdom communications gathering and monitoring network in the Mediterranean and North Africa. == Twin towns and sister cities == == See also == List of Gibraltarians Chief Justice of Gibraltar Attorney General of Gibraltar 1943 Gibraltar B-24 crash == Footnotes == Notes References == Bibliography == == External links == Government of Gibraltar Royal Gibraltar Police Gibraltar Fire & Rescue Service