

CHOLISTAN DESERT



The Cholistan Desert, also known as the Rohi Desert among the locals is located in the southern region of Pakistan. The name is derived from the Turkic word chol, meaning “sands”, and istan, a Persian suffix meaning “land of”. In ancient years, the desert was a fertile region with water coming from the Himalayan range. The area later turned into a center for caravan trade which led to the establishment of many forts, including the Derawar Fort. Cholistan covers an area of 25,800 km² (10,000 sq mi) in the Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, and Rahim Yar Khan districts of southern Punjab. The nearest major city is Bahawalpur city, 30 km (19 mi) from the edge of the desert. The desert is about 480 kilometers in length, with a width varying between 32 and 192 kilometers. 81% of the desert is sandy, while 19% is characterized by alluvial flats and small sandy dunes