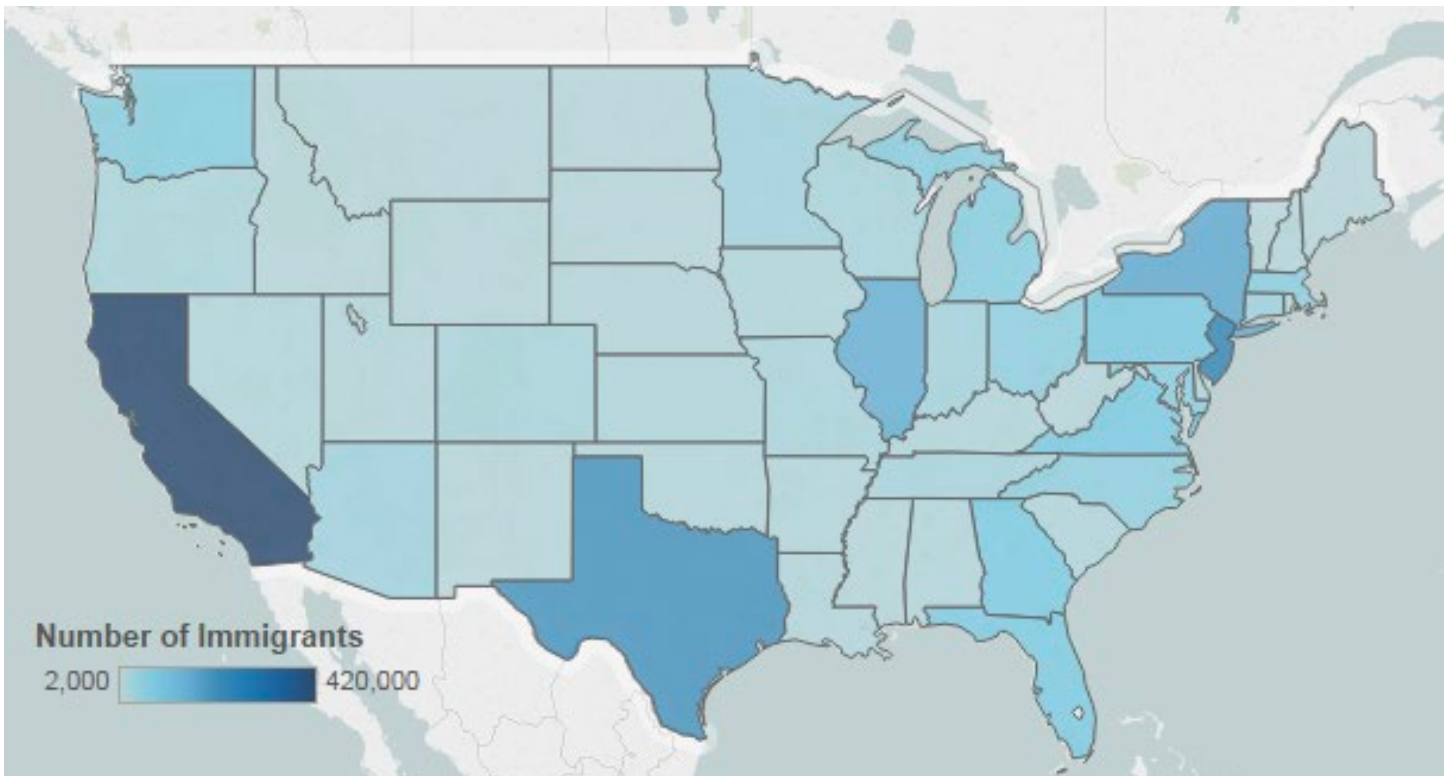




Overview

The second most populous country in the world, India, located in Southern Asia, is home to over 1.3 billion people. These billions of people, who can be heard speaking Hindi, Gujarati, English, or one of over 20 official languages, encompass a large swath of cultural diversity, which stands to reason--these billions of people inhabit over 1.2 million square miles. With millions of Indian immigrants living in the United States as of 2015, the impact Indian immigrants have had on the country is all too evident.





Notable People

In the United States, Indian-Americans make up roughly 6% of the country's immigrant population--second only to Mexico. Their arrival is relatively recent--while Indian immigration to the United States dates back to the early 1800s, in 1960, there were but 12,000 Indian-Americans in the country. With a change in legislation and culture in the late 1990s, Indian immigration swelled, and as of 2015, almost 2.4 million Indian-Americans are living in the United States. While most have settled on the west coast, Indians and Indian-Americans can be found in all parts of the country, including:

Satya Nadella

Born in Hyderabad, India, Satya Nadella, once passionate about cricket, realized his inescapable passion for science and attended both the Manipal Institute of Technology in India, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the University of Chicago. With degrees in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and an MBA, Nadella joined Microsoft in 1992; 22 years later, in February 2014, he was named CEO, succeeding Steve Ballmer and Bill Gates. He has overseen some of Microsoft's recent endeavors and successes, including bringing Microsoft Office to the Apple iPad, creating Windows 10, and releasing the Microsoft Surface Book.



Chef Aarti Sequeira

A native of Bombay, India and raised in Dubai, Chef Aarti Sequeira moved to Chicago, Illinois in 1996 to study journalism and international relations at Northwestern University (which would later serve her as production assistant for CNN). After embracing her passion for food, she would later attend The New School of Cooking in California, later producing the online cooking show Aarti Paarti. The name of this online show would later be changed to Aarti Party when it was picked up by Food Network after Aarti's win of season 6 of Food Network Star. She is also a supporter of Oxfam America, a movement working towards the end of poverty.



Mallika Dutt

Born in Kolkata, Mallika Dutt is the founder of Breakthrough (<https://us.breakthrough.tv>), a global human rights organization whose mission is "to prevent violence against women and girls by transforming the norms and cultures that enable it." Also a co-founder of SAKHI for South Asian Women (an organization to end violence against South Asian women), Dutt has dedicated her life to human rights advocacy.



M. Night Shyamalan

Born in Mahe (a town in the Indian Union Territory of Puducherry, surrounded by the state of Tamil Nadu), and raised in Philadelphia, M. Night Shyamalan is a film director best known for his twist-filled movies like *The Sixth Sense* (1999), *Signs* (2002), and *Split* (2016).



Vikas Khanna

A native of Amritsar, India, Vikhas Khanna was inspired to love food at an early age by his grandmother. Having studied at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Cornell University, the Culinary Institute of America, and New York University, he is an accomplished Chef and restaurateur. He is also known for being a judge MasterChef India, for his philanthropy, and for his documentary films.



Padma Lakshmi

Lakshmi, born Padma Parvati Lakshmi Vaidynathan in Madras (now Chennai), India, is a New York-based author, actress, and model known for hosting and judging Top Chef since its second season. Her career has also included writing several successful cookbooks and hosting television specials on international cuisine.



Kamala Harris

California's first Senator of either Indian or Jamaican descent, Kamala--from the Sanskrit word for lotus--Harris was born to a Tamil mother (a breast cancer scientist) and a Jamaican father (an economics professor). She is known for her tenure as San Francisco's District Attorney from 2004-2011, as California's Attorney General from 2011-2017, and as California's junior United States Senator since 2017.





Holidays & Festivals

Republic Day

Celebrated on January 26th to celebrate the 1950 effecting of the Constitution of India, Republic Day is a national holiday marked by ceremonies before the President of India, parades, and a host of other patriotic events across the country. Speeches are made, sweets are distributed in schools, and patriotic foods are made, including:

Tricolor Sandwiches

An easy-to-make sandwich with many varieties, this sandwich, with its orange, white, and green fillings, represents the colors of the Indian flag.

<https://ourrecipeforunity.org/recipes/tricolor-sandwiches/>





Holidays & Festivals cont.

Diwali

Perhaps one of the more well-known of Indian holidays, Diwali is a five-day celebration of the triumph of light over darkness, of good over evil. This festival, which is celebrated throughout both India and the rest of the world for a variety of cultural and religious reasons (the holiday is celebrated by Hindus and Jains alike), is complete with elaborately decorated homes and doorways, the lighting of diya (lamps), fireworks, shopping, and the uniting of family and loved ones. Pujas (prayers) are made and snacks are eaten, such as:

Gulab Jamun

One type of *mithai* (sweet or snack) eaten during Diwali, gulab jamun was derived from a Turkic fritter brought to medieval India. While a staple sweet in India, the name of this sweet treat is a combination of the Persian words for "flower" and "water" (*gol* and *ab*, respectively) and the Hindi-Urdu word for a fruit with a similar shape (jamun or jaman); this is in keeping with the sweet itself, which is a fried ball of milk solids soaked in a syrup containing cardamom and either rose water, *kewra* (a type of plant extract), or saffron.

<https://ourrecipeforunity.org/recipes/gulab-jamun-2/>





Food Palate | Indian and Indian-American Cuisine

It is almost impossible to pin down one style or definition of “Indian” or “Indian-American” cuisine, as the country’s diverse roots go 8,000 years deep and reflect millenia of interactions with other peoples and cultures (notably the British and Portuguese).

Historically, the Indian diet consisted of legumes, vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy, and honey; modern staple foods include lentils, wheat, rice, and pearl millet. These dishes have been brought to the United States with waves of immigration; a 2007 Survey by The Washington Post indicated that there are over a thousand Indian food products that had been introduced into the United States since 2000.

Today, Indian and Indian-American cuisine feature these ingredients and dishes:

Primary Starches	Primary Proteins	Primary Produce
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rice• Pearl millet• Wheat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lentils• Beans• Chicken• Fish• Lamb• Paneer (cheese)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chickpeas• Curry leaves• Lime• Mango• Chiles
Primary Seasonings	Primary Cooking Methods	Foundational Dishes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coriander• Cardamom• Chili pepper• Black mustard seed• Cumin• Turmeric• Ginger• Garlic• Cinnamon• Mint• Anise• Saffron	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Dum</i> (steaming food in its own steam)• <i>Bhunao</i> (a combination of sauteing, stir-frying and stewing)• <i>Talna</i> (frying)• <i>Baghar</i> (tempering in hot oil)• <i>Dhungar</i> (smoking)• <i>Sekna</i> (Baking or roasting)• <i>Bhapa</i> (steaming in a pot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curry• Tandoori chicken• Breads (naan, roti, phulka, etc.)• Chutney• Samosa• Raita• Pakora• Chana masala• Chicken korma



Featured Ingredients

Curry Leaves

The leaves from the curry tree, native to India and Sri Lanka, are used largely in South Indian cooking, where they hold an important role in seasoning dishes. The leaves help add flavor to a plethora of consumed goods, from being added to glasses of buttermilk to being included in spice blends and sauces that bear their name. These leaves, which have made their way to countries worldwide--including the United States--are included in hundreds of dishes, including:

Chicken Curry

Prepared by adding chicken and sauteed curry leaves, cashews, coriander seeds, and cilantro to a thick gravy complete with a bevy of aromatic ingredients, this dish is one of many that include what we know as a "curry," which is a blanket term for an array of iconic spice blends that may date all the way back to 2600BCE.

<https://ourrecipeforunity.org/recipes/chicken-curry/>





Featured Ingredients cont.

Saffron

This expensive and often-elusive spice, derived from the *Crocus sativus* (saffron crocus plant), dates back more than 3,000 years. Grown today in a large swath that reaches from Spain to India and harvested (necessarily by hand) in autumn, this aromatic and flavorful spice is sold in small quantities and high prices. It is soaked prior to its use in cooking, which may be in dishes such as:

Saffron Chicken

Saffron plays a large role in this warm and vibrant recipe, which is made with chicken, ghee, ginger, and other seasonings and served with rice or *roti* (Indian flatbread).

<https://ourrecipeforunity.org/recipes/saffron-chicken/>





Did you know...

...that fibre-optics were the invention of an Indian-American immigrant?

That's right--Narinder Singh Kapany, born in Punjab, India, is known as the "Father of Fiber-Optics"; he is the pioneer of the technology that helps power the very internet from which this fact sheet was downloaded! With a PhD from Imperial College London, he has won over 100 patents in fields that range from fiber-optics and lasers to energy and pollution monitoring.



Embassy Information

The Embassy of India in Washington, D.C., is located:

2107 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20008

(202) 939-7000

<https://www.indianembassy.org/>



Organizations and Places to Learn More

Indian Cultural Center (Marlton, NJ)

<http://www.iccofsj.org/>

(855) 422-6375

Serving South Jersey, the New Jersey Shore, Philadelphia, and Delaware, the Indian Cultural Center of South Jersey is a “one of a kind center” that provides a space for events, dance classes, yoga, and language classes.

Hispanic Heritage Foundation (Washington, DC)

<http://hispanicheritage.org/>

(202) 558-9473

With offices in Washington DC, Los Angeles, New York, and Miami, HHF is “a 501(c)3 focused on assisting “a Latino to help hundreds more” through a unique cycle of leadership built on a high-profile, year-round continuum of sustainable programs, including the Hispanic Heritage Youth Awards, Latinos On Fast Track (LOFT), Hispanic Heritage Awards and Public Awareness Campaigns.”

The Association of Indians in America

(Oyster Bay, NY)

<http://aianational.com/>

(516) 624-2460

As the “oldest national association of Asian Indians in America,” this organization, founded in 1967, the Association of Indians in America’s mission is to “foster and promote cultural social interactions among the members and all those interested in Indian culture and heritage. The AIA will also strive to raise political awareness among its members and other regarding issues relevant to India and the people of Indian origin.”

American India Foundation

<https://aif.org/>

(888) AIF-4IND

The American India Foundation is an organization dedicated to “catalyzing social and economic change in India and building a lasting bridge between the United States and India through high-impact interventions in education, livelihoods, public health, and leadership development.”

Caveat

Our Recipe for Unity is not suggesting that any person's culture or ethnic identity can be synthesized into one Fact Sheet. Our resources are just a place of beginning. We encourage you to learn more by contacting any of the organizations mentioned at the end of our Fact Sheets; to talk with people from different cultures and ethnicities to learn from them; and to please feel free to send us any resources that you think would be helpful to include on this site or in these Fact Sheets.

This publication is prepared and provided as an educational service by Our Recipe for UnitySM.
© 2019 Our Recipe for UnitySM. All Rights Reserved.