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1. Culture of Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland

Culture Name

Northern Irish

Alternative Names

Ulsters, Ulster Unionists, Protestant Ulsterites, Loyalists; Republican, Nationalist

Orientation

***Identification.***The island of Ireland is known as *Eire*in Irish Gaelic. The name of the capital city, Belfast, derives from the city's Gaelic name, *Beal Feirste,*which means "mouth of the sandy ford," referring to a stream that joins the Lagan River.

The state of conflict in Northern Ireland is manifested in the names by which the Northern Irish identify themselves. Ulsters or Ulster Unionists identify themselves by ethnicity, religion, and political bent. These residents are generally Protestants from England who colonized the country in the nineteenth century and earlier supported William of Orange when he wrested the throne of England from the Catholic James II. The Nationalists are native Irish who were ruled by Irish chiefs. They are Roman Catholics who want Northern Ireland to be reunited with the Republic of Ireland, removing the northern counties from the sovereignty of England. The Ulster Unionists remain politically, religiously, and culturally loyal to England, yet feel that Northern Ireland is their homeland. Nationalists believe that the land is theirs, and their loyalty is to their compatriots in the Free State of Southern Ireland.

***Location and Geography.***Northern Ireland is the smallest country in the United Kingdom, situated on the second largest island of the British Isles. It occupies one-sixth of the island it shares with the independent Republic of Ireland. Northern Ireland is composed of six of the twenty-nine counties of Ireland, covering about 5,452 square miles (14,120 square kilometers). It is separated from the Republic of Ireland by a three-hundred-mile-long artificial boundary. Northern Ireland makes up the northwestern corner of the island; the entire island is bordered on the west by the Atlantic Ocean, on the east by the Irish Sea, and on the south by the Celtic Sea. The waters around Northern Ireland's coast are shallow.

The climate is mild as a result of Atlantic Ocean breezes and the Gulf Stream, with comfortable summers and temperate winters. Snow is uncommon, and temperatures dip below freezing only a few times a year. However, rainfall is heavy. Low mountains with steep cliffs dropping off to the sea and fertile lowlands are the principal topographic features. The two major mountain ranges are the Sperrin Mountains and the Mourne Mountains. Most of the farmable land, in the middle of the country, is used as grazing pastures for livestock. Lough Neagh, in central Northern Ireland, is the largest lake in the British Isles.

Until seven thousand years ago, Ireland was linked to Europe by a land bridge, but the ocean eroded that bridge and separated Ireland from the continent. Scotland lies just thirteen miles east of the island across the English Channel.

The Upper Bann River begins in the Mourne Mountains and flows northwest for twenty-five miles before entering Lough Neagh. The Erne River, which is seventy-two miles long, starts in the Republic of Ireland and flows northward into Northern Ireland. The Foyle River, marking the northwestern boundary with the Republic of Ireland, passes through Londonderry and empties into the Atlantic Ocean, becoming a bay called Lough Foyle.

Soggy areas called peat bogs have developed in parts of the country. The bogs contain layers of vegetation that have partly decayed in the moist earth. As the layers build up, they form a thick crust of turf that is called peat. This turf, originally cut by hand, is now cut by machine. The resulting



*Northern Ireland*

briquettes are burned for fuel and remain the major source of heat and electricity in rural areas.

***Demography.***In 1998, the Annual report of the Registrar General for Northern Ireland reported the population of Northern Ireland to be 1,668,000. The population is most dense in the east. In the 1980s, the population was described as being 70 percent Protestant and 30 percent Catholic, but 60 percent Protestant and 40 percent Catholic may be more accurate. The population breakdown is difficult to ascertain because many residents are reluctant to indicate their religion.

Catholic families have a higher birthrate because of their religious beliefs and their desire to surpass the population of the Unionists. Stability in the population has resulted from the fact that many Catholics were forced to go to London to escape unemployment.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***English is spoken throughout the country, and the native language of Gaelic, or Gaeltacht, is disappearing. Many Gaelic speakers died in the Great Famine of the 1840s, and Gaelic was replaced by English, which was needed to achieve social mobility. Gaelic still carries a stigma as the language of the poor.

Gaelic is a Celtic language that probably was introduced by Celts in the last few centuries B.C.E. Similar to Scottish Gaelic, it shares common structures with Welsh and Breton. It is an idiomatic language with a complex grammatical system that is considered rich in terms of warmth and expressiveness. Irish is required at some schools but is taught with an emphasis on grammar rather than conversation. The Gaelic League, formed in 1893, is a revivalist organization, that attempts to propagate the Irish language and culture. In the 1920s, the Gaelic League attempted to deanglicize the country by gaelicizing the schools. It wanted to require that all teachers at teacher training colleges have a background and proficiency in Irish. However, the league realized that Gaelic would languish if it was not also used in the home environment.

***Symbolism.***The Union Jack flag and the British crown are associated with the Unionists both by their Protestant supporters and by their Catholic opponents. Members of the Orange Order have a picture of the crown on the huge drums that are used in the parades in which Orangemen celebrate the victory of William of Orange over James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. Another image associated with the rivalry between Loyalists and Nationalists is the Ulster emblem of a right hand severed at the wrist from which no blood should flow.

Northern Ireland is recognizable by its lush green countryside and stout mountains leading down to a steep and craggy shoreline. The flag of the Free State of Ireland, which has equal vertical bands of green, white, and orange is a symbol of the Irish nation.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Prior to 1920 the island of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The Government of Ireland Act of 1920 founded the Irish Free State and allowed six Ulster counties to remain part of the United Kingdom, becoming Northern Ireland. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) opposed the establishment of the Irish Free State. In 1925, an agreement among the Irish Free State, Northern Ireland, and Great Britain partitioned Ireland and defined the borders. Catholic residents of Ulster did not want to see Ireland divided, but Protestant business leaders wished to remain linked to England. In 1936, the Irish Free State proclaimed its complete independence, and in 1949 it renamed itself the Republic of Ireland. Since 1974, the United Kingdom has ruled Northern Ireland directly.

***National Identity.***The Northern Irish see themselves as distinct from the English but connected to their compatriots in the Republic of Ireland. The Northern Irish see the British of Northern Ireland as interlopers and oppressors.

***Ethnic Relations.***Violent antagonism between Catholics and Protestants developed in the nineteenth century and resulted from history and religion. The influx of settlers from England and Scotland was not welcomed by the native Irish, since the newcomers were awarded the best parcels of land. At first, the minority Ulster Protestants could not dominate the Catholic majority, but after the victory of the Protestants supporting William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne, they prevailed.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Particularly in Belfast, most decisions involving public planning are made to preserve public security in the midst of "the Troubles." Many of the busiest streets in that city have control zones where only pedestrians can travel. Automobiles are not allowed in those zones to reduce the risk of car bombings. Cars that are parked in commercial parking lots are given a quick inspection for potential bombs. The boundaries that separate Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods are enforced by the police.

Graffiti and wall murals appear throughout urban areas, depicting the sentiments of Unionists and Nationalists. In the case of the Nationalists, IRA propaganda and images of men with guns tell supporters to "fight back" and state that "we will meet force with force." Catholic children learn from graffiti the strong views and potential for violence held by the Nationalists.

In a sign welcoming travelers to the County of Londonderry, Nationalists have expressed their anti-British feelings by scratching out the word "London" and identifying the county as Derry, as it is known among Catholics. At Free Derry Corner, two large murals commemorate the events of



*A memorial to fourteen unarmed marchers who were shot by British paramilitary troops during a civil rights march in Derry on Sunday 30 January 1972. Since 1974, the United Kingdom has ruled Northern Ireland directly.*

Bloody Sunday, in which thirteen people were killed and another fourteen were injured, after British soldiers opened fire during an illegal demonstration in 1972.

The Ulster Architectural Heritage Society is an organization that educates the public and lobbies for historic buildings in nine counties in Northern Ireland.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***The diet is rather simple. Porridge or oatmeal often is eaten at breakfast. At midmorning, one stops for a cup of tea or coffee with cookies or biscuits. Most people eat the main meal at midday. This meal generally is meat-based, featuring beef, chicken, pork, or lamb. Fish and chips are eaten for a quick meal, and a rich soup with plenty of bread can be bought in taverns at lunchtime. Potatoes are a staple, but onions, cabbage, peas, and carrots are eaten just as frequently. Irish stew combines the chief elements of the cuisine with mutton, potatoes, and onions.

Bakeries carry a variety of breads, with brown bread and white soda bread served most often with meals. White sliced bread is called *pan*in Irish. Belfast's soda bread enjoys an excellent reputation; made of flour and buttermilk it is found throughout the country. In the evening, families eat a simple meal of leftovers or eggs and toast.

A drink generally means beer, either lager or stout. Guinness, brewed in Dublin, is the black beer most often drunk. Whiskey also is served in pubs, and coffee is also available.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Food customs of the Northern Irish are not really different from the practices of the Irish in the Republic of Ireland. Christmas supper includes meat such as chicken and ham followed by plum pudding. Being a strongly Catholic country, the Friday night prohibition of meat is observed by Catholics. Since fish is permitted, the Friday evening meal generally features trout or salmon.

***Basic Economy.***The economy of Northern Ireland is based on agriculture and manufacturing. The agriculture sector benefits from rich farming soil. Agriculture contributes to manufacturing through processing of livestock and dairy products. Northern Ireland's principle industries are textiles, shipbuilding, and engineering.

Unequal resources and unequal opportunities resulting from colonization have created conflict. The ethnic and religious strife is really a matter of an uneven distribution of economic resources and opportunities.

***Land Tenure and Property.***The current distribution of land between Catholics and Protestants can be traced back to the settlement patterns of the seventeenth century. The eastern counties of Antrum and Down were settled by the Scottish because of their proximity to Scotland. The settlers who later came from the north of England got land in Monaghan. In the 1600s, the incoming Protestants took the best land for farming, leaving the Catholics with less fertile and more mountainous parcels. As a result, a majority of Protestants established roots in Antrum and Down as well as Armagh and Londonderry.

***Commercial Activities.***The [Industrial Revolution](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Industrial_Revolution.html) occurred in Belfast during the twentieth century and made the country the world's major linen center and the home of two flourishing shipyards. The success of shipbuilding spawned related industries in engineering and rope making.

***Major Industries.***Northern Ireland, Belfast in particular, has always been an industrial center. Early in the twentieth century, the major industries were shipbuilding and rope making. The success of Belfast's industries kept it inextricably bound to Great Britain, from which it imported its raw materials. The owners and managers of most industries were Protestants, reinforcing the paternalistic relationship to England.

***Trade.***As much as 80 percent of external trade is with England. Textiles, in particular linen, are the major export. Grain also is exported; during the Great Famine, grain and foodstuffs were exported to England, with little done to relieve the starving Irish people.

***Division of Labor.***Catholics generally are excluded from skilled and semiskilled jobs in shipyards and linen mills. They historically were restricted to menial jobs on the docks, earning lower wages than the Protestants who worked in skilled jobs and management positions. Ulster Unionists tend to own businesses. Many Catholic Republicans are unemployed.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***The class structure renders Protestants superior in that they dominate the professional and business classes, tending to own the majority of businesses and large farms. Catholics tend to be unskilled workers or work small farms. Catholics tend to be poorer than Protestants as a result of economic inequality that often is attributed to ethnic and religious roots. The general enmity between the two groups is exacerbated by long standing prejudices. Protestants generally believe that Catholics are lazy and irresponsible. Social separation contributes to these perceptions. Protestant and Catholic families live in separate enclaves and worship separately, and their children study in segregated schools.

Irish Catholics may tend to drink, whereas Protestants are viewed as more British and puritanical. On Sundays, Catholics often engage in leisure or recreation activities after mass, while Protestants scorn Sunday leisure activities, often choosing not to garden in deference to the sabbath.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Protestants tend to comport themselves as British, members of the United Kingdom. In regard to owning land and businesses, Protestants constitute the economic, social, and political elite. Their accent and manners are in keeping with those of Great Britain. Catholics, who tend to be poorer and have larger families, speak Gaelic, although not fluently. Most Protestants belong to the Orange Order, which is dedicated to maintaining the Protestant religion and Protestant social superiority.

Political Life

***Government.***Northern Ireland is symbolically headed by the British monarch but it is governed by an elected parliament. The Ireland Act of 1920 established a parliament that was suspended in 1972 because of the ethnic violence. The makeup of the parliament is intended to include fifty-two delegates in the [Northern Ireland House of Commons](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/House_of_Commons_of_Northern_Ireland.html) who serve five-year terms. The House selects twenty-four Senate members who serve eight-year terms. House members choose the prime minister from the political party that holds the most seats.

The judicial system is similar to that of England, in which the courts base decisions on parliamentary legislation and common law. A magistrate hears minor cases, and more serious cases are heard by the Crown Court, which is made up of a judge and jury. Any appeals go before a nine-judge court in the British House of Lords.

There is no written constitution. The three viable political options are the continuance as part of the United Kingdom, association with the Republic of Ireland, and independence. The country has the



*Farmhouse in mountains of Mourn. Northern Ireland has lush green countryside and stout mountains leading to a steep and craggy shoreline.*

right to self-determination under the Northern Ireland Constitution Act of 1973, but unless there is a majority vote for independence or a formal alliance with Ireland, it will remain part of the United Kingdom.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Each of the twenty-six districts has an elected council. Belfast and Londonderry have their own councils, which focuses on education, public works, local planning and public health. Protestants tend to hold most elected positions, and this has led to an uneven distribution of resources.

In the 1830s, the Catholic Emancipation Act allowed Catholics to seek election to the British legislature. However, Protestant leaders in Northern Ireland [gerrymandered](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Gerrymandering.html) the voting districts so that the Catholics were always a minority in every district.

***Social Problems and Control.***Most violence results from the civil unrest between Catholics and Protestants. Bombings and individual attacks generally are motivated by the politically charged atmosphere and segregation. Nonpolitical crimes are generally based on socioeconomic inequity. Burglary and theft accounted for nearly three-quarters of all recorded crime in Northern Ireland in 1995. Between 1990 and 1995, the number of arrests for drug-related offenses more than tripled.

***Military Activity.***The presence of British police and military personnel is pervasive. There are police checkpoints, and citizens must carry documents routinely. The [Ulster Volunteer Force](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ulster_Volunteer_Force.html) is a Unionist military organization that is highly secretive and has been labeled a terrorist group since it is openly anti-Catholic. The Ulster Defense Association was a legal organization until 1991. The Royal Ulster Constabulary and the British Army are responsible for keeping the peace; the Royal Ulster Constabulary employs a special branch of army intelligence to anticipate and prevent all terrorist attacks.

The [Irish National Liberation Army](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Irish_National_Liberation_Army.html) is composed of older, more experienced members. The [Provisional Irish Republican Army](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Provisional_Irish_Republican_Army.html) is a descendant of the original IRA. In this secretive group, which is a military wing of the IRA, each member knows only the names of his immediate colleagues. The IRA has detonated bombs under cars, striking at the moment a police patrol passes. The IRA has killed twenty to thirty soldiers and police officers per year since the 1980s.

Young Nationalists are recruited for paramilitary service. First they join Fionna Eireann as a scout or recruit. To prove themselves, young initiates must participate in the beating or kneecapping of a Protestant.

The military carries out regular security patrols in Unionist and Loyalist areas on foot or in police or army vehicles. The 1974 Prevention of Terrorism Act was passed to prevent the IRA from extending its attacks to Great Britain; it authorizes detention for up to seven days for anyone seemingly engaged in terrorism in Northern Ireland, Great Britain, or the Republic of Ireland.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Social insurance benefits exist for orphans, widows, pensioners, and persons on disability or maternity leave. The state, the employer, and the employee all contribute to the fund that provides these benefits. Health services and medicines are free to all persons with long-term illnesses. Beyond that, there are two kinds of entitlements: free health services for those who have a low income and a lower level of services for people with higher incomes.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Most [nongovernmental organizations](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Non_governmental_organization.html) operating in the country, including the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Assembly, are concerned with human rights and human rights violations resulting from violent attacks by the IRA and the British Army. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, which was established by the Northern Ireland Act of 1988, has the duty and power to ensure the human rights of all residents and to counter human rights violations.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***The position of women in the economic structure shifted during the period of direct rule, with more women entering the workforce between 1952 and 1995 as the number of jobs expanded. Typically, women work in low-paid, part-time jobs in the service sector, and even though their participation in the workforce has increased, it has remained below that of men.

The most dramatic increase in women's employment was that of married women after a constitutional revision. In 1937, the constitution reflected religious bias by stating that a working woman who married had to resign from her job. It was not until 1977 that an Employment Equality Act made that practice illegal.

***The Relative Status of Men and Women.***Women have become increasingly involved in the peace movement. The Northern Ireland Peace Movement, which began in 1976, allied Protestant and Catholic women who marched together through both Loyalist and Republican parts of Belfast. Two of the founders, [Mairead Corrigan](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Mairead_Maguire.html) and Betty Williams, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1976 for their efforts to unite Catholics and Protestants to halt the violence.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Premarital chastity is valued by both religions, especially in rural areas. Young people are expected to abstain from sex until after they are married in a religious ceremony in a church. Marriages often are brokered by a matchmaker since the economic aspects of marriage require experienced calculation. In the 1920s, postfamine marriages were infrequent, with many young people abstaining from marriage; there were more single than married people in the age range of twenty-five to thirty. Farmers who had small plots of land wanted to keep it and they discouraged early marriages of their children to avoid the need to subdivide the land.

In the 1970s, marriage rates increased, but Ireland was joining the West in embracing the nuclear family model. While more marriages occurred, married couples were having smaller families. By 1977, the birthrate had declined by one-third. This trend toward nuclear families applied to both Catholics and Protestants, although Catholics still had larger families. Even after marriage, contraception, which is forbidden by the Roman Catholic Church, is not legally obtainable in much of the country.

Since the 1600s, when the Scots and English arrived, very little intermarriage between those ethnic groups and the original Irish inhabitants has occurred. However, it is said that as many as one-fifth of marriages in Belfast today are between a Catholic and a Protestant; this figure may be exaggerated.

***Domestic Unit.***Families tend to live together in nuclear units in government housing projects that reinforce the separation of Catholics and Protestants. Catholics get smaller, older houses, while Protestant government officials award new or upgraded dwellings to other Protestants. Catholics tend to have larger families, making their homes more crowded. The government once talked about altering family assistance to favor smaller families but decided that move would lead to charges of religious discrimination from Catholics.

***Inheritance.***Inheritance customs changed after the 1920s. After the famine, farmers felt betrayed by the land, and the generations of birthright to a family's land stopped. Farmers who had small plots wanted to hold on to what they had and were reluctant to subdivide their parcels to hand down to their sons.

Generally the father would give his land to one son, not necessarily the oldest. Only then could that son take a bride. Often this did not take place until the father reached the age of seventy, at which time an old age pension allowed him to bequeath his land. In the meantime, the grown children who were not going to inherit land had no place in the home and usually emigrated or looked for work as craftsmen in a neighboring town.

Parents enjoy a patriarchal status and the father claims the best chair near the fire. Historically, when parents retired and passed their land to a son, they stopped sleeping in the kitchen and moved to a smaller room in the back of the house, where they would display heirlooms and religious pictures that previously were kept in the main hearth area.

***Kin Groups.***Kinship is reinforced by religion, class, and socioeconomic status. Catholics feel a kinship among themselves as the minority as well as links to their coreligionists in the Republic of Ireland. Protestants associate with their British heritage and identify with their compatriots in Great Britain in terms of religion, socioeconomic status, and class. Nuclear families are the main kin group, with relatives involved as kin in the extended family. Children generally adopt the father's surname. The first name is generally a Christian name, usually the name of a saint.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Infant mortality as measured in the 1926 Dublin census was high. In the 1990s the infant mortality rate fell to a level lower than that in Europe as a whole.

***Child Rearing and Education.***The mother raises younger children. However, when a boy makes his first communion, generally at age seven, his father rears him alongside his older brothers. Education is compulsory from ages six to fifteen. Schools are



*Main street of Enniskillen. Families tend to live together in nuclear units in government housing projects.*

segregated, with Catholics attending parochial schools and Protestants attending public schools.

***Higher Education.***Queen's University in Belfast, which was founded in 1845 and originally was called Queen's College, is the most prestigious university. About eight thousand students study there, mostly in the sciences. The Union Theological College was founded in 1853. In 1968, the New University of Ulster opened in Colraine; two thousand students are enrolled. Vocational schools include the Belfast College of Technology, Ulster Polytechnic in Newtownabbey, and the Agricultural College. Assembly College, founded in 1853, is a Presbyterian training school.

Etiquette

Rules of etiquette are situational and are affected by status and class. While political conversations in pubs may be intense, political discussions occur only among friends and people with similar views. People are reluctant to discuss their political, religious, social, and economic views with outsiders.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***For Catholics, Good Friday, Easter, and Christmas are the most holy days and are observed by attending church services and spending time with the family. While Catholic-Protestant conflict has worsened in the last century, the religious and political history between the two groups goes back centuries. In 1534, King Henry VIII of England established himself the leader of a new church of Protestantism that he tried to impose in Ireland. He offered to increase the landholdings of Irish nobles who would recognize the new church. However, few of the Irish, and none in Ulster, accepted the offer. In 1541, Henry declared himself king of Ireland and outlawed monasteries. In 1547, Edward VI, his son and successor, declared Protestantism the official religion of Ireland and dispatched troops to enforce the new law. Those troops arrested Irish nobles and seized the property of those who refused to convert. Edward gave the confiscated land to the English Protestants who were settling there. Elizabeth I continued that policy and enforced Protestantism. In 1560, she was named head of the Irish Church and insisted that English, not Gaelic, be used in religious services.

***Religious Practitioners.***The Catholic clergy provide a link between God and the Catholic congregants. This represents a significant difference between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Catholic clergy participate in the civil rights movement in an attempt to equalize the volatile conflict. However, Protestants complain that the Catholic clergy exacerbate the situation by interfering with politics when they support Nationalist candidates and participate in demonstrations against the British Army.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***The headquarters of the Catholic and Protestant churches are located in Armagh. Each religion has a cathedral named for Saint Patrick, a fifth century missionary who brought Christianity to the Celts of the island.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Protestants believe that the Catholic Church teaches that salvation is found only in their religion, which means that the Protestants are heretics damned to eternal damnation. Catholics killed in "the Troubles" are venerated as martyrs.

Medicine and Health Care

A national health care program was started in the 1950s. The Department of Health and Social Services administers the health care system by using tax revenues. Many services are free, such as hospitalization and maternity coverage.

Secular Celebrations

[Saint Patrick's Day](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Saint_Patrick_s_Day.html) is the most widely celebrated secular holiday and is characterized by vigorous parades. New Year's Day is celebrated on 1 January. The controversial annual pride parade of the Orange Order is held on Orange Day on 12 July to celebrate and commemorate the victory of Prince William of Orange over King James II. This Protestant organization had about ninety thousand members in the 1990s. The public parade and celebration evoke tension in Belfast, often provoking Nationalists to violence.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***Since the partition of Ireland is artificial, there is no real distinction between the two cultures.

Established in 1962, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland is the prime distributor of public support for the arts. Its mission is to develop and improve the knowledge, appreciation, and practice of the arts; to increase public access to and participation in the arts; and to encourage and assist artists.

***Literature.***Most Irish literature has been written by authors in and around Dublin. However, Northern Ireland produced the Nobel Prize-winning poet, Seamus Heaney, who has published many collections of poems. His career parallels the violent political struggles of his homeland, but he is fascinated primarily by the earth and the history embedded there. His verse incorporates Gaelic expressions as he explores the themes of nature, love, and mythology. His poems use images of death and dying, and he has written elegiac poems to friends and family members lost to "the Troubles." Northern Ireland is also the birthplace of C. Day Lewis, who wrote novels and verse and taught and translated classical literature. Lewis was named poet laureate of the United Kingdom in 1970.

***Graphic Arts.***Celtic designs can be seen in artistic and everyday images. The Celtic influence appears in the lettering on shop signs, letterheads, jewelry, and tombstones.

***Performance Arts.***Irish music incorporates fiddles, bagpipes, drums, flutes, and harps. Folk music is performed in pubs and parades. The Ulster National Orchestra in Belfast and the Philharmonic Society are the leading classical musical groups. Traditional Irish music has grown very popular outside the country in the last decade.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Queen's University has a strong reputation in the sciences. Many of the eight thousand members of the student body receive undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in agriculture, food science, and horticulture. The university has research programs in livestock production and crop and grass production as well as food quality and processing to improve the competitiveness of the beef, sheep, and pig livestock sectors.

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—S. B. D OWNEY

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User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_1)

**hailey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Add information about the Ulster Project. (Where Northern Irish teens come to America and learn new life lessons and getting along!) Great experience!!!

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_2)

**David Gim**

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Thank you  
  
Best regards  
David Gim  
Editor  
GLM PTE LTD

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_3)

**Sarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, this article was very helpful towards my school studies however i am looking for deep culture also, like for example the Irish inception of beauty. But this article was otherwise very helpful. thank-you for your help.  
  
A fellow learner,  
Sarah H.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_4)

[**Amanda**](mailto:milleram%20[at]%20mhs%20[dash]%20pa%20[dot]%20org)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The information on religion in Ireland helped me greatly in my Gov and Econ project, thank you very much. Is there anyway you can put more information in about how the religious war between Protestants and Catholics affect [globalization](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Globalization.html)?

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_5)

**kathy**

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Incidently, there are a total of 32 Irish counties, 26 in the Republic and 6 in Northern Ireland.

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_6)

[**unknown**](mailto:rose%20[dash]%20jac002%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

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So cool. I think Ireland is awesome. This site is really helpful with reports.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_7)

**R. Simpson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think alot of the views in this are now outdated. this is how it used to be but N.I has changed quite a bit now. I wouldnt think it would be fair to say that all the rich people are protestants and the poor are catholics. this was how it used to be but not so much anymore. There is more harmony in the country as Catholics and Protestants now live together and attend the same schools. There is still some trouble between Catholics and Protestants in certain areas however

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_8)

[**Anne Russell**](mailto:memoriesfour%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was a great info that I could you for a group presentation. Could you possibly send me an updated version if there is one. Thank you so very much and have a great day.  
  
Anne

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_9)

[**Ruth**](mailto:ruthmcilmoyle%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A major part of Irish culture, both north and sourth of the border, and in both Protestant and Catholic traditions, is the way that funerals happen. In NI, burials are usually on the third day (48 hours after death). All of this time is known as the 'wake'. The body is taken to a funeral parlour and then returned to the home as quickly as possible until the funeral. The home is open for visitors who come to sit with the family, and visitors usually bring food, particularly biscuits and tea but also meals. The coffin is borne in 'lifts' by the closest male members of the family.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_10)

**Karen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

In Northeren Ireland, in reference to theDry land bridge, need to know where it is now in what town or region, what it looks like now.

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_11)

**Tanya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is somewhat dated and a tad offensive it may have reflected life here in 1970's! We now have integrated schools and do not sit down to meat and vegetables at lunch times! We have a wide variety of international cuisine available and a diverse cultural population from many parts of eastern Europe and Asia!

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_12)

**Shelly**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

So, I'm trying to do a report for school, what are some good culture facts?

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_13)

**kylie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

need to know about the holidays in northern Ireland. What is orange mans day?

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Northern-Ireland.html#Comments_14)

**Jocelyn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The cultural aspects seems little outdated, as if they reflected the life in Ireland about 19th-20th Century. I would like it updated if we are to report it for the school purposes and project. Also, I loved the things I learned about Northern Ireland! Please update the article to the current generation!

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[Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Commonwealth of the [Northern Mariana Islands](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Northern_Mariana_Islands.html)

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Culture Name

The original inhabitants and dominant ethnic group of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (all the Marianas except [Guam](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Guam.html)) in western Micronesia refer to themselves as Chamorros ( *tsa-'mor-os*). The term *chamorri*was used to designate the upper caste at the time of Magellan's arrival in 1521. The Spaniards heard this as *chamurres*and understood it to mean "friend." By 1668, the term had shifted to *chamorro*("bold"), because Chamorro men often wore a topknot of hair on an otherwise shaved scalp.

Alternative Names

A more general designation of the people of the Northern Marianas is Mariana Islanders, but residents frequently use the acronym CNMI.

Orientation

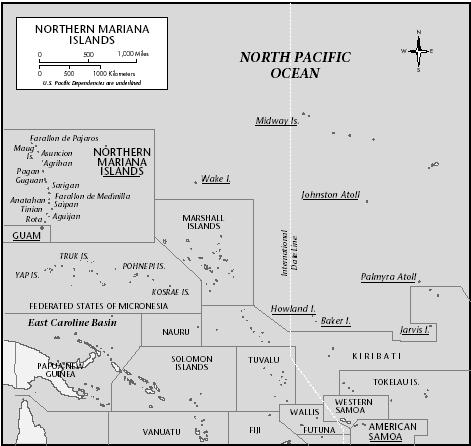
***Identification.***[Ferdinand Magellan](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ferdinand_Magellan.html) claimed the islands for Spain in 1521 and first named them *Las Islas de las Velas Latinas*("The Islands of the Lateen Sails") after the triangular sails on the native canoes. Later, angered by the islanders' penchant for stealing from his ships, he renamed the archipelago *Las Islas de los Ladrones*("The Islands of the Thieves"). In 1668, the name was changed to Las Marianas in honor of Mariana of Austria, widow of Philip IV of Spain.

***Location and Geography.***The CNMI is in western Micronesia, about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to the Philippines. The fourteen islands stretch like beads on a five hundred-mile string, from [Farallon de Pajaros](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Farallon_de_Pajaros.html) in the north to Rota in the south. The climate is tropical. Temperature varies only slightly between a December–June dry season and a July–November rainy season. Typhoons are a threat from August through November.

The Marianas are high islands, largely limestone terraced in the south and [volcanic](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Volcano.html) in the north. The 176 square-mile (458 square kilometers) land area (21 percent of it arable) is concentrated in the three southern islands of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. Only three other islands (Agrigan, Pagan, and Anatahan) are larger than ten square miles (26 square kilometers) in area. Culturally integrated but politically separate, the United States Territory of Guam lies thirty miles farther south at the bottom of the chain. Garapan is the capital of the CNMI, located on Saipan, the site of the commonwealth's only urbanized population.

***Demography.***The population grew from 16,780 in 1980 to an estimated 66,000 in 1998. Most of this nearly 400 percent growth was in the form of labor pools from Asia migrating in response to unprecedented economic growth. The 1995 breakdown of the population by ethnicity was Filipino, 19,868 (33.75 percent); Chamorro, 17,120 (29.1 percent); Chinese, 6,837 (11.6 percent); Micronesian, 4,818 (8.2 percent); Carolinian, 3,041 (5.2 percent); Korean, 2,325 (3.95 percent); white, 2,013 (3.4 percent); Japanese, 1,047 (1.8 percent); and all others, 1,777 (3.0 percent).

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The official languages are English, Chamorro, and Carolinian, an Eastern Malayo-Polynesian language that is a combination of dialects from atolls in the area of Truk. Chamorro is closely related to [Tagalog](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Tagalog_language.html) (Pilipino). After more than four hundred years of Western (Spanish, German, and English) and Asian (Japanese) colonial domination, Chamorro is untouched in its grammar, although major portions of the vocabulary have been transformed into variants of Spanish and English. The Chamorros and Carolinians are largely multilingual, speaking their native tongues, English, and Japanese. Carolinian is spoken mostly in the home and the immediate neighborhood, while Chamorro is used widely in communities throughout



*Northern Mariana Islands*

the islands. Guamanians consider the Chamorro of the CNMI, especially on Rota, a picturesque, almost sing-song dialect of their self-proclaimed standard language. Chamorros of the Northern Marianas generally are proud of their distinctive way of speaking.

***Symbolism.***The Catholic Church and its calendar dominate Chamorro symbolic rituals. Every community has a saint's day, and the major seasonal holidays are occasions for family and community feasting. The most important identifying symbol, displayed on the flag, is the Latte stone. These carved limestone columns in their most modest form are four- to five-foot-tall supports designed to provide a raised foundation for living and ceremonial structures. Parallel double rows of eight to twelve much taller Latte pillars topped by separate capstones are all that is left of what must have been huge structures throughout the archipelago. Much about the Latte stones remains unknown. Whatever their actual significance to those who hewed them from the islands' limestone deposits, these stones have emerged as one of the most visible links to the Chamorros' past.

Family vacation packages

History and Ethnic Relations

The cultural history of the CNMI can be divided into a precontact period and successive periods of Spanish, German, Japanese, and American political hegemony.

***Emergence of the Nation.***The early history of the Marianas is little known, but they appear to have been first settled 3,500 years ago by people who sailed northward and eastward from southeastern Asia via the Philippines. The archaeological record and the little that can be gleaned from early Spanish accounts suggest that Chamorro society had developed a two-tiered system of stratification roughly based on differences of wealth stemming from richer coastal holdings as opposed to a more subsistence-level economy of inland horticulture. This was especially apparent on the larger southern islands (especially Guam), as attested by the size and distribution of Latte structures and patterns of human burial there.

Villages were small and scattered, and there is little evidence of major ceremonial centers. Kinship and descent may have been organized around matrilineal clans, a common pattern in Micronesia. However, both patrilineal and cognatic (bilateral) systems are widespread in southeastern Asia, and the Chamorros did not move further into the Pacific. The rapid replacement of Chamorro with Spanish naming practices after contact is of little note since the cultural history of the islands after 1521 was one of initial population decimation followed by massive Hispanic [acculturation](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Acculturation.html).

Magellan sighted the islands and claimed them for Spain in March 1521, when he made his landfall at Guam. The estimated Chamorro population at that time was nearly seventy-five thousand. By the time of the first official census in 1710, that number had plummeted to about 3,500. The disease, forced labor, and harsh treatment introduced by the Spaniards took a toll. The resulting collapse of Chamorro society and culture left a vacuum that was filled by the Catholic Church and other Hispanic institutions. Chamorro culture today, with the exception of the language structure, is largely the product of 350 years of forced inclusion in and adaptation to the Spanish Empire.

Spain sold the islands to Germany in 1899, and at that time Guam became a possession of the United States. The Germans had little impact on Chamorro culture, though they did introduce new forms of education, bureaucracy, and governance. In 1919, after Germany's defeat in World War I, Japan administered the Mariana Islands (except for Guam) and most of the rest of Micronesia under a mandate from League of Nations.

Throughout the Japanese period, the Chamorros remained isolated from their masters. Intensive agricultural development in copra and then sugarcane was carried out largely by thousands of Japanese nationals. Education and other trappings of modernization enhanced some aspects of Chamorro life, and some Chamorros look back on that period as a golden age of economic prosperity and stability. However, other than an acquired taste for imported rice, little that was Japanese remained after the battles on Saipan and Guam in 1944.

In July 1947, the area was recognized as a [United Nations Trust Territory](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/United_Nations_trust_territories.html) administered by the United States, beginning a period of American acculturation and modernization. The traditional Hispanic nature of Chamorro culture was infused with Yankee economic and political energy. Tourism and the reopened markets on Guam encouraged the people of the Northern Marianas to look beyond their island borders. The stage was set for confrontation with the wider world.

***National Identity.***In 1978, after years of debates and plebiscites, the Northern Marianas entered into a commonwealth association with the United States. Though still under foreign control, the new Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands reintroduced in modern form a measure of autonomy missing from Chamorro culture for over four hundred years.

***Ethnic Relations.***Except for colonizers, for most of their history the Chamorro lived in ethnic isolation. The arrival of refugees from the Caroline Islands in the late nineteenth century did little to change that situation. Only since the creation of the CNMI and its attendant economic opportunities have Chamorros had to deal with large immigrant populations from Asian countries. The exposure of recent cases of labor exploitation may result in an improvement of social and economic relations in the growing multiethnic populations, especially in the urbanizing areas of Saipan.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

The urban pattern in the CNMI (essentially only on Saipan) is one of small towns growing rapidly in response to new economic opportunity in the form of tourism and light manufacturing. Areas with a denser population are characterized by a low, rectangular architecture, the product of simple plans



*A man holds a green fish he caught using Daiwa tackle. A subsistence economy of farming and fishing remains fundamental.*

and construction blocks. While some resort areas and golf courses take advantage of the tropical landscape and sweeping shorelines, street life tends to be defined by the glow of neon lights.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Rice dominates the diet, which is now built on a base of vegetables and marine resources. Most food purchased at local markets is imported from Japan, Australia, and the United States. Three meals a day, eaten at home, are the norm. Even those working in towns are usually close enough to go home for lunch, as do farmers.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Food at religious and secular ceremonies is characterized primarily by being eaten communally. Families bring prepared food and additional food and drink for preparation on site. While the dishes and settings are generally more elaborate, the meals do not differ markedly from those for everyday consumption.

Family vacation packages

***Basic Economy.***While a viable subsistence economy of farming and fishing remains fundamental, the people of the CNMI look increasingly to employment in tourism and government.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Many families, especially among the Chamorros, own or homestead small farm parcels. In general, only native residents of the CNMI can own property. Leasing land to outside commercial interests is a major source of income for many citizens.

***Commercial Activities and Major Industries.***Tourism is by far the largest sector of the economy, followed by government activities and light industry, especially garment manufacturing.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Economic differentiation is emerging along with the commercial economy in general. However, there are no large class differentials with the exception of the migrant labor populations, which live in poor economic conditions relative to the native residents. The subsistence economy is stable and substantial. Increases in wealth and population size are beginning to take a toll, but the CNMI, though not egalitarian, is relatively homogeneous both socially and economically.

Political Life

***Government.***The CNMI is a commonwealth that has a political union with the United States. It is [self-governing](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Self_governance.html) with a locally elected governor, lieutenant governor, and bicameral legislature.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***The CNMI has a two-party system modeled after that of the United States. With a relatively small population concentrated on a few of the larger islands, politics are very personal and family-centered. Nearly everyone are related to the political leaders, and family loyalty is fierce. Fistfights and shouting matches occur at some political rallies.

***Social Problems and Control.***Until recently, crime was not a major problem, and it is still not common outside the urbanizing towns. Informal sanctions of disapproval and ostracism remain effective controls in most areas of social life. Rising population densities on the three largest islands have been accompanied by increased rates of juvenile delinquency, drug trafficking, and immigrant labor abuses. Nevertheless, there are few displays of public violence, and violent crime remains rare.



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*Women tend to hold more importance in home roles, rather than outside the household.*

Gender Roles and Statuses

Chamorro culture is deeply Hispanicized with over-tones of American individualism. Men play dominant roles outside the household, where women tend to hold sway.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Chamorro culture is heavily influenced by its commitment to Catholicism. Marriage is largely a matter of personal romantic love and is monogamous. Few adults remain unmarried, and large families are favored.

***Domestic Unit.***Newly married couples may remain with the bride's family until children are born, at which time an independent nuclear household is established neolocally. Larger extended family households develop occasionally, but the goal is for the married couple and children to live independently.

***Inheritance.***As islanders, Chamorros must deal with restricted land allocation to heirs. This problem has been ameliorated by the lessening need for land as a result of the growing cash economy in the



*Workers in a taro field. Migrant labor populations live in poor economic conditions, compared to native residents.*

towns. A form of [primogeniture](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Primogeniture.html) is practiced in which an oldest brother acts as a kind of corporate head of a sibling group that works its farming parcels collectively until other opportunities draw siblings away to other ventures. Distinctions among subsistence parcels, pastureland, government-issued homesteads, and residential lots provide additional options for distribution decisions, which typically are made public and implemented at a formal family meeting.

***Kin Groups.***Kinship is cognatic and bilateral. There are no corporate kin groups beyond the household and family, but extended kindreds permeate the society and shape social relationships to a large degree. Rarely does one travel to another island and not stay with relatives. The Catholic system of godparenthood further ramifies kinship networks by creating ritually defined fictive kinship relationships between children and the friends and colleagues of their parents.

Family vacation packages

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Infant care is diffused throughout the household and the community, with siblings and neighbors forming an open network of caregivers. Young children are rarely left alone; they are nearly always in the company—and usually in the arms—of someone from the family or neighborhood.

***Child Rearing and Education.***Chamorros place a high value on formal education. Obedience to authority and a capacity for independent living go hand in hand. School age in the Marianas is from six to sixteen (first through twelfth grades). Schools operate on the American model. There are Head Start programs and preschool opportunities for the child under six years old.

***Higher Education.***The Northern Marianas College on Saipan is a two-year school that offers degrees in education, liberal arts, and business. Students who wish continue their education attend the University of Guam or the University of Hawaii. Young people who leave the CNMI to complete their higher education often do not return.

Etiquette

Chamorros are on intimate terms with one another. They are used to being close together and often do not have to speak to communicate. When one encounters an older Chamorro, one need not say much, but one is expected to at least nod with a bow or to kiss the elder's hand briefly as a sign of respect. Casual "hellos" in the neighborhoods often consist of no more than a raising of the eyebrows in recognition. Especially at public social events, an arm around a male or female friend is a sign of casual good feeling.

Religion

Since the coming of the Spanish, Chamorro culture has been Catholic and Hispanic, and the Chamorro world continues to revolve around the Church calendar. The most distinctive buildings, events, customs, and ideas are Catholic, from the many community churches and chapels, to the saints' days' feasts, to the week-long wakes in the homes of the dead.

Medicine and Health Care

Generally the CNMI is a healthy place to live. There are no poisonous snakes or insects and no malaria. The leading cause of death is heart disease. Automobile accidents are the fifth leading cause of death. The infectious diseases usually associated with a tropical climate are not present. Influenza has been the leading cause of illness, followed by gastroenteritis. There are health centers with dental facilities on Rota and Tinian. Medicaid and other federal health programs are available.

Family vacation packages

Secular Celebrations

Commonwealth Day is celebrated on 8 January, and holidays celebrated by other groups, such as the Fourth of July, are gala occasions for everyone.

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—J. J EROME S MITH

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_1)

**Bobby Capelle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i would like to know about the prehistory of saipan.... every thing such as the creation of the island. and if could be at my address tomorrow... thank you very much....

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_2)

**Elinor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow! this website is amazing it really helped me with my reaserch!

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_3)

**Erick aimin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow! very nice site this help me allot in my classwork

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_4)

**Smitha706**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi there! Someone in my Myspace group shared this site with us so I came to give it a appear. Im definitely loving the details. Im bookmarking and will likely be tweeting this to my followers! Outstanding blog and great style and style. efkbceedfkfcfkea

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_5)

**Marquina Hofschneider**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello,  
  
I am a local of the CNMI and although some details weren't completely accurate, they were all pretty close. Great work!

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_6)

[**Mercy Gamtin**](mailto:mercygamtin%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great One!! This site helped me a lot for my class presentation... Thanks

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Commonwealth-of-the-Northern-Mariana-Islands.html#Comments_7)

**Denrose Fritz**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i LOVE THE WAY I READ THIS HISTORY ABOUT THE MARIANAS ISLANDS. I LOVE TO READ IT.

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1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Norway

Norway

Culture Name

Norwegian

Alternative Names

*Norsk*(in Norwegian), Norse (historical)

Orientation

***Identification.***The name *Norge*("the Northern Way") originally pertained to a region of the country before political [consolidation](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Consolidation.html) under Harald the Fair-Haired around 900 C.E. In later use, the country's name indicates its location on the northern periphery of Europe. Some of the northerly sections of the country are home to at least two main groups (coastal and mountain) of an indigenous population of Sami (previously called Lapps) with a separate language and distinct cultural traditions. Some groups of Sami practice reindeer nomadism and range across northern Sweden and Finland. A smaller Gypsy population also was part of the otherwise homogeneous population. For humanitarian reasons, in the late twentieth century, the country welcomed asylum seekers and immigrants from other countries. Norwegians have an acute sense of identity fostered by a nineteenth century national romantic movement and by the country's emergence in 1905 as an independent constitutional monarchy. The small scale of Norwegian society, with a population of little more than four million, also promotes cultural sharing.

***Location and Geography.***Norway is situated on the western side of the Scandinavian peninsula, which it shares with its eastern neighbor, Sweden. The North Sea borders the country on the west, and the Barent Sea lies to the north. Spitsbergen, a group of islands four hundred miles to the north in the Arctic Ocean, is a Norwegian dependency. The country also shares borders with Finland and Russia in its northern regions. A long and narrow landmass, Norway extends more than 1,100 miles from north to south and varies in width between 270 miles and 4 miles. One-third of the country lies north of the Arctic Circle. The dominant feature of the topography is a backbone of mountains extending down the Scandinavian peninsula, with fjords, or long inlets of the sea, penetrating inland on the west and south. With a total area of 125,181 square miles (324,200 square kilometers), much of the country is dominated by rugged mountainous or coastal landscapes that have made tourism an important industry. Only about 3 percent of the land area is suitable for raising crops, and nearly half of that land is situated in the east, near Oslo, the capital, where broad, open valleys produce grain and root crops. The west coast traditionally has supported smaller farms perched along the fjords or nestled in mountain valleys. Farming and fishing have always been major occupations in this region. Trondheim, a medieval cathedral city on the west coast, also has an agricultural hinterland. The northern region constitutes the largest part of the country, with 35 percent of the land area and only 12 percent of the population. Fishing has been the major traditional occupation in this region. Oslo, which was called Kristiania before the nation gained independence, has long been associated with major governmental functions.

***Demography.***In January 2000, the total population was 4,478,497. Approximately thirty thousand to forty thousand of those residents self-identify as Sami. The first census which was taken in 1769, recorded 723,618 residents. For most of the nineteenth century, the population grew at an average annual rate of 1.7 percent in spite of substantial migration to the United States during the second half of that century. The post–World War II growth rate declined to about 0.2 percent annually.

Immigrants constitute just under 6 percent of the total population. The largest number of immigrants



*Norway*

came from Sweden and Denmark, with the third largest contingent coming from Pakistan.

In 1999, the population grew by 0.7 percent, the largest annual rate of growth since the first half of the 1950s. This unusual growth is accounted for by the arrival of 19,300 persons from abroad. Approximately 67,200 persons with a political refugee background lived in Norway at the beginning of 1999. Among the recent refugees, the largest groups are from Bosnia (11,000), Vietnam (10,500), and Iran (8,100). Refugees are concentrated in and around the largest cities, with approximately one-third living in the Oslo area.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The major languages of the indigenous minority and majority populations are Samisk (Lappish), a Finnic language, and two official Norwegian languages, Bokmål and Nynorsk, both of which are Germanic languages. Bokmål, or "book language," is derived from the Danish-influenced Norwegian used in the eastern region. A product of the national romantic movement, Nynorsk, or "New Norwegian," was constructed in the nineteenth century from peasant dialects to create a genuinely Norwegian written language. Formulated by Ivar Aasen, a self-taught linguist from the west coast, Nynorsk was consciously constructed to reveal a clear relationship to Old Norse, linking contemporary Norway with the Viking age.

***Symbolism.***The flag, folk costumes, the land (or landscape), and the home are the major symbols of national unity. The flag (a red background with blue stripes outlined in white) is owned and flown not only by public agencies but by many private individuals. On Constitution Day (17 May), citizens appear at public celebrations carrying small flags and wearing red, white, and blue streamers pinned to their clothing. In the year 2000, there were thirteen official flag days. Folk or national costumes *(bunad)*are owned by large numbers of both men and women. Based on local traditional peasant apparel, women's costumes include elaborate skirts, blouses, jackets, stockings, and shoes adorned with silver pins and decorations. Because of increased affluence in recent decades, more individuals own costumes, which are considered correct attire for any festive or formal occasion. The design and colors of the costumes vary according to locality so that each large fjord or valley has a distinctive costume. Fostered by national romanticism, folk costumes are partially constructed traditions, with some historically authentic elements and some new elements. The costume for the city of Bergen, for example, was designed in 1956.

Best clothing retailers

The national anthem affirms a love for the land and the importance of the home as symbols of nationhood. Festive days in this home-centered society often feature a public celebration followed by gatherings of families and relatives in people's homes. Entertaining is done at home, not at restaurants or bars. Homes are comfortable refuges and are decorated to express the identity of the family. Because there is less geographic mobility than is the case in some other countries, family members and relatives tend to live in the same region over a number of generations and identify with the local area. This attachment to place is also apparent in people's relationship to nature. Half the nation's families have access to nearby ski huts, cabins, or boats, and virtually everyone engages in outdoor pursuits such as skiing, hiking, and boating. In a variety of ways, Norwegians aim to preserve rather than transform the local natural landscape. At the same time, they attempt to preserve the cultural traditions of the locality through numerous folk museums and other specialized heritage organizations.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Norway claims the heritage of early Norse seafarers, raiders, colonizers, explorers, and merchants for whom the "Viking Age" (793 to 1050 C.E. ) was named. In the ninth century Harald Fairhair became the first king of all of Norway, consolidating smaller kingdoms through alliance and conquest. Harald's descendant, [Olaf Tryggvesson](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Olaf_I_of_Norway.html) (Olaf I), converted to Christianity while in England and came to Norway in 995 to force conversion of the country from the Norse religion. Killed in 1030 at the Battle of Stiklestad, Olaf II (Saint Olaf) was the first king to organize an administration for church and state. His brother, Harald III, was killed invading England in 1066. The Black Death devastated the country in 1349–1350, killing at least one-third of the population. A weakened Norway was politically joined with Sweden and Denmark at the Union of Kalmar, in 1397. Danish kings ruled Norway until 1814.

Family vacation packages

The emergence of the nation-state can be traced to the development of a national culture, then to that of a national identity, and finally to the political events that led to the country's final emergence as an independent nation in 1905. The [Napoleonic Wars](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Napoleonic_Wars.html) resulted in the dissolution of the union between Denmark and Norway in 1814, the year in which the Norwegian constitution was established. Norway had been a province of Denmark for nearly four hundred years before it was ceded to Sweden. The union with Sweden was dissolved in 1905.

The foundation for the development of a national culture can be traced to the national romanticism of an intellectual elite. In the late eighteenth century, Norway was predominantly rural, with a tiny elite of religious and government officials under the king of Denmark. Those administrators began to collect information about the topography and landscape of the national regions and the natural history of the land. Later, the educated bourgeoisie wrote about the history of the country, tracing the connection between the present and the Icelandic sagas, the Viking period, the medieval period, and the decline of Norway in the period before the union with Denmark (1380–1814). Those intellectuals also began recording and describing rural culture,

A picture containing outdoor, mountain, white, old

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

*A collection of houses built for coal miners and painted colorful tones to reduce suicide rates in the long, dark winters of Spitsbergen.*

including folktales, architecture, customs, clothing, mythology, music, and peasant dialects. From a national romantic perspective, this information helped make the case for a distinct Norwegian land, culture, and history quite different from those of other Nordic countries. Rural culture became identified as Norwegian culture, a culture that could be traced back to Viking times.

Best clothing retailers

***National Identity.***The idea of a distinct Norwegian culture piqued the interest of writers, painters, dramatists, musicians, and religious leaders. The culture of the rural peasants was not the culture of the intellectual elite, but the elites reinterpreted and identified with that tradition. By the middle of the nineteenth century, schoolbooks reflected the theme of a distinct, rural Norwegian culture, as did a variety of popular journals. Writers conveyed the notion that everything of true value was found close to home, in the everyday life of simple people. In the second half of the century, voluntary organizations that promoted popular enlightenment helped shape the consciousness of a common culture and history. In the national dialogues that followed, a national identity was formed, contributing to the eventual dissolution of the union with Sweden.

***Ethnic Relations.***Relations between the majority population and the indigenous Sami peoples have been problematic on occasion. In 1999, the United Nations Human Rights Commission asked Norway to explain the delay in giving the Sami population self-determination. Defining the population has been difficult in that many people in that population who were not engaged in reindeer nomadism chose or felt compelled to assimilate into mainstream Norwegian culture. The establishment in Karasjok, north Norway, of a Sami parliament to coordinate relations with local, regional, and national government offices has helped draw attention to the needs of that population. The Sami parliament and the governments of Norway, Sweden, and Finland are beginning to coordinate Sami issues across national boundaries.

Because immigration has been tightly controlled, immigrants from non-Scandinavian countries have not constituted a large or visible minority until recently. In the 1980s, as the attitude toward asylum seekers became somewhat less sympathetic, survey data showed that about half the respondents felt that those newcomers were given too much special treatment.

Surveys have shown that outside of business dealings, relatively few Norwegians have contact with the immigrant populations. Those who have had informal contact with immigrants tend to be sympathetic and positive toward them, but those who have not had such contact tend to be less positive. In a survey in 2000, 64 percent of residents agreed that the country should continue to take in as many immigrants and asylum seekers as it does currently. Over 90 percent of the surveyed population agreed that immigrants should have the same job opportunities as native residents, affirming a basic belief in equality of opportunity.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

The national culture is informed by an anti-urban bias that idealizes the natural environment and rural life. Regional policies are aimed at providing a high level of services and amenities in less populated regions to encourage people to remain there rather than migrate to urban centers. Cities such as Oslo, Bergen, and Trondheim have low population densities since they incorporate substantial areas of undeveloped "natural" forests within their boundaries that are used by the residents for recreation. In Oslo, streetcars run through the city to the edge of the forest, where they empty their cargo of hikers and skiers. While all the cities have parks for relaxation and enjoyment, those manicured urban environments are not as culturally important as the wilder and less regulated woods, mountains, and seashores. A walk in the woods on Sunday morning, either on a challenging trail or on the "family path" suitable for baby buggies and wheelchairs, is considered almost essential for coping with urban stress. In the winter, these paths become [cross-country ski](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Cross_country_skiing.html) trails. Cities, thus, attempt to incorporate natural areas to counterbalance the built environment. Similarly, residential dwellings usually have their own mode of indoor-outdoor living. Single-family homes and apartment houses usually have a deck, balcony, or porch that gives residents convenient access to the outdoors.

Family vacation packages

While many older residences have straight sidewalks and broad, open lawns, many newer houses are nestled into their own miniature woods of closely planted trees and evergreen shrubs. The distinction between the built environment and the natural environment is often blurred as these two areas are made to interpenetrate.

Except perhaps for Oslo's City Hall, which serves as a landmark for ships coming up the fjord to the harbor, government architecture is usually less awe-inspiring and intimidating than inviting and approachable. The *Storting,*or parliament hall, in Oslo is built to a human scale and is embedded within a busy downtown area with considerable foot traffic. The Royal Palace, which is situated on a small hill overlooking a busy street, is the destination for thousands of cheerful marchers in the Constitution Day parade as they greet and are greeted by the royal family waving from the balcony.

Seating in parks and public places is not conducive to conversation among strangers. Acquaintances can find seating next to each other, but not in an arrangement that encourages eye contact and conversation. This configuration allows people to use public space without drawing attention to themselves or invading the personal space of others. In homes, in contrast, furniture often is arranged to encourage conversation among family members and friends. Homes should be furnished to reflect the good taste of their owners, often with the clean simplicity of Scandinavian design, using natural materials such as wood and wool.

Family vacation packages

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***The food considered by many to be most typically Norwegian is brown cheese that is thinly sliced with a cheese plane (a Norwegian invention) and eaten on bread. Breakfasts *(frokost)*usually consists of coffee, breads (including flatbread or crisp bread), pickled or smoked fish, cold meats, perhaps boiled eggs, and milk products such as cheese, butter, yogurt, and varieties of sour milk. Breakfast may be more substantial than the noon meal *(lunsj)*which may consist of an open-faced sandwich of bread, cheese, paté, or cold meat, perhaps accompanied by a piece of fruit and coffee. Fish and meat (pork, beef, lamb, chicken, and whale) and boiled potatoes, usually served with gravy or melted butter, traditionally have defined the late afternoon meal *(middag).*Root vegetables such as carrots often supplement potatoes. Beer or wine is drunk occasionally in the evening. Pizza and hamburgers are popular occasional meals and often are served at fast-food restaurants. Cafés and cafeterias serve open-faced sandwiches with cold meats, smoked fish, or cheese as well as simple but substantial meals of meat or fish and boiled potatoes. Chinese, Indian, and other ethnic restaurants often occupy the medium-price niche, while restaurants with seafood and continental cuisine are the most expensive. In the last several decades, the cuisine has become more diversified and international. The consumption of fats has gone down in the last twenty years, the consumption of meat has never been higher, and the consumption of fish has gone down



*Women work in a Rabol, a traditional farm kitchen. Hafjell, Norway.*

and is much lower than recommended by the Nutritional Council. The popularity of potatoes has declined, while that of rice and pasta has gone up. Cereal consumption is stable. Norway has continued to hunt minke whales along its coast. Whale meat is eaten as steaks or in a stew.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***For Constitution Day, many families traditionally eat a meal of flat bread, thinly sliced dried meats, and milk porridge, with beer or aquavit as a beverage. Christmas meal traditions vary by region and may include roast pork, other meat, or lutefisk. On festive occasions, both restaurants and family meals may feature a *kaldt bord*with a large array of cold meats, cheeses, shrimp, smoked or pickled fish, salads, jams, and soft and crisp breads. Cloudberries and lingonberries, both of which grow wild on mountain plateaus, are particular favorites.

Family vacation packages

***Basic Economy.***The country is highly dependent on international trade for manufactured consumer goods but has a trade surplus. Most employment is in highly specialized services and manufacturing, with only a small workforce in the traditional occupations of forestry, farming, and fishing. In a labor force of more than two million workers, approximately 72 percent are in services, 23 percent work in industry, and 5 percent engage in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. The currency is the Krone (Crown).

***Land Tenure and Property.***The allocation of farmland is regulated carefully to encourage the continuity of ownership within the family line. Farms are not divided among heirs, thus avoiding the fragmentation of farms into small, economically nonviable units. The lineal descendants of a farmer have the first right to purchase a farm. Conflicts over farm boundaries and the surreptitious movement of boundary stones are part of the folklore of most agricultural districts. Hikers have the right to walk on unplanted farmland.

***Commercial Activities.***Firms produce, package, distribute, and sell food products, beverages, textiles, clothing, footwear, wood products, furniture, and chemicals for domestic consumption. Printing, publishing, and media production are important enterprises for a highly literate nation that is a world leader in the consumption of newspapers, magazines, and books per capita.

***Major Industries.***As a consequence of the discovery and exploitation of North Sea oil in the 1970s, Norway has become the world's second largest exporter of oil and natural gas. Much of this production is managed by Statoil, a government enterprise. Since 1993 the country has exported hydroelectricity, which it produces in excess of domestic needs. Although shipbuilding has declined, Norway has one of the leading merchant fleets, with approximately 762 ships. Other exports include transportation equipment, electrometallurgical products, electrochemical products (processed with hydroelectric power), paper and pulp from the extensive forests, and fish, increasingly produced in fish farms in coastal waters. For the home market, the country produces equipment, furniture, and textiles. About half the manufacturing firms are located along the Oslo fjord. Livestock are the most important products of the subsidized agricultural sector.

Family vacation packages

***Trade.***Norway exports goods to its main trading partners: the European Union, Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, France, and the United States. Exports include petroleum and natural gas, hydroelectric power, metals, chemicals, paper pulp, and fish. The United States is a significant importer of smoked salmon. Manufactured goods, machinery, and chemicals are imported from the trading partners.

***Division of Labor.***Government, labor, and management are integrated into a centralized industrial planning system. Since the 1970s, the principle of codetermination has meant that labor and management increasingly share the determination of daily operations and longer-term planning. Workers typically have a great deal of autonomy. As a consequence of this trend in industrial democracy, emphasis is placed on training and the upgrading of workers' skills. In contrast to countries where labor is cheap and training is limited, decision making frequently is delegated to lower-level workers. The division of labor is based more on skills than on status and seniority.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***The ethos of egalitarianism is reflected in the highly progressive marginal tax rate on personal incomes. While income differences are relatively flat, there is a small proportion of extremely rich owners and managers of merchant fleets. Although the affluent are likely to own ski huts in the mountains, their huts may not be better furnished than those of less affluent workers. Conspicuous consumption is not admired. Leisure time is an important resource for industrial workers, who in 2002 will have five weeks of vacation annually. Counting national holidays, this brings the number of working hours in the year down to 1,703 for industrial workers. Immigrant populations have tended to move into some of the less desirable and less well-paid occupations such as cleaners and fast food workers.

Best clothing retailers

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Affluent individuals signal their wealth by driving a luxury car, wearing expensive clothing, and taking expensive vacations. They may have a posh Oslo accent. However, these differences in possessions and advantages do not symbolize differences in moral worth. The author Aksel Sandemose, in *En Flyktning krysser sitt spor*(1953), described the law of the fictional village of Jante, which warns that "you should not believe that you are better than we are." The Law of Jante expresses a widespread cultural belief in egalitarianism.

Political Life

***Government.***Norway is a constitutional monarchy that divides responsibility between the parliament *(Storting)*and the King's Council of State, which consists of a prime minister and other ministers of state. The *Storting,*which consists of 165 representatives, is the supreme authority and controls finances. Representatives are elected by direct vote for a four-year term. One-quarter of the representatives serve in the upper chamber *(Lagting),*and the rest form the lower chamber *(Odelsting).*Local government is represented by 450 municipalities in eighteen counties.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Leaders are supposed to be articulate and dedicated spokespersons for the policies of their parties. The major parties, listed roughly in order of their popularity in recent elections, are the Norwegian Labor Party *(Arbeiderpartiet),*a socialist party affiliated with labor unions; the Progress Party *(Fremskrittspartiet),*a nationalistic party; the Conservative Party ( *Høyre*); the Christian People's Party *(Kristelig Folkepartiet),*which supports the use of the principles of Christianity in politics; the Center Party *(Senterpartiet),*which originally focused on agrarian issues; the Socialist Left Party *(Sosialistisk Venstrepartiet);*and the Liberal Party *(Venstre),*a reform party. Coalition governments that rely on the cooperation of two or more parties are not uncommon. Party leaders receive considerable media attention and are supposed to be accessible to the electorate. They are not likely to respond to offers of gifts or special privileges.

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***Social Problems and Control.***The judicial system has three levels: the district *(Herredsrett)*and city



*A young Lapland boy and girl wearing traditional dress in Kautokeino. Each large fjord or valley has a distinctive costume.*

courts *(Byrett),*the High Court *(Lagmannsrett)*with six jurisdictions in the nation; and the Supreme Court *(Høyesterett).*Each municipality has a conciliation council *(Forliksråd),*where civil cases go first for mediation and possible out-of-court settlement. If this effort fails, the case can be taken to the district or city court. An "ombud" system has been established to hear complaints about actions by government agencies and private firms. The crime rate is about ten reported crimes per hundred thousand population. While the rate of crimes against persons is increasing, most crimes involve property.

Best clothing retailers

***Military Activity.***National military service is required, with the option of community service for conscientious objectors. The nation has an army, navy, and air force; is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and participates in peacekeeping operations. Norway spends 3 percent of the gross national product on defense.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

After 1945, the National Insurance Scheme was developed to manage and allocate resources for health, old age, disabilities, widows, widowers, children, and single parents. Approximately 15 percent of government expenditures are for health services. Nongovernmental organizations play an important role in supplementing this welfare system in partnership with the government. Special attention is given to organizations that support disadvantaged citizens through subsidies granted by local governments.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Approximately 62 percent of the population belonged to at least one voluntary organization in 1995. Historically, voluntary organizations were first developed in the middle of the nineteenth century as agents of change to support the social movements that were sweeping the country. Voluntary organizational life has been based on unpaid participation, personal membership, and commitment to egalitarian democratic principles. While participation in religious and temperance organizations has declined, membership has increased in organizations devoted to recreation and outdoor sports.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***In the contemporary period, Norway has followed an ideology, if not always the practice, of gender neutrality in access to economic, political, social, and religious roles. Women entered the workforce in larger numbers during the 1970s but continued to be involved in unpaid work to a greater degree than were men. There are few women in the upper levels of management of businesses and industries. According to the United Nations Development Programme, which created a "Gender-Related Development Index" to measure achievements in increased life expectancy, educational attainment, and income equality for men and women in 146 countries, Norway ranked second behind Canada and ahead of Sweden.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***The cause of gender equality was advanced by the women's movement of the 1960s. At that time, nine of ten women with small children did not work outside the home. Women began to enter the labor force in greater numbers with the increase in industrialization. Now nearly eight of ten women are employed outside the home.

Education is deliberately gender-neutral, with the goal of giving everyone an equal opportunity for self-realization. In the 1980s, women entered



*Sod roofs of old houses in Roros, a mining town founded in 1646.*

higher education in larger numbers, and constituted approximately 55 percent of the students at universities in 2000. In law and administration, men and women are accorded equality, with parental leaves available for both. Many of the roles traditionally reserved for men, such as the military and politics, are now integrated. In 1981, at age forty-one, Dr. [Gro Harlem Brundtland](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Gro_Harlem_Brundtland.html) first served as the prime minister, the youngest person and the first woman to do so. Several political parties follow the "sixty/ forty" rule in establishing committees, with women constituting at least 40 percent of the membership.

The armed services are sexually integrated, although the majority of service personnel are men. In 1998, the commander of a coastal defense submarine was a woman, with a crew of twenty men and one other woman. Some women's organizations regard this as tokenism and state that when the critical mass of 30 percent women is achieved, they will be pleased with the progress of integration of the armed forces.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Family vacation packages

***Marriage.***Marriages are supposed to be romantic love matches between two individuals with similar values and perspectives. Marrying for economic, social, or political reasons would seem improper to most people. When King Harald, then the crown prince, wished to marry a commoner rather than seek a bride among the royal families of Europe, the nation approved.

Currently, 38 percent of residents are married, compared with 47 percent in 1978. The divorce rate has doubled in the last twenty years. In this generation, married women have worked for pay outside the household to a greater degree than was the case in earlier generations.

***Domestic Unit.***Currently, families usually consist of a husband, a wife, and no more than two children. Single-parent families are increasingly common. Two major urban family cultures, with a rural variant, exist. These cultures include the urban middle-class family, which may focus on a fair exchange of services and an equal sharing of tasks, and the urban working-class family, which may focus on the common good of the family rather than the needs of the individual members. Urban families often create symbolic boundaries between themselves and others; internally, they value "peace and quiet" as a theme of family life. The typical rural farm family focuses on maintaining a committed, harmonious unit. Divorce seems to be more common in the first type of family.

***Inheritance.***At marriage all material goods become joint property. A couple may enter into a contract specifying that, in case of divorce, each will retain the goods they brought to the marriage. This may be important in the case of farms and other significant property. Surviving spouses have a right to continue living in the family house until death. Children inherit equally from the parents.

Family vacation packages

***Kin Groups.***Three-generation family households exist most commonly in rural areas. Parents and children often choose to live close to each other. Relatives on both sides of a marriage are invited for life-crisis ceremonies such as baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***With the institutionalization of parental leave from employment, both parents can be available to provide care for infants. Traditionally, infants were regarded as defenseless and in need of constant care. Infants sleep in separate beds or cribs, either in their parents' bedroom or in a separate room. Breastfeeding on demand is now usual, but in previous generations was scheduled about every four hours. Fresh air is considered important and often babies are allowed to sleep outdoors in a pram. Stimulation, exploration, and play, both indoors and outdoors, are now emphasized. Some mothers carry infants close to their breast in carrying slings, but the use of prams is more common. Many parents use day care facilities for one to six year olds, although this form of institutional care for the youngest ages is controversial. For older toddlers, the social experience of interacting with others in day care facilities is highly valued.

***Child Rearing and Education.***The national culture tends to be extremely child-centered. A national welfare system for children was enacted as early as 1896, and in 1981, a national ombudsperson for children was established. Ideally, children should be cooperative and independent. However, socialization tends to be permissive since children are not taught boundary-setting rules and manners early. Childhood lasts longer than it does in many European countries, with adolescence not ending before graduation from high school. Since numerous mothers are employed, many children are socialized in child care facilities, either privately or through the local authority. Paid babysitters, usually young girls, may provide child care in cities when grandmothers are not available.

Family vacation packages

Confirmation as a member of the church is an important rite of passage. The ceremony is followed by a party to which neighbors and relatives are invited. Girls usually are given a *bunad,*or folk costume.

In traditional rural society, children were transformed into responsible adults, participating in adult economic activities, without going through a culturally recognized stage of adolescence. In the late twentieth century, adolescence became much more important for developing an identity separate from one's parents.

***Higher Education.***Vocational training or higher education for the majority of citizens is emphasized. After ten years of compulsory schooling, students may go on to an upper secondary school and then to one of the four universities or many colleges. Education accounts for approximately 14 percent of government expenditures.

Etiquette

Residents tend to be egalitarian, private, and noncompetitive. Gender equality is observed in most social settings. People rarely use the polite or formal form of address; the use of the informal pronoun for personal address is almost universal. Independence and self-sufficiency are valued. Being indebted by borrowing or receiving favors makes people uncomfortable. Individuals generally do not call attention to themselves through loud speech or flamboyant behavior. Personal space is respected, and so individuals stand well apart from each other when conversing. Punctuality is expected both in business and in social life.

People may be reserved among strangers but are warm and friendly once a relationship has been established. One should not inquire about personal issues unless one is well acquainted with a person. Respect for each individual's dignity is expected.

Competition is downplayed in most settings, Even the victors in sports contests are supposed to be humble and not obviously proud. After the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, King Harald worried that perhaps the nation had not been a good host since its athletes had won so many medals.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The Norwegian-born Viking Olav Tryggvason was baptized as a Christian in



*A classical-style building along Karl Johans Gate in downtown Oslo, Norway.*

London in 994 C.E. Soon afterward, King Olav brought Christianity to his homeland, converting first the leaders and later the farmers. In 1536, the Reformation came to the area, with the consequence that a greater emphasis was placed on personal faith. In 1814, the [Evangelical Lutheran](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Lutheranism.html) religion was named the official religion of the state, but the constitution also guaranteed freedom of religion. The pietist movement, which was particularly strong in the country in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, posed an alternative to the state church and contributed to an individual sense of religious commitment unmediated by the clergy. The state church subscribes to a belief in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. The main religious holidays celebrate belief in the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ. Other religious groups such as Roman Catholics, Pentecostalists, Seventh Day Adventists, Baptists, and Methodists, receive state subsidies. In recent years, immigrant populations have brought Islam to the nation.

***Religious Practitioners.***The king is the head of the state church, which employs a system of bishops and priests in the administrative structure. Local priests hold religious services and perform baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and funerals. The king appointed the first woman priest in 1961 and the first woman bishop in 1993. More than seventy nationally organized Christian voluntary organizations reinforce religious beliefs and practices. Those organizations also carry out missionary work at home and abroad and help with youth work and welfare.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***During the medieval period, the holy shrine of Saint Olav in the cathedral at Trondheim was a destination for pilgrims. In the contemporary period, 87 percent of the population belongs to the state church. While about seven million church visits are recorded annually, many people are more likely to be found on ski slopes or hiking trails than in church on Sunday. Religious services in the state church occur weekly and on the major religious holidays, including Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Whitmonday.

***Death and the Afterlife.***According to the doctrine of the state church, souls reside in heaven with Jesus after death. After the funeral, the body of the deceased is cremated or interred in a graveyard, usually adjacent to a church.

Medicine and Health Care

Norway is one of the healthiest countries in the world, with an average life expectancy of nearly seventy-eight years. Modern medicine replaced folk



*A church in Bud, a fishing village near Molde. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion.*

medical beliefs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Currently, there are over fifteen thousand doctors and nearly sixty thousand nurses. The compulsory National Insurance Scheme provides free hospital care and modest charges for medicines and primary care. Approximately 15 percent of government expenditures go for health care.

Secular Celebrations

The major holidays are New Year's Day (1 January), Labor Day (1 May), Constitution Day (17 May), Christmas (25 December), and Boxing Day (26 December). Labor Day is celebrated by the labor unions, with parades in the larger towns. The most important celebration of nationhood is on Constitution Day, which is an occasion for massive public parades by voluntary organizations, bands, unions, schools, and other civic groups. Christmas and Boxing Day are focused on family visits and gift giving.

Family vacation packages

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***Because of the small population base, the artistic community is challenged to earn a living. Government subsidies coordinated by thirty nationwide artists' organizations have provided a particularly Norwegian solution. Professional artists receive a minimum income until retirement. Through a variety of cooperative arrangements with counties and municipalities, the government has sponsored the creation of touring cultural organizations, bringing concerts, theater, and art exhibitions to smaller towns.

***Literature.***The Icelandic sagas of Snorri Sturlusson (1178–1241) often are considered the beginning of Norwegian literature, followed by *The King's Mirror,*a thirteenth century work. Pedar Clausson Friis (1545–1614) wrote descriptive works about the country and translated the sagas into Norwegian. *The Trumpet of the Northland*(1700) by Petter Dass details life in Norway. In the early eighteenth century, Ludvig Holberg wrote in a variety of forms, including satire and comedy. [Henrik Wergeland](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Henrik_Wergeland.html) (1808–1845) inspired the national romantic movement. As their contribution to the discovery of a national culture, Peter Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe collected the *Norwegian Folktales*(1841–1844). In the nineteenth century, the dominant figure was [Henrik Ibsen](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Henrik_Ibsen.html) (1828–1906), whose psychological dramas remain important in world literature. [Knut Hamsun](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Knut_Hamsun.html) wrote powerful novels in the twentieth century. Later writers include Sigurd Hoel, Nordal Grieg, Tarjei Vesaas, and the Nobel Prize winner Sigrid Undset. Significant postwar writers include Jens Bjørneboe, Bjorg Vik, and Kjartan Flagstad.

***Graphic Arts.***Painters in the nineteenth century helped establish a national romantic vision. Edvard Munch's (1863–1944) symbolist works have been influential internationally. In sculpture, Gustav Vigeland's Frogner Park sculptures are well known. Pottery, glass, jewelry, metalsmithing, and textiles are central to Scandinavian design.

***Performance Arts.***The nation's greatest musician, [Edvard Grieg](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Edvard_Grieg.html) (1843–1907), was inspired by the folk themes of his homeland, as was the violinist Ole Bull. Many cities have festivals for the performing arts. Perhaps the most famous is Bergen's annual festival featuring music, drama, and dance. Molde's jazz festival is notable. The National Theater and National Opera in Oslo are important institutions.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The universities at Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, and Tromso have extensive science and social science departments. Many of the regional colleges are strong in one or both areas. A variety of research institutes focus on applied knowledge, in fields as diverse as fish farming and petroleum extraction.

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—D. D OUGLAS C AULKINS

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_1)

**dominic**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it seems nice and reveals some hidden facts and encouragable for an ambassador.  
has a nice culture and religion.  
i would also like to know more on the culture and religion of norway and also some of the human rights violation and the strategies to ammend it.  
thanks and waiting for your reply.bye

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_2)

**Connie Olsen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Fascinating information. Thank you for sharing in such a compelling and understandable manner. I visited Oslo nearly 2 years ago and loved the people and history. On a tour, the guide told us of the tradition of Norwegian people voluntarily coming together as a community to complete a task for the common good. Example, cleaning the grounds of Vigeland. She used a word that escapes me, something like "dagnut". Can you let me know what that word is? I love the concept and want to share it out.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_3)

**ghie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank u so much for this information it was really great!a nice country with a good culture and beliefs.i know it has a great expectations to tourists or immigrants in this country.i will share this to my friends and tell more abt it.by the way what are some expectations and do i need to know more about this country?thanks i will wait your reply.  
best regards..

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_4)

**Wyatt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Ya over all it was good.  
But, I believe you forgot to add some knowlege of the Black Metal scene in Norwy. Black metal from Norwy is one of their biggest exports and it deal with a lot of the attitude and tough times in Norway.  
It list interest of young people and how they express themselves in the Norweigan environment. Black Metal also has popularized Norway over the last couple decades.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_5)

[**Viper**](mailto:discovery0000%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Voluntary work done by groups of people affiliated with a sportsclub, a neighburhood, a church, or even a single apartment building is quite common, and is called "dugnad". It is considered obligatory, and is a remnant of the agrarian society, strenghtened and maintained by the rebuilding of the country after ww2. In the latter part of the 20. century and into the 21. this tradition seems to be less common, and fever people attend, possibly because of a stronger focus on personal gain following the libertarian econimical policies sweeping the world since Margareth Thatcher and Ronald Reagans time.  
  
Re. Black metal: it is true that black metal was "born" in Norway, and the genre is certainly the biggest musical export. However, it is not a major export by any stretch of the imagination. petroleum and petroleum products, machinery and equipment, metals, chemicals, ships, fish (and related products) make up the bulk of exports totalling app. $140 billion (2007), compared to a GDP of app. $250 billion (2007). Black metal is well known outside Norway, but does not have a particularly large following at home.

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_6)

[**Myron Hoitomt**](mailto:myronh%20[at]%20redwing%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like to know more about the area where my Grandfather Hans Christian Adolphsen Hoitomt was born November 14, 1873. I found a reference to Hoitomt Farm at Eidsberg, Ostfold, Norway. I would like to know what type of farm it was, and how big. I have found other pepoles names from 1652 referencing Hoitomt, Eiddsberg, Ostfold, Norway as the birth-place.  
  
Any information will be greatly appreciated

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_7)

[**Bobbi**](mailto:bobbihanson%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for your thoughtful article. I am 1/2 Norwegian by blood and identify primarily with my Norwegian heritage. Thank you for this article. It actially defines many of my family practices here in the United States...volunteerism, conspicuous consumption, and so forth. I visited Oslo a couple of years ago and I loved it. Will return soon. I am so proud of my Norwegian heritage. Thanks so much. oh...I am sure you're familiar with lefse. I make lefse according to my family tradition. However, it is not made with potato...it is sweet with butter and suger. I've heard it is called "cling" (or is it cleng?). Do you know about this? Is this sort of lefse common in a certain region of Norway? Thanks!

Family vacation packages

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_8)

[**F**](mailto:gfgzfd%20[at]%20gfsdf%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It should be noted that while many of us are registered as christians in the state church it is only so because of tradition, same with confirmations. Most generations after WW2 are not religious but may express a personal belief in "something greater", ie a belief of deistic or agnostic nature. Most of the population is split between that and atheist.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_9)

[**taylor c.**](mailto:taytay1x%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this information seems really good i think this is wat i will use for my social studies project for school

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_10)

[**Gerard Drapeau**](mailto:flaggygg%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20ca)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Can you tell me what was the name of the outfit(clothes) worn by norwegian fishermen and adopted by the British Royal Navy during the second world war.  
  
Thank you very much

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_11)

Best clothing retailers

**ray**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm asking the same question as no 10.(name of the outfit)Thank you.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_12)

[**Thomas Lockwood**](mailto:In%20[dot]%20gentle%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a good source of information on Norway. Awesome!

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_13)

[**Janice**](mailto:cod7thcavalryid1863%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for the information. My Granfather John(spelled different in Norway) Maurice Sorlie is from the Trondhiem area. He move to the US in 1911 and I am trying learn about the culture, the land the way of life.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_14)

[**Amee Piskura**](mailto:ameepiskura%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thankyou to the people who make this website possible. It has all the information I need for my school project. Thankyou again.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_15)

[**megan**](mailto:megan_denise_ducharme%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what was their family life like if possible please Explain a little better.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_16)

Family vacation packages

**Aliyah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is great that i can share my heritage with my children

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_17)

[**mobin**](mailto:mobin_12488%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is my dream country. i am very eager to go norway.

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_18)

**I**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

To Connie Olsen:  
  
I believe the word you are looking for is "Dugnad".

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_19)

**ashley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think this website is okay but, I dont like it That much

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_20)

**Raut Sabina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Since I'm planning to apply in aupair in Norway, I wished to prepare myself knowing some of the cultural, traditional, socialization, government policies and languages, the informations about Norway was really helpful to me. But Still I was seeking for the online Basic Norwegian Language Studies through this website. Hope I'll be selected by the Government of Norway to gain the practical knowledge too.  
Heartly thank you for the fascinating informations and the articles.  
Regards Raut Sabina  
Nepal

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_21)

[**cantubury**](mailto:k34236%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

if Nordics have no interest in elevation via welth and culture; why all the brand differentiation. this seems so American. the "disneyification" of the globe does not work for me

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_22)

**Girly**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very helpful, thanks (: but I think that you should put a lot more on social issues with other countries, I would like to read more on how Norway is involved with world issues, again thanks!

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_23)

**dingus**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

where is the clothing for their nation... this was no help on that note...

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_24)

**rina resurreccion**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi, could you please enlighten me on how the word "oslo paper" (oslo paper refers to the paper commonly used for arts and crafts) came about? Did this originate from oslo as well? thanks

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_25)

[**whatsername1996**](mailto:nicky%20[dash]%20kaulitz%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

so hi there strangers. well, im doing a cultural project on Norway because i had this online boyfriend from there (yes i know, totally lame) and he presented me his country as such a horrible place, ya know, rain, rain rain, and i totally feel this is one of the best countries you could live. So I've been thinking on moving into Norway because i fond it a beautiful and amazing counbtry and also a pleasant and safe place to live, compared to my country, Honduras. I mean, i love my country but its way to dangerous and i just want to live in Norway! Can someone take me? To Kopevik or Stravanger. Any of those. TAKE ME!!! :D

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_26)

**kate snedeker**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi guys, i am doing a cultural project and i need to know about the people, food, popular festivals, and modern art's like!

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_27)

**Christina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Intercultrual assigment regarding Max Manus, Norway Nationalism & cultural patterns of Norway. This site helped with social practices that make-up Norway's beliefs, values, and norms. Thank you for sharing.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_28)

[**seedee**](mailto:aaby85%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

#6 I actually grew up in that area, but I can't remember any farm named Hoitomt (probably HÃ¸itomt in Norwegian). I did a search on google maps (hÃ¸itomt) and it turns out to be a name in this particular part of Norway. Probably where your grandfather is from.  
  
#25 Haha, sure. I would rather visit Honduras to be honest though (-:. Too bad I live in Oslo ;)

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_29)

**Ved**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Norway and ethnic Conflict:  
  
I am a person who has done a lifetime of research on connected themes of language, culture and conflicts that may come in. I would request you to kindly view this video of my young daughter taken some years back. English verses the feudal languages  
  
It is everyone's right to seek the correct companions for their children. Companions that bring in negative inputs should be kept off. Persons who are at home in Asian/African/South American etc. languages do carry within them codes that can spoil the individuality of a population. They themselves seek to run away from it, but they also carry the same.  
  
For more these, I would request some serious academic study on March of the evil empires, Codes of reality, and also on the different themes in these links: EnglishNations, SouthAfrica, Norway and also such Language, IndianEducation  
  
Do not burden your own children with the companionship of persons who will change them forever, by means of words and usages. What I am saying is an theme that is unknown to most European language speakers. But there is a truth in it.  
  
If these words of mine are not heeded, then in years to come, there shall be much violent actions in your nation, as the native citizens try hard to shed themselves of encumbrances that they do not want to be with them.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_30)

**Marceline**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanx for the help! :)  
This website is so useful for school projects.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_31)

**AyaSykes TW**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was quite helpful for my project at school, but i cant find the part about there clothing!  
Thank you very much though.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_32)

**harlie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its nice to have this kind of webpage which can help to know more facts about norway.

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_33)

**Josh Kilhn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This kinda helped me. It was for a school poject, not really what I needed though.

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_34)

**breanna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you so much, i have been interested in this for quite some time, for I am half norwegian, but from USA. I can now have an idea of where my blood line comes from.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_35)

**Shawty**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website is very intersting and very helpful to our cite

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_36)

**ximena**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I enjoyed reading the post in this website, I am chilean,(South America),my grandfather came to Chile when my mother was 5 years old,so it's in my genes the heritage and the way my mother taught us , although we don't speak norwegian she does some typical meals..and she is so sweet and has her accent and she is so Norwegian

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_37)

**somdatta**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A lovely write up, painting a lovelier picture of the very beautiful country called Norway with all the niceties!! :)

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_38)

**avijit chatterjee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT IS A WONDERFUL INTRODUCTION TO ANYONE TRYING TO FORM IDEAS ABOUT THE LIFE AND TIMES OF PEOPLE OF NORWAY , A COUNTRY QUITE BEYOND INDIAN COMPREHENSION. VERY GOOD JOB DONE.

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_39)

**Laura**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I could not find the clothing Norwegian's wear daily and that was what I was looking for specifically, so that was an upset, but the information is very helpful and educational. Thank you.

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_40)

**Bodil**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi!  
  
You have much good information about Norway :-) Good work!  
  
I`m Norwegian and I wanted to add a little to the modern Norwegian life here. I got a message that I have one bad language word and can not get it posted. I canÂ´t find a bad word though. So I have to give up to post it. However if anyone here have questions about Norway I can try help you if you send me an email. I can`t promis I have the answer about everything, but I will do my best.

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_41)

**Deborah Hellestoe-Ross**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have Norwegian heritage - on my Grandfather's side - this provided very interesting reading. Thank you.

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_42)

**luc Tjugum**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Helps with school work great info.thanks for the help

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_43)

**tella**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this artical and it helped me on my school project so thank you so much

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_44)

**ellie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thingi really liked this add it had good text and everything!

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_45)

**Amy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi  
  
I need to do an oral on a culture, I chose Norway as my great-grandfather was Norwegian. I need more information on their traditional food, traditional clothing, ways of greeting or language, their music and religion,  
  
Help in this regard would be appreciated.

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_46)

**Jenna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this because its info is really good. it could use a bit more schooling info though.

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_47)

**vinit**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love the content and it's really helpful in my schoolproject work.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_48)

**ananya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like the content of the information it has. very much enough for my project

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_49)

**Sharon R.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A friend told me there is a special Norwegian tradition for celebrating 80th birthdays. My great-grandmother was from Norway. I visited Norway a few years ago. I'll be celebrating my 80th birthday in a couple of years and would like to know what, if anything, is special about the Norwegian celebration.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_50)

**A person who needs infoðŸ˜„**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What about food? I need a lot of information can anyone help me?

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_51)

**Bayley M.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am doing Norway and this website has more than enough info. :) Thanks to the maker of htis website its awesome. My whole class is using it, for their reports. :)

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_52)

[**ali**](mailto:ali_behzadi666%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks. I am student in Australia but my nationality is iran. thanks about information. it was great. I love Norway

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_53)

[**akmax**](mailto:akmax3123%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the information it is very useful, I wanna visit norway but I don't know anyone there and in visit visa the are asking for invitation letter from any norwegian person who lives there.  
Now how can I come visit norway, could anyone suggest any idea..  
Thanks.

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_54)

**Erica C.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the information. It is very helpful. But I think u need more information about dressing

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_55)

**Diana**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Bergen accents can be "posh" also. Depends on "social staus" not specific dialect. Norwegians do not have an extended adolescence.. In fact, they are much more responsible and independent than children in other cultures (i.e. American) and often start out on an independent life at 18. They are referred to as "students" for an extended time. This part of your report needs to be better researched and updated to reflect this.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_56)

**lizzy lawton**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this site it has like all the facts you need to make a letter,esay and report!

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_57)

**reilly gaudin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

For home schooling my grandma told me to do a reserch report on norway and i think i have most of my information if not most of it all of it and i haven't even read half of it.This site is the best i will use it for all my reserch reports.LOVE THIS SITE.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_58)

**Hind**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was very informative and absolute wonderful read. Thanks, i'll come back to this later once again.

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_59)

**Brayden Bergum**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much! This article greatly helped in my research. I would like to know more about everyday Norwegian wages though. If there is ever a day I need to refer somebody to Norwegian anything, the first place I'd tell them to look is here!

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_60)

**baba**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was very informative and absolute wonderful read. Thanks, i'll come back to this later once again.

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_61)

[**Dan Price**](mailto:dan%20[at]%20stubborngoat%20[dot]%20ca)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
I'm interested in learning more about the history of Viltgryta stew. There doesn't seem to be much on the subject that I can find on the internet. If anybody has any info regarding this topic please email me. cheers

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_62)

**Eleanor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello my mothers family name was Nyberg and she came from Norway but I have no idea where from. She remembers going to England in the war to escape the Germans in a fishing boat and remembers living in a big house, I think there were at least 10 children.My mums name was Joan Nyberg born in 1932, but I don't kno which town. How do I find out.They do have a coat of Arms but I don't know what it is or how to find this.  
Kind Regards  
Eleanor May

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_63)

**sumon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it is very helpful to me to know about norway.if I get to chance to visit norway I will try to do something.

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_64)

[**Martha**](mailto:coolkattastic%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

does anyone know how to cite this website, it would help me a lot on my project about Norway

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_65)

**kkk**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Helpful To me, but mainly I needed the part were it said clothes. I didn't find anything about that.

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_66)

**Kat**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article was very helpful. It was nice to learn about my heritage.

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_67)

**alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm doing a project about Norway and gives me more general information than the other sites I've tried!

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_68)

**piplup**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is helpful cause i'm doing tpsp culture shock about norway and this gave me lots of good info

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_69)

**heru**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am trying to write an essay about Norway and this helped me

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_70)

**Tord**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

As a fellow Norwegian. I find this quite historical

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_71)

**Megan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article was really helpful and informational. I'm guaranteed to find the answers to every question i have on my homework assignment. And it has relieved me of stress of not knowing where to find the information :)

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_72)

[**mamudu D konneh**](mailto:mamudukonneh911%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

love the history of norway and also love the country too.

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_73)

**awidferd**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this info is really good! I'm gonna use it for my project!

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_74)

**Brooke Miller**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Who is the author of this? I need for a reference for my paper. Thanks for the help

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_75)

**Lanie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Is it true that when a couple gets married, woman is expected to contribute money when buying a house?

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html#Comments_76)

**Norske-Lise**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

75: YES! Norwegian women contribute equally to our men in everything. We are very independent. We work, earn money, paint the house, handle the drill and hammer, pay 50% of household bills and basically everything that the man does. We also expect our men to do their share of vacuuming, empty the dishwasher, drive the kids to ballet lessons, braid their hair, change their nappies... We are equal partners. But of course women are feminine and men are masculine, so there are some differences, but then they are both comfortable with it and have agreed how to split chores among them.

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1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Oman

Oman

Culture Name

Omani

Alternative Names

Various peoples in Oman use regional names such as Dhofari, which identifies them as being from the southern region of Oman, or Zanzibari, which identifies them as having close links with East Africa and at one time Zanzibar.

Orientation

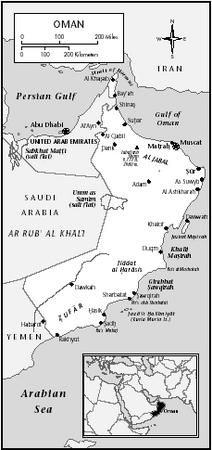
***Identification.***Although Oman has existed as a distinct nation for several thousand years, the modern state—the Sultanate of Oman—is a creation of the last two centuries. The traditional territorial concept of Oman was altered in this period by the independence of the northwestern part of Oman as the United Arab Emirates and the absorption into the sultanate of the southern region of Dhofar. Although the names of both Oman and Dhofar are clearly of great antiquity, their original meanings and sources are uncertain. While most northern Omanis share a common Arab, Muslim, and tribal culture, the people of Dhofar remain culturally distinct and often feel culturally closer to neighboring regions in Yemen to the west.

***Location and Geography.***The Omani culture owes much to the geography of the country. The cultural heartland lies in the interior, in the valleys of the mountainous backbone which parallels the coastal plains and the interior plains. Seas to the north and east and deserts to west and south have served to isolate the country from the outside world. At the same time, Oman's presence on the Indian Ocean has fostered a long maritime tradition which has enriched the culture through the settlement of many Baluchis (the Indo-Iranian people of Baluchistan) along the northern coast and the interaction with East African cultures. Traditionally, Oman's capital was located in the interior but Muscat (Masqat), now the principal seaport, has served as the capital since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Northern Oman is separated from southern Dhofar by several hundred miles of desert, which results in the cultural distinctiveness of the Dhofaris.

***Demography.***Oman's only census (1993) revealed a total population of 2 million, of which 1.5 million were Omanis. There were 175,000 residents of Dhofar. Census figures were not broken down into ethnic or linguistic categories, although it can be estimated that several hundred thousand Omanis were of Baluchi origin. About half the Omani population belongs to the Ibadi sect of Islam and a similar number belong to mainstream Sunni Islam. There are several small communities of Shia Muslims. Population growth is estimated at nearly 4 percent per year.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Arabic is the principal language spoken by Omanis, who have spoken it since the immigration of Arab tribes nearly two millennia ago. The Omani dialect generally is close to modern standard Arabic, although coastal dialects employ a number of loanwords from Baluchi, Persian, Urdu and Gujarati (two Indo-Aryan languages), and even Portuguese. The mountain peoples of Dhofar, as well as several small nomadic groups in the desert between Dhofar and northern Oman, speak a variety of unique South Arabian languages that are not mutually intelligible with modern Arabic. Minority groups speak Arabic as well as their own languages at home, and English is widely spoken as a second language.

***Symbolism.***The national symbol employs a pair of crossed *khanjars,*the traditional daggers that all Omani men wore until recently (and still wear on formal occasions). This symbol is integrated into the national flag and appears in nearly all government logos.



*Oman*

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Oman has a very long history and was known as Magan to ancient Persian and Mesopotamian civilizations and was an important producer of copper and ornamental stone. The Arab tribes in Oman adopted Islam during the lifetime of the prophet Muhammad (c.570–632) and forced the Persian colonizers to leave. Since then, Oman has generally remained an independent Arab and Ibadi/Sunni Muslim entity.

***National Identity.***The Omani national identity has evolved from its predominant Arab language and culture, its tribal organization, and Islam. Oman withstood attempts by classical Islamic empires to subdue the country, and the Portuguese invasion of the sixteenth century was confined to coastal ports and was terminated by national Omani resistance in the mid-seventeenth century.

***Ethnic Relations.***Although the dominant cultural group in Oman is Arab and Ibadi/Sunni Muslim, the culture has been very tolerant of other groups. Ethnic, sectarian, or linguistic conflict rarely occurs in Oman although tribal disputes are not unknown.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

The contemporary urban character of Omani culture has strong ties to Indian Mogul architectural style. This is manifested in the seafront whitewashed two- and occasionally three-story residential buildings that line the road along the harbor of Matrah (Muscat's sister city). It is also seen in the style of some mosques and minarets with their slim and ornate shapes, as well as in public buildings such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs building in Qurm. Other contemporary constructions are more eclectic in style.

Earlier architectural styles found in the towns and interior cities of Oman, such as Nizwa, Ibri, Ibra, and Bahla, reflected a pared down and simpler cultural expression and use of space that was consistent with Ibadism, a relatively austere form of Islam.

Private residences reflect the culture's concern for gendered space. Most Omani homes have formal rooms for men and their visitors, while women generally socialize in each other's private quarters. When people meet to mark various rites of passage, such as births, marriages, and deaths, the celebrations are marked by clear gendered space. It is women who visit other women on the occasion of a birth in a family. Marriage rituals entail elaborate celebrations for women only, for men only, and, when space is open, with segregated sitting areas. Deaths are similarly marked by gendered use of space, with only men attending the actual burial of a body.

Family vacation packages

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Omani cuisine revolves around rice. The morning meal is not significant, often consisting of bread or leftovers from the day before, and tea. The main meal of the day is in early to mid-afternoon. It is generally a large dish of rice with a thin sauce often based on tomato or tomato paste and meat or fish. Pork does not exist in the Omani diet as it is prohibited by Islam. The evening meal is generally very light, sometimes consisting only of fruit or bread and tea. The influence of Indian cooking is very strong. A variety of Indian restaurants are found throughout the country. In the capital area, there are a number of Western fast-food establishments, as well as a variety of French, Italian, Japanese, and Chinese restaurants.

Best restaurants near me

***Food Customs and Ceremonial Occasions.***Dates, fresh or dried, are important to the diet and to the ritual of hospitality. Equally important is *helwa,*a sweet confection based on clarified butter, honey, and spices. Both are served to guests with strong, bitter, and often cardamom-scented coffee. During Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, Omanis refrain from eating or drinking between sunrise and sunset. They break their fast with coffee and dates followed shortly thereafter by a ritual meal, often shared with family and close friends, of elaborate foods heavy in oils and spices.

***Basic Economy.***A large percentage of Omanis live in rural areas and many others own land and property in the countryside even though they live and work in the towns. Many of those in the countryside are self-sufficient farmers and fishermen. Livestock production is the basis of agricultural activity in the center and south of Oman, with fishing along Oman's long coastline coming a close second. Nearly one-third of Omani's nonoil exports come from agriculture and fisheries. Oman imports more than half the vegetables and dairy products it needs and just under half the beef, eggs, and mutton.

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Family vacation packages

***Land Tenure and Property.***All land is officially owned by the state. Some land has been recognized as privately held and in the late twentieth century the government pursued a policy of providing all Omanis with private parcels of land for residences and farms. Shared property rights or land use rights are held by custom and are generally tribal in origin. Hence much of the interior semiarid and arid lands are used by nomadic pastoral tribes. Although their territory is no longer recognized as theirs by the state, it remains uncontested by local inhabitants and other tribes.

***Commercial Activities.***Agriculture and fishing are the traditional economic activities in Oman. Dates and limes, make up most of the country's exports. Coconut palms, wheat, and bananas are also grown. Cattle are raised in Dhofar. Fish and shellfish exports create a steady income of roughly $40 million (U.S.).

***Major Industries.***Oman is an oil-producing nation and revenues from petroleum products have been the backbone of Oman's dramatic development over the last three decades of the twentieth century. But oil resources are not extensive and natural gas reserves are becoming more prominent, with liquified natural gas exports expected to provide significant new income in the early twenty-first century.

***Trade.***After oil, petroleum, and liquified gas, fish and shellfish account for the majority of Oman's export trade. The fish and shellfish are sold mainly to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, although some of this fresh product finds its way in refrigerated trucks further north. Dates and limes are also exported.

***Division of Labor.***Both men and women engage in agricultural activities: men work the date gardens, while women tend to the fields of wheat, barley, and alfalfa. Men go out in fishing boats or dive from the shore, while women often mend fishing nets. Children take on domestic agricultural and fishing tasks at an early age, nine being a common age for starting. The elderly are greatly respected and are often relieved from any physical work, but their opinions and ideas are eagerly sought by the middle-aged and young.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Omani culture does not have a caste system, but it does operate in a hierarchy based on family connections (tribal ties), relative wealth, and religious education. At the top of the pyramid is the sultan and his immediate family, the Al-Sa'id. This is followed by a large tribal group, the Al-Bu Sa'id. Prior to the discovery of oil in the country, the wealthiest group (class) was arguably made up of the merchant families, many of them Indian in origin, language, and culture; a particular Omani community, mainly of Hyderabadi origin, also accumulated some wealth through trade in foodstuffs. Certain families and tribes had built reputations for religious learning and mediation skills, and they often represented the government in the interior of the country. In the late twentieth century, wealth spread somewhat and a few more Omani families joined the ranks of the extremely wealthy. Oman has a small but growing middle class while the vast majority of its population outside

Family vacation packages

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*A crowded market in Fanja. The vast majority of the population outside of the capital area are engaged in subsistence agriculture, fishing, or animal husbandry.*

of the capital area are engaged in subsistence agriculture, fishing, or animal husbandry.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Dress in Omani culture is a "badge," one highly visible and prominent marker of ethnic identity. Among Omani nationals, dress is finely tuned to reflect each person's region of origin or ethnic background. Women's clothing and, in particular, the choice of face covering and head cloth advertises membership in a particular tribal, ethnic, or language group. Men's clothing, consisting of a long, ankle-length shirt (locally called a *thawb*or *dishdashah*), is also amenable to the expression of tribal and regional belonging through variations in the style of the collars and sleeves. Head covering is required of men as well as women.

Best clothing retailers

Political Life

***Government.***Oman is a sultanate (a type of monarchy) with a sultan as the head of state and head of government. His position is hereditary within the Al Bu Sa'id family. There are few checks on the power of the sultan and his decrees form the basis of law. He appoints a council of ministers and can dismiss ministers without reason. There is no prime minister.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Senior members of the sultan's family routinely receive important government positions. More distant members of the family serve as ministers, other government officials, and the equivalent of governors throughout the country. Other ministers and senior government officials are chosen by merit and family or tribal connections; Muscat merchant families are overrepresented. There are no political parties and a limited electorate chooses candidates for the Majlis al-Shura, an indirectly elected consultative council dealing with social issues.

Family vacation packages

***Social Problems and Control.***The legal system is derived from a combination of Western and Arab civil codes with the *Shari'ah*(Islamic law) used in family matters such as marriage and inheritance. The Royal Oman Police covers the entire country and is responsible for traffic, criminal investigation, firefighting, the coast guard, and immigration. Crime is infrequent although the capital area has seen a modest increase in burglaries and there is some drug and alcohol abuse. Civil disobedience is unknown and there is complete respect for the law and state institutions.

***Military Activity.***The armed forces of Oman were created to counter several insurrections beginning in the 1950s. Since the mid-1970s, however, there has been no unrest in Oman and the security forces are geared to protect against potential external threats. Oman continues to maintain a relatively large military establishment in part to provide employment for its people.

Family vacation packages

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Social welfare is still basically a family and kin network business. The old, the handicapped, the disabled, and the disadvantaged are looked after by a network of relatives. Since the 1970s, the government has worked hard to establish a social welfare service to promote stability and security for families in a rapidly changing social environment. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Vocational Training takes responsibility for making monthly payments to the elderly, the widowed, the divorced, and the disabled. Special attention has been given to training the mildly disabled, especially the young, through special government centers.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Organizations

Oman has very few nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Perhaps as a reflection of security concerns, it remains very difficult to acquire formal government recognition of NGO status. The first NGO to be created in Oman in the 1970s, the Omani Women's Association, was integrated into the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in the early 1980s. The Association for the Welfare of Handicapped Children, which was founded in 1990, runs a number of centers for the care and rehabilitation of disabled children and has acquired a semiofficial status. The Oman Charitable Organization (also known as the Oman Benevolent Society), was created in the late 1990s by royal decree to provide assistance to the needy. Other NGOs include sports clubs, literary associations, and university cultural centers.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Gender roles are shaped by the demands of the economic realities of peoples' lives. In the desert interior of the country, women contribute very actively to economic activities associated with livestock raising and have significant social and political power. In the agricultural oasis settlements, the economic role of women is not as active and this is reflected in reduced social and political power. Women's roles in religion reflect the formal restrictions of Islam. In urban centers and towns, however, many women serve as teachers in Islamic pre-schools, the *kuttaib.*

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Women have significant authority within the family unit and make strong contributions toward family decisions regarding various rites of passage. Outside the kin group, however, women have little authority or privilege. From the early 1990s, the government has made great efforts to include women in government. Women were nominated to run for election to the consultative council in 1997, with two obtaining seats, and several speeches of the sultan emphasized the importance of integrating women into public life.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Marriages are normally arranged. The preferred marriage is to a cousin. First choice is to a patrilateral cousin, and second choice is to a matrilateral cousin. Even the well-educated elite of the country, university medical students, express a preference for their families to arrange marriages for them. Love matches are very infrequent, as marriage is viewed more as a contract between two families with the major aim being to produce offspring for the next generation. In polygamous households (more common among the wealthy, but not restricted to them), the first wife tends to be a close cousin and the second wife a younger, less-close relative. In the past, men tended to take on additional wives—Islam permits up to four—but in recent years, men have tended to divorce first wives and remarry, often leaving divorced women destitute and reliant on the government for support.

***Domestic Unit.***The domestic unit is generally an extended three-generation nuclear family; residence is usually patrilocal, with the husband's family. Although many nuclear family units reside in single residences, individual family members keep in constant contact with each other through either daily visits or regular telephone calls. It is not unusual to find families of eight, nine or ten persons living in one household. The eldest male has the greatest authority in the family while an elderly female usually takes responsibility for allocating tasks within the household.

***Inheritance.***The rules of inheritance are entirely governed by the *Shari'ah*(Islamic law), which lays down the percentage of an estate that each relative may inherit. In descending order of shares, this moves from the direct descendants (sons, wives,



*A group of Bedouin eat a meal. Omani cuisine revolves around rice.*

daughters, and husbands) to cousins and more distant relatives. These rules apply to fixed property and capital. In the interior among the pastoral tribes, women often pass on their share of certain large livestock (camels) to brothers or sons, in exchange for informal welfare security in their old age.

***Kin Groups.***Omani culture is organized around the kin group as a large extended family or tribe inhabiting a particular valley or set of hamlets. There are also dispersed kin groups, the pastoral tribes, who move around with their livestock in search of grazing land in a territory normally regarded as theirs to use. Life revolves around the kin group in the interior of the country, while in the urban centers the extended family or tribe is the hub and locus of much activity and networking.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Omanis do not separate the infant or child from family rhythm or routine. The newborn child remains exclusively with her or his mother for the first forty days after birth. After that the infant sleeps, eats, and plays at her side, and is nursed on demand for two years. Infants are not offered particular stimulation, but soothed and calmed and encouraged to watch rather than interact.

***Child Rearing and Education.***After the age of two, Omani children are encouraged to behave like miniature adults, taking on duties or hospitality toward guests at a very young age. They are only reprimanded, ever mildly, occasionally with a tap across the back of the legs. They are socialized to look to their peer group. Punishment for unusual or unacceptable behavior is often offered as: "What would your friends say?" Girls are circumcised with little ceremony at or just after birth and boys are circumcised in later childhood with some celebration of their entering an age of "reason."

Primary education for both boys and girls is encouraged. In the later intermediary and high school years, however, attendance by girls, particularly in rural areas, declines, largely due to a persistent pattern of early marriage. Many boys also leave school before the end of their secondary education in order to seek jobs, thus contributing to a large low-skill sector of the workforce. The government also operates a number of vocational training institutes.

***Higher Education.***In 1986, Oman opened its first university. Built upon a combination of American and English models of higher education, the first colleges were of medicine, engineering, science, Islamic studies and education, and agriculture. In the 1990s, several more colleges were opened including a faculty of commerce and economics and a faculty of *Shari'ah*and law. Enrollment in the university is nearly equally split between male and female students. It was only in 1993 that, under pressure from elements in the private sector and the government, the university administration decided to deny women admission to two colleges, engineering and agriculture. In the late 1990s, the government sanctioned several private colleges that emphasized business curricula.

Etiquette

Omanis are very polite and formal in public. Upon meeting, formulaic greetings must be exchanged before a discussion can ensue. To do otherwise would be considered rude. Although men and women may interact in public, their contact should always be chaperoned or in the open. Even educated elite women often find it necessary to be chaperoned by a male relative at public events, parties, or receptions. Omanis tend to stand close to one another as Arabs do, and it is common for friends and relatives of the same sex to hold hands. Two or more men or women entering a doorway at the same time always try to persuade the others to enter first, although a man always invites a woman to enter first. On the other hand, forming lines in shops, banks, and other public places is not a cultural trait, although women invariably are encouraged to go first.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Nearly all Omanis are Muslim, divided nearly equally into Sunnis and Ibadis with a small percentage of Shia. A few families of Indian origin are Hindu but there are no Omani Christians or Jews. Omanis tend to be careful in their observance of religious obligations. Most carry out the prescribed five prayers per day and many men go to nearby mosques to perform them. Most Omanis observe the dawn-to-dusk fasting required during the Islamic month of Ramadan, and it is against the law to eat, drink, or smoke in public during daylight hours in Ramadan. In addition to formal religious beliefs and practices, superstitions are common and some folk rituals are practiced.

***Religious Practitioners.***There is little formal religious hierarchy. The government appoints the *mufti*who serves as the country's highest Islamic authority. Traditional religious educators, known as sheikhs, are trained by the Ministry of Awqaf



*View of Muscat city buildings along the Gulf of Oman. Oman is a sultanate, with a sultan as the head of state and government.*

and Religious Affairs and teach in Koranic schools throughout the country. Religious judges ( *qadi*) are appointed by the state to serve in *Shari'ah*courts. There are also religious healers ( *mutawi'*) whose services are called upon by the population, often to deal with mental illnesses.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***All Omani Muslims are obliged to fast during Ramadan. One of the pillars of Islam, this period of abstinence lasts twenty-nine or thirty days. This month is also one of celebration and prayer and is followed by two important festivals, one immediately after the period of fasting, *Eid-il-Fitr,*and one sixty-six days later, *Eid -il Adha.*Many Omanis undertake the *hajj,*or pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca (in Saudi Arabia), if they are physically and financially able. Because of the austerity of Ibadi Islam, there are no specific holy places in northern Oman; there are, however, some venerated tombs of "saints" in Dhofar.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Omanis are pragmatic when it comes to dealing with sickness. They will try modern medicine but if that fails will turn to traditional healers. Traditional herbalists, bonesetters, and exorcists have a thriving practice, especially in the interior of the country. Many look to the cold and hot properties of foods for curing sickness (a common practice in Islamic belief). Spirit possession, often among women, is addressed through *zar,*or exorcism, ceremonies, which frequently involve the community in the curative process.

Secular Celebrations

National Day takes place on 18 November, the birthday of the sultan, Qabus ibn Sa'id. This is the principal nonreligious celebration of the year and includes a major pageant, a profusion of fireworks around the country, and the sultan's annual policy speech. Armed Forces Day (11 December) is the occasion for a large banquet hosted by the sultan for his officers, senior government officials, and the diplomatic corps. The Islamic, but not the Christian, New Year's Day is an official holiday.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***The government provides some limited assistance for the arts through subsidies to such organizations as the Omani Arts Society. Most artists, however, either hold full-time jobs or come from well-to-do families.

***Literature.***In the past, literature was confined to religious treatises and histories. Like other Arabs, Omanis gave great importance to oral traditions, including poetry and an emphasis on genealogical roots. The Ministry of Information has sought to revive these traditions through folk programs on radio and television. In the last decades of the twentieth century, a small number of authors published works of fiction and poetry.

***Graphic Arts.***Traditional Omani handicrafts are in decline although periodic attempts are made to encourage their production. Notable handmade products include silver and gold jewelry, woven baskets, goat- and camel-hair rugs, swords and *khanjars*(daggers), and large pottery water jugs. Drawing, painting, and photography have become popular forms of expression in educated circles, although artists still tend to avoid representation of the human form as per Islamic convention.

***Performance Arts.***Local instrumental and vocal music is very popular, as are songs from other Arab countries. Traditional performers still provide songs and dances at events such as marriages. The Ministry of National Heritage and Culture maintains a small national theater. Arab entertainers are well known throughout the country and many educated Omanis enjoy Western performance arts.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Physical sciences, particularly earth sciences such as geology and hydrology, are popular subjects for study and research in Oman's university and in a number of government ministries. The social sciences, however, are not as well represented. Economics and sociology are taught at the university, but anthropology, political science, and psychology are not.

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——. *The Imamate Tradition of Oman,*1987.

—D AWN C HATTY AND J.E. P ETERSON

**Also read article about**[**Oman**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Oman.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_1)

**Alhassan Mohammed**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I enjoyed reading the article.Iwill be happy if it is often sent to me dirrectry.

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_2)

**Laila**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It was very lovely to read about my country, just pleas can you change the pictures because they are so old and the situation in Oman now is completely different. Thanks a lot

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_3)

**Lorenzo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I see Oman in my dreams.Hope to see this place one day with God help.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_4)

**jery**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oman is a very interesting place, i hope that one day I can come and visit your country.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_5)

**Carlo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I found this topic very interesting and I found very useful information about the Oman's People, heritage and way of life.It made me feel very much closer to Arab/Muslim Brothers' culture than the usual media's information do. Thank You !

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_6)

**Billy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This infomation really helped me. Oman is really cool.I hope to go there some day

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_7)

**Lynette**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

My husband and I will be visiting Oman from 24th Dec to 4th Jan '10. We are from Cape Town, South Africa.

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_8)

**Omania**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello  
nice article  
it says there are no Omani Christians  
I'm sure there are :)

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_9)

[**omani**](mailto:ecq08aaa%20[at]%20sheffield%20[dot]%20ac%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

how lovely!!! please stick to the existing pictures. they are reflecting our culture.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_10)

[**umteymor**](mailto:ghojayeva%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oman is unspoiled heritage ,jewel of the Gulf.I miss Oman a lot.

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_11)

**shona**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

EXCELLENT ARTICLE...OMAN is really such a nice country!!!  
May god bless it n its ppl more wid his blessings ...

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_12)

[**Karen**](mailto:nilemama3%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

here ya go, this is the article on Oman that you requested to Read

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_13)

[**khalid**](mailto:khalid%20[dot]%20bro%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I THINK OMAN IS THE BEST COUNTRY I'VE EVER HEARD OF

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_14)

**Rabya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Assalam o alaikum...As a part of M.U.N I have 2 know all about Oman as I have been given this beautiful country..This website really helped me in my purpose.I loved reading about Oman.It is a beautiful country.May Allah bless you .Thank you

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_15)

[**Sheila**](mailto:sheila%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi this aricle has helped me a lot with my project on oman. i rlly appreciate who ever wrote all of this. its awesomely amazing

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_16)

[**Olivia**](mailto:random%20[dot]%20monkey%20[at]%20optusnet%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanx for this info i really needed it for a school project!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_17)

**peirce**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great article. Sad to hear in Oman they practice female genital mutilation to take away women's natural, healthy libido. In such a traditional culture, wouldn't teaching self-control be better than surgery? I would think women were made the way they are for good reason.

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_18)

[**Hassan**](mailto:Hassanahmed24x7%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Well written,it is good to read about my country.im an omani but i lived in foriegn two years from birth

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_19)

[**lisa**](mailto:zanjeri%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

have always wanted to know more bout oman so this information has done me lots of gud,thank you for the gud work and get us more information if you can.inshallah one day i visit OMAN.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_20)

[**Dr Mary Ann**](mailto:drmaryannjames%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Your article is very informative & a great learning experience. I consider myself to be among the fortunate few having spent two working years in the Country. The people, the Country and their culture are unique and beautiful. I loved my stay there, and will return. It is a Country that has to be experienced.  
You need to include more photographs of the amazing contrasts; The luscious, fertile green of Salalha

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_21)

**Pranay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Really very informative article, My brother is going to Oman to join as a professor in couple of days. We are Hindu and to be honest I am little worry, but after reading the article now I am relaxed.  
Really Great Country, may be in future I also got a chance to visit OMAN.  
  
Thanks for introducing myself to a Country of great culture & peoples.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_22)

**Steph**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I lived in Oman for 2 years, and I absolutly loved it. Now I am doing a Country Notebook on it for a class, and I am learning so much more. I wish I could go back. I miss it!!

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_23)

[**Dr Qazi Mughisuddin**](mailto:dr_mgq%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good one but no information on the total land arrea and its cpapcity.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_24)

[**wed**](mailto:rose%20[dash]%20w%20[dot]%2093%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi  
can you writ a short essay about omani tradition ?

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_25)

**Beautiful**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is not a good article not related to the topic. I wanted information on the life in rural areas. About culture, every perosn knows. It shld stick to one point not scatter.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_26)

[**HAIDER**](mailto:haidermalik2006%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great people, great traditions and culture...I look forward to be there as soon as i can  
Haider malik  
haidermalik2006@gmail.com

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_27)

[**zaynab 8 years old**](mailto:zaynab%20[dot]%20hussain%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow really helped me on my homework the facts are awwsome

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_28)

[**frost**](mailto:frost_magnum%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

shows no migrations that is jew balls i wish more info was given to the site

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_29)

**Carina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Beautiful article, I am so pleased to learn more about this country. May Allah envoke an understanding of other's cultures so that we may accept them as they are. I feel blessed to learn more about the Omani's ways of life.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_30)

**Thwaini**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very tank to this writer .but I thik not all Omani people eat rice evry day.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_31)

**Mohamed Idris**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Assalam o alaikum...As a part of M.U.N I have 2 know all about Oman as I have been given this beautiful country..This website really helped me in my purpose.I loved reading about Oman.It is a beautiful country.May Allah bless you .Thank you

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_32)

**Mikkeyk**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

good for a project!!! awesome and the facts are good and deep explaining:)

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_33)

**Michael**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i think this good for my project because i thought this would be just a crazy website but its not it was perfect or i thought it was and this kind of website deseves a thumbs up :-)!! thats a good website

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_34)

**Meem**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A good site to start learning about Oman. One point about handicrafts, (under label of Arts and Humanities/graphic arts) some of the handicrafts are in decline, but many others are flourishing such as rug weaving, camel trappings, pottery making in Dhofar, basketry, embroidery. There are two organisations, one aged 16 yrs and the other 9 years that help sustain the handicraft industry, though there is still much work to be done.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_35)

**danial**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

a very good site to start amaizing learning about Oman.  
i like very much omani cultur.  
peoples think and evryone

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_36)

**Irah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A very informative article. I salute the author for the information written above.Since Oman is the first country I came to work at, I really had a hard time adjusting but this article helped me a lot. Hats off to the author.

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_37)

**inacine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i hope to travel to oman before i leave this world

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_38)

**axca**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

nice for my presnation... i will get full mark from this information..

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_39)

**ZZ**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good one, i have not been to Oman yet but been dating Omani guy for few years..we met few times and most of the information given by writer is very true.

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_40)

**tamim nguzo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

is good this piece of info and this country is where my late grandfather came from

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_41)

**pawar priyanka**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT IS VERY BEUTIFULL and i very like it.the culture of oman is also vry beutiful and also families of this culture is very. it is vry eutiful city and hotels of oman are very big big

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_42)

**kendahl**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this really helped me for my report in school i just wish it told me about the arts they do

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_43)

[**Dr. Ghudayyer**](mailto:ghaduir123%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am interested in the A geographical investigation to study the early development of the Wahiba Sands (now known as Eastern Sands), its ecosystem and the impact of recent change.which carried out on 1 December 1985 - 22 April 1986 Number of members: 40 Duration: 5 months,  
By the following teams:  
  
Patron: HRH Prince Michael of Kent  
Leader: Nigel de N. Winser, Expedition Officer, Royal Geographical Society  
Scientific Co-ordinator: Dr. Roderic Dutton, CORD (Centre for Overseas Research and  
Development), University of Durham.  
Scientific Programme Directors:  
Earth sciences: Dr Andrew Warren, University College London  
Biological Resources: Paul Munton, University of Canterbury at Kent  
Economic and Human Geography: Dr Roger Webster, University of Exeter

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_44)

[**Jenna Percibal**](mailto:jenna%20[dot]%20percibal%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is great! It's very interesting, its a pleasure to find this site, because i have a fiance from Oman, so i want to know his culture,traditions,foods, likes and etc.. It's very helpful really. Thanks a lot! Now i'm very excited to be there.. Hope in God's will, i want to visit salalah & muscat.. :D

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_45)

**Anya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Dear Friends of Oman,  
  
Such interesting information about Oman here, thank you!  
  
I am a writer, teacher, for a long time, and have been encouraged to think about coming to teach English and Writing in Oman. I love teaching, have taught in many settings and always love my students! I am from NY, of refugee parents, and have an international family of dear friends. My question is this -- I am Jewish, partly Sephardic, and so feel close ties to North Africa and the Middle East -- is it a problem for people in Oman that I am Jewish? I always move in the world with respect for the cultures and countries I am blessed to visit. I felt very welcome in Morocco, in Turkey, and elsewhere. Thank you so much. I am shy to ask this, but of course this is a big decision. I have been encouraged to do this by Palestinian friends, and friend in Qatar.  
  
Best wishes to all,  
A

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_46)

**Mohammed Masud Rana**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its great article and very helpful, i love to see Oman & all their cultural activates, I heard Oman is very peaceful and cool country,Most specially views of Salalah and all heritage, people are Oman so nice, Its my dream one day i visit Oman. May Allah bless all Omanis People, long live Oman.  
  
Mohammed Masud Rana  
Chittagong,Bangladesh

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_47)

**Elly**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Salam. Thank you for this great article and I like it very much. I am trying to learn more about Omani, Omani men to be more specific as I have boyfriend from Oman. We met online and have been knowing each other for about 3 months. I really like to know how do they normally behave in relationship, their likes and dislikes in their women and so on. If anyone here could explain I would very much appreciate it.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_48)

**tina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANK YOU FOR THIS INFORMATIOON AND IT REALLY HELP ME

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_49)

[**White Cloud**](mailto:cats_raiser%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Salam friends  
  
I thank whoever wrote this article, it really enjoyed me,,  
It doesn't matter what is your religion or nationality, Omani people welcome you.  
It's our pleasure to be in our country :)  
  
You can contact me by e-mail, Elly  
If you want to know more about Oman  
I'm Omani

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_50)

**Andrew Kola**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Really resourceful, but didnt get the topic i wanted.

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_51)

**Aaron\_of\_Portsmouth**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I had the privilege of visiting Oman recently and I hope to return soon. This article is very much appreciated and gives me a better understanding of the customs and culture of Oman, aside from what I've read elsewhere and what I personally experienced during my short stay there.  
Oman is such a unique and wonderful place with fantastic people and a landscape like no other I've seen or read about.

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_52)

**Ray**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I loved this article. It has expanded my knowledge of Oman and help a lot on a school project. Oman is a beautiful place I one day wish to go to. Thanks Again!

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_53)

**Kelsei**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am visiting Oman at the end of December and I am truly excited. I love learning about the cultures in countries outside of the United States. After reading this I will do everything I can to apply my life to the Omani culture so that I do not offend anyone. The culture is really fascinating.

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_54)

**Falcon Tamer**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks a lot i relay enjoyed this  
I am relay grateful for your hard work thanks a lot! i need to find the clothing only but i didn't see that and Happy New Year Of 2016!

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_55)

**lulu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am an Omani and I appreciate your compliments about my country and about Omanis. you are the most welcome to visit Oman.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_56)

[**Ali**](mailto:wolw72%20[at]%20outlook%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am impressed by studding above article about oman and the people of oman I wish, and will visit oman in near future this article has motivated me to see. the people of oman with all their ethical values which I absorbed from their introduction through this article.

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_57)

**mo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The article is very beautiful and true. Oman is a country of civilizations and the neighboring countries are also affected because of its emergence in peace and security  
I hope you continue

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_58)

**priya chandak**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is nice and recently i have seen a news about Oman to become a regional hub for import and export: Report

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_59)

**Ladylime**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The article here was very nice.I'm researching because I have to work in oman for 2 yrs.,I love the politeness of the people as it being written.Hope to love oman!:-)

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_60)

[**Faisal**](mailto:7omaan%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

As an Omani person, I feel very proud of this article and all the feedback. Thanks for the writer and thank you all for your feedback. I am an open-minded Omani who lived in the U.S. for studying and maintaining the Bachelor degree. I feel very positive about Oman becoming an attractive country for all people around the world. I like meeting new people in my life and helping them in their needs. It would be such a pleasure to help all the people who are interested in my country. If you want to know more either in fields of business, tourism, working or any other concerns please have a touch with me by emailing me and I would be very happy to assist you in your needs :)  
  
Faisal  
7omaan@gmail.com

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_61)

**REEM AL HARTHI**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love the information I am Omani and I agree with all the info  
  
I think that you should stick with the old pictures but add pictures that show Oman nowadays  
you should really visit Oman especially Salalah

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_62)

**akash**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for the this kind of information about Oman . Very nicely you explained everything about this country. I wish to receive more and more updated information in future. WISH YOU GREAT COMPLIMENTS.

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_63)

**augusta**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I want to go to Oman but I am a Christian how do I cope when there are no Christians.

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_64)

**IBRAHIM AL AHMED**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the article shows that oman is worthy living into,but it is silent on the killings of girls that go there to work,many allege it is because the omani at times believe in superstitions just as highlighted above

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_65)

**Sonya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oman is indeed a very nice country. People are friendly, weather is good & food is also nice. I am an Indian and recently got a job in Oman and am very happy to be a part of this lovely country.  
  
Lots of love and respect to this country.

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_66)

**Arunima Das**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oman is indeed a very cultural country . As I live in Oman , I should know something about Oman ! HA,HA,HA,HA,HA,HA !!

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Oman.html#Comments_67)

**Faye J. Girsh**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I loved being in Oman. It was calm, stable, welcoming, tolerant, friendly. The Sultan's mosque was magnificent. I am sorry he is no longer there -- his reign was progressive and peaceful. His people spoke  
highly of him. I loved taking the long bus ride from Muscat to Salalah. The people were different there but  
also friendly and helpful. Amazing that it is next to Yemen which is so chaotic and disorganized, though also interesting and friendly. No Qat in Oman which probably helps.

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

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Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

[Culture of Oman forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Norway](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Norway.html)[Pakistan](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Pakistan.html)

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Toggle navigation

Countries and Their Cultures

Countries and Their Cultures No-Sa Culture of Pakistan

Pakistan

Culture Name

Pakistani

Alternative Names

While the official name of the nation is the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, generally the country has been referred to as Pakistan since 1971.

Orientation

Identification. As part of India's independence from Great Britain in 1947, a partition took part of their land and created Pakistan as a separate Islamic nation. It is estimated that approximately 95 percent of the population are Muslim, but members of several minority religions live there, including some Hindus, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, and Buddhists. Although the modern nation of Pakistan was but fifty-three years old in 2000, it has territorial areas and tribal populations whose histories date back many centuries; thus Pakistan has both an ancient and a relatively new identity.

Location and Geography. Pakistan is in South Asia and is 339,697 square miles (879,815 square kilometers) in area. It was created from what had been the northwest side of India. All of the country except the southern portion is landlocked, with Afghanistan to the northwest, Jammu and Kashmir to the northeast, India to the east and southeast, and Iran to the west. In the southern portion, along the shores of the city of Karachi, which was the original capital when the nation was formed in l947, is the Arabian Sea. Karachi is well known for its shorelines. Most of the northern section of the country consists of mountains and also the famous Khyber Pass, whose history goes back several thousand years. It is in this northern section where most of the ancient tribes still live and where many ancient tribal cultures and customs still exist.

Pakistan consists of several provinces, including Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier, Baluchistan, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

The city of Islamabad, which is centrally located in the country, was officially named the capital of Pakistan in 1961, and construction began on government buildings in addition to others. Islamabad became the active capital in 1966. In addition to modern government buildings it also features a wide variety of modern hotels, an international airport, and the nearby famous ancient city of Rawalpindi.

In addition to being known for a number of mountains, including K-2, which is the second-highest mountain in world, Pakistan also has several lakes and rivers, including the Indus River, which is 1,800 miles (2,896 kilometers) long. Pakistan also has several deserts, in Punjab and Sind. Pakistan is also home to Taxila, the oldest known university in the world. In the north, leading from China, through Tammu and Kashmir, is a famous ancient silk road.

Pakistan is diverse. There are snowcapped mountains in the north, sunny beaches in the south, and a wide variety of geographically and culturally interesting sites elsewhere.

Demography. The population of Pakistan is estimated to be 135 million. An estimated 40 million live in urban areas, with the balance in rural areas. In addition to the residents of the major cities of Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, and Peshawar, which is the city at the edge of the Kybher Pass gateway, a number of tribal residents live in valleys. These include Chitral Valley, at an elevation of 3,800 feet (1,158 meters), where the majority of the people are Muslims but that also is home to the Kafir-Kalash (wearers of the black robe), a primitive pagan tribe. In Swat Valley, which was once the cradle of Buddhism, Muslim conquerors fought battles and residents claim to be descendants of soldiers of Alexander the Great. In the Hunza Valley, people are noted

Pakistan

Pakistan

for longevity, which they claim is because of diet and way of life. The people of Hunza Valley are Muslims and also are believed to be descendants of soldiers of Alexander the Great. In North-West Frontier Province is Kaghan Valley, which is bounded on the west by Swat Valley, on the north by Gilgit, and on the east by Azad Kashmir. The people of Kaghan Valley are Muslim-Pathans as well as Kohistanis and Gujars. Shardu Valley is the capital of the district of Baltistan and is known as "Little Tibet" because the lifestyle there is similar to that in Tibet itself. The people of each of these valley areas are well known for their tribal cultures, handicrafts, and for fascinating clothing, most of which is woven and handmade there and unique to their particular area. Best clothing retailers

Linguistic Affiliation. The official language of Pakistan is Urdu, but most public officials, people, and others in Pakistan also speak English; English is referred to as the informal official language of Pakistan. Urdu was created by combining the languages of early invaders and settlers, including Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. The spoken form of Urdu is the same as that of Hindi but it is written in a different script than Hindi.

While Urdu and English are prevalent throughout Pakistan, a number of other languages are spoken in different valleys and areas. These include the Punjaki, Sindhi, Pushto, Balochi, Brahvi, Saraiki, and Hindko dialects, among others.

Symbolism. The design of Pakistan's flag was officially adopted by the country's Constituent Assembly in July 1947, it was flown for the first time on their independence day, 14 August l947. The flag was designed by Ali Jinnah, the man acclaimed as the founder of Pakistan. There is a thick white strip on the left side of the flag; the rest of the flag has a dark green background with a white crescent and a five-pointed star centered on it. The white represents peace, and the dark green represents prosperity. The crescent stands for progress, and the star stands for light, guidance, and knowledge. Pakistan also has a national emblem. In the middle of a circled wreath of jasmine flowers is a shield that has four sections, each of which shows a major product of the country from when the country was created. One section shows cotton, another shows wheat, one tea, and one jute. Above the four sections are the crescent and star, as on the national flag. On a scroll beneath the wreath is written in Urdu "Faith, Unity, Discipline."

History and Ethnic Relations

Emergence of the Nation. For many years India sought independence from Great Britain. During most of those years the Muslim League of India was also striving to establish an independent Islamic nation. The Muslim leader was Ali Jinnah from as early as 1916; in 1940 he began advocating and working for a separate Muslim state. When the British finally agreed to India's independence and withdrew in 1947, Pakistan became a Muslim nation, with Ali Jinnah as its first governor-general. Originally it was divided into two parts. The nation now called Pakistan was then called West Pakistan, and on the opposite side of India, some 1,000 miles (1,609 kilometers) away, was another Muslim area, designated East Pakistan. In 1956 Pakistan became a republic. In 1971 East Pakistan waged a successful war of independence from West Pakistan and became the independent nation of Bangladesh.

While the history of Pakistan as an independent nation dates only to 1947, the history of the territory it encompasses dates back many thousands of years, during the period when the territory was a portion of the Indian subcontinent. In addition, the land is home to the famous Khyber Pass, which is the route that many invaders into India used. These include Mogul invaders and Alexander the Great. Many centuries ago a number of Buddhists also used that northern section as a route, so Pakistan today has many interesting Buddhist sites and historical notes as part of its history. Punjab is also a portion of the country; it was the home of the founder of the Sikh religion, and it continues to play a significant role in Pakistan. Lines of demarcation between India and Pakistan in northern border areas are unclear in places or in dispute, and controversy continues to surround these lines.

National Identity. The national identity of Pakistan today is that of an Islamic nation; it was created as such. However, because the territory that is now Pakistan has a history that goes back several thousand years, the area has a history that forms part of the present identity of Pakistan. That is one of the reasons why both residents and visitors find the relatively young nation of Pakistan historically interesting and why the national identity includes many sites and stories that are centuries older than the nation itself.

Ethnic Relations. There are at least five ethnic groups within Pakistan. In general, there are not continuous or frequent problems between the different ethnic groups other than ethnic tensions in Sind, which occur somewhat regularly.

Urbanism, Architecture and the Use of Space

Because of the relative newness (1966) of the capital city of Islamabad, it features modern architecture arrayed under a master plan. In addition to modern capital buildings, Islamabad is also home to the famous Shah Faisal Mosque, which is so large that the prayer hall can accommodate ten thousand persons, while verandas and porticoes can hold more than twenty-four thousand worshipers. It also has a courtyard that has enough space for forty thousand people.

Islamabad also has a sports complex, art galleries, a museum of natural history, and four universities.

Other sites in and near Islamabad include Rawal Lake; the Rose and Jasmine Garden, the Murghzar Mini Zoo and Children's Park; and the Shakarparian Hills, whose terraced garden features views of other hills, Rawal Lake, and the cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The ancient city of Rawalpindi, on the border of Islamabad, has a history that dates back three thousand years. While many new modern buildings have been added to this city, it has retained much of its historical look and is well known for its bazaars that specialize in handicrafts. Rawalpindi is home to Linquat Memorial Hall with a large auditorium and library; Ayub National Park; and the Rawalpindi Golf Course, which was completed in 1926 but is still in regular use.

Another well-known urban area is Lahore, founded four thousand years ago. Lahore was the cultural center of the Mogul Empire, which glorified it with palaces, gardens, and mosques. It is the second-largest city in Pakistan and the capital of Punjab. Some of its historical sites include the Royal Fort, which was built in 1566 by Akbar the Great, and Wazir Khan's mosque, which was built in 1683 and is still considered one of the most beautiful mosques in all of South Asia.

Another ancient but still famous site in Lahore is the Shalimar Gardens, which were originally laid out in 1642 by Mogul emperor Shah-Jehan. The garden is surrounded by high walls and a watchtower at each of the four corners. The garden is used as the site of regular special state receptions. Lahore is also home to several other well-known mosques, museums, and parks.

A more recent historical site in Lahore is the Minar-e-Pakistan, where a resolution was passed in 1940 demanding creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims. The minar is an estimated 197 feet (60 meters) high.

Another equally well-known urban area is the city of Karachi, which was the first capital of Pakistan. Karachi is in the south of the nation and in addition to being a modern city on the shores of the Arabian Sea, it has a number of interesting sites, including the Masjid-e-Tooba which is said to be the largest single-dome mosque, and several art galleries and bazaars. It has a wide variety of water sports and remains the center of commerce and industry.

There are a number of other urban areas throughout Pakistan, but one of the best known is the city of Peshawar, which is the northernmost major city and is home to the gateway to the Khyber Pass. Peshawar is a city of Pathan tribals who are also Muslims. Alexander the Great and parts of his army stayed in this city for forty days in 327 B.C.E. Balahissar Fort is on both the eastern and western approaches to the city, and it is from near here that one can take a train along the mountain routes of the Khyber Pass. While the city is centuries old, the modern Peshawar is well known for its bazaars and for several colleges and a university.

Food and Economy Best restaurants near me

Food in Daily Life. Because at least 95 percent of the Pakistani population is Muslim, there are two food customs that are followed almost universally. One is that Muslims do not eat pork (therefore beef, chicken, lamb, and fish are the basic foods), and the other is that during the month of Ramadan, fasting is a daily activity.

Spices and curry are an essential part of any Pakistani recipe. The most prevalent spices include chili powder, tumeric, garlic, paprika, black and red pepper, cumin seed, bay leaf, coriander, cardamom, cloves, ginger, cinnamon, saffron, nutmeg, and poppy seeds, among others. Using yogurt to marinate meats is another typical recipe. Because of the use of spices and curry for the main dish, the usual side dish is plain rice. Lentils are another common specialty. The food in the south is more exotic and highly spiced, while that in the north often features plain barbecued meat as the main dish. Usually any meat, fowl, or seafood is curried, and frying is the typical method of cooking. Ghee, which is clarified butter, is another commonly used recipe item and is often used for frying. Best restaurants near me

Wheat and flour products are considered mainstays of the daily diet, and the use of pickles, chutneys, preserves, and sauces along with curried meats, seafood, vegetables, and lentils and are why Pakistani cuisine has such a unique flavor.

Green tea is the typical drink served at all meals.

Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions. Fasting is an important part of the Muslim observance of Ramadan, but food does play a role on many other occasions. One such event is the Eid-ul-Azha (Feast of Sacrifice) in the last month of the Muslim calendar, commemorating the occasion when the prophet Abraham was about to sacrifice his son in response to an order from God. Muslims who can afford it are required to sacrifice a sheep, goat, camel, or cow symbolizing Abraham's submission to God. The meat of the sacrificed animal is divided into three equal parts, with the first donated to the poor, the second given to relatives and/or friends, and the third cooked at the home of the person who made the sacrifice. Eating the meat is part of the festival celebration activity. Best restaurants near me

The important religious festival Shab-I-Barat involves a special type of pudding known as halwa and unleavened bread known as nan being distributed among the poor. The halwa and nan dishes are specially decorated with silver or gold leaves and also are sent to relatives and neighbors.

Workers on a community sanitation project examine the pipes for a new sewer in Faisalabad.

Workers on a community sanitation project examine the pipes for a new sewer in Faisalabad.

Food also plays a role in the celebration of the end of the Ramadan fasting period. This starts with a special breakfast of sheer kharma (a sweet dish), which is vermicelli cooked in milk with dried dates, raisins, almonds, and other nuts. In addition, crowds hurry to local bazaars to purchase fruit, meat, and sweets as well as new clothes and jewelry. Best restaurants near me

Sweets are distributed as part of the celebration of the birth of a new baby in a family, and an animal sacrificial offering is also made—one goat for a girl and two for a boy, with the animal meat distributed among the poor or among friends and relatives. Food also is involved in a ceremony celebrating a child becoming six or seven months old. Sisters and relatives place rice pudding in the infant's mouth using a silver spoon, and a drop of chicken broth is also put in the mouth. After this ceremony the adults then hold an elaborate dinner concluded with a special dessert called kheer. Best restaurants near me

Basic Economy. Pakistan is a poor country and its economic outlook is bleak. It relies heavily on foreign loans and grants, and debt obligations take nearly 50 percent of the government's expenditures. The average per capita income per person in Pakistan is estimated at $460 (U.S.). A large number of Pakistanis, estimated at 35 percent, live below the poverty line.

Land Tenure and Property. An estimated 54.69 million acres (22.14 million hectares) of land are used for agriculture. The major crops are cotton, wheat, rice, and sugarcane. A large amount of land in Pakistan has archaeological sites, such as Moenjo Daro, Harappa, Taxila, Kot Dijji, and Mehr Garh. Family vacation packages

Commercial Activities. A large percentage of the commercial activities include the sale of handicraft items such as the carpets for which Pakistan is well known.

Major Industries. Major industries of Pakistan include textiles, cement, fertilizer, steel, sugar, electric goods, and shipbuilding.

Trade. Pakistan's major exports include cotton, textile goods, rice, leather items, carpets, sports goods, fruit, and handicrafts. Major imports include industrial equipment, vehicles, iron ore, petroleum, and edible oil. Trade partners include the United States, Hong Kong, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United Arab Emirates. Best clothing retailers

A caravan along the Silk Road.

A caravan along the Silk Road.

Division of Labor. Forty-eight percent of workers are in the service sector, 27 percent are in industry, and 25 percent are in agriculture.

Social Stratification

Classes and Castes. There is no caste system in Pakistan. There are high-income, middle-income and a large number of low-income persons throughout the country. Locale makes an important difference in the quality of life; a low-income person in an urban area has more problems than one living in a tribal, mountainous area.

Symbols of Social Stratification. There have been and continue to be a number of social development shortcomings in Pakistan, but in recognition of them, the government in 1992–1993 initiated the Social Action Program (SAP) to make social development and social services available to all levels of the Pakistanis. Reports show that while some had benefited, the rural people who were meant to benefit mostly did not. Some of the program's expenditures were for elementary education, primary health, welfare, and rural water supply and sanitation. It is believed that many people do not understand the purpose and scope of the SAP and that substantial changes must be made in the program if it is to be successful.

Political Life

Government. The government of Pakistan consists of an elected prime minister, a president, and a Parliament that consists of the Senate (Upper House) and the National Assembly (Lower House). There are 57 members of the Senate and 217 members of the National Assembly. The prime minister is the head of government, and the president, who is elected by the legislature, is the head of state. There are also ministers in charge of government divisions such as education and tourism. These are appointed by the prime minister. They in turn appoint the governors of the different states within the country. Also appointed by the prime minister are the chief justices of the Supreme Court.

Leadership and Political Officials. Each individual state within the country has a governor, and each city has its own mayor. Additionally, most tribal groups have a head chief.

Social Problems and Controls. The greatest social problem in Pakistan is drug use. There are both governmental and non-government programs

Women gathered together at a wedding in Islamabad. Muslim marriages unite not only a couple but also their families.

Women gathered together at a wedding in Islamabad. Muslim marriages unite not only a couple but also their families. Family vacation packages

working toward rehabilitation of drug users and ending drug use.

Military Activity. Branches of the military are the army, navy, air force, civil armed forces, and national guard. The military of Pakistan consists of members from all ethnic groups within the country. Their duties have included participation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping and nation-building activities in different areas of the world. Soldiers in the Pakistani Army are regular participants in the long-running dispute, sometimes resulting in violence, with India regarding sovereignty over Kashmir.

Military activity in Pakistan has included four military coups. After those in 1955, 1969, 1977, the government was returned to civilian control via popular election. The most recent coup took place in October 1999, and toward the end of 2000 a general was still acting as the head of the government, although he has promised a democratic election for a new prime minister in the near future.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

There are a number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) within Pakistan, including the Aurat and Behood women's organizations, as well as international Lions and Rotary clubs, to which a large number of men belong. The World Bank and its various agencies have been active in Pakistan since 1952.

The Aga Khan Rural Support Program has worked to build up village organizations with separate groups for men and women and then, through their groups, to launch a number of development activities. The Orange Pilot Project, headquartered in Karachi, has been active in urban development, including working to improve one of Karachi's worst slum areas, with the first focus being on sanitation, followed by a range of community development activities.

Gender Roles and Statuses

Division of Labor by Gender. The majority of Pakistani women are homemakers, and men are generally referred to as the breadwinners. The largest percentage of working women in Pakistan are nurses or teachers. Women are represented in government as ministers in Parliament and ambassadors. Benazir Bhutto was the first female prime minister and served from 1988 to 1990.

The Relative Status of Women and Men. The women of Pakistan are regular voters as are the men, and women also are regular attendees at colleges. Islam gives women rights to child custody, to alimony, and to inheritance, and they also have the right to conduct business and enter any profession. Women are engaged in agriculture production and the services sector. Women judges have been appointed to four high courts as well as several lower courts and a 10 percent quota was established for women to become police officers.

There are growing numbers of violent crimes against or involving women and the government has introduced the concept of women police stations, which have been opened in Rawalpindi, Karachi, and Abbottabad in the North West Frontier.

A number of computer training centers have been established for women and the government has opened "women development centers" that specialize in training community development workers in family planning, hygiene, sanitation, adult literacy, community organization, and legal rights. Family vacation packages

Marriage, Family and Kinship

Marriage. One form of a Muslim marriage involves a nikah , a formal legal document signed by the bride and groom in front of several witnesses; this establishes that the couple is legally married.

There are other Muslim marriage traditions as well. One includes the mayun or lagan which takes place three or four days before the marriage and starts with the bride retiring to a secluded area of her home. On the day before the marriage there is a menhdi ceremony, when the bride's hands and feet are painted with henna. When the marriage ceremony takes place it is required that at least two witnesses be there, and all the guests offer a short prayer for the success of the marriage. After the ceremony, dried dates are distributed to the guests. Wedding customs vary somewhat among provinces, but the Muslim marriage is seen as uniting both families as well as the couple. Family vacation packages

Each tribal group also has certain ceremonies that are an important part of the marriages within that group.

Inheritance. Women have inheritance rights in Pakistan, so that inheritance benefits can go to women and children after the death of the husband and father.

Kin Groups. A Muslim marriage is seen as uniting the families of both the bride and groom, so the kin group is expanded after a marriage. In some tribes there can be neither a cross-cultural marriage nor a dual ethnic one, so therefore the kin groups are and basically remain identical ethnically and culturally. Family vacation packages

Socialization

Infant Care. The addition of a new baby to a Muslim family is seen as a great blessing and there are a wide variety of ceremonies that take place both at the birth and throughout the different stages of infancy. To help families with infant care there are a number of child health centers throughout the country.

Child Rearing and Education. Most Pakistani families consider it the privilege of the grandfather to name the baby. Another tradition is that the first garment for a baby's layette is made from an old shirt that had belonged to the grandfather. The child is usually named within forty days after birth and thus is generally known by a nickname until then. A baby boy's hair is shaved off, with the belief that this will then ensure thick growth throughout life. The shorn hair is weighed and balanced against silver, and that silver is then given to the poor. Best clothing retailers

In February 1998 the prime minister announced a draft for a new education policy from 1998 to 2010, to increase the number of elementary and secondary schools to meet the projected enrollment of twelve million children, including about six million female children in the primary schools by 2003. The draft also suggested establishment of community-based nonformal schools to fill the school gap and to help minimize the cost of primary schools. The new education policy also proposed training about thirty-six thousand teachers each year from 1998 to 2003 to maintain a pupil-teacher ratio of forty to one, with most new teachers to be females. A reduction in military spending was also proposed so funds could be channeled toward countrywide primary education for all children. Family vacation packages

Higher Education. Higher education is seen as having an important role in preparing an individual for a successful career. There are nearly one thousand colleges and universities located throughout almost the entire country.

Religion

Religious Beliefs. Pakistan was formed as an Islamic nation, and Islam continues to be the religion of approximately 95 percent of the population. There are also small groups of Buddhists, Christians, Parsis, and Hindus. The Muslim religion was

Houses in Baltit. Pakistan's landscape includes snowcapped mountains and valleys such as this, as well as sunny beaches.

Houses in Baltit. Pakistan's landscape includes snowcapped mountains and valleys such as this, as well as sunny beaches.

founded by the prophet Muhammad in the seventh century, when, according to Islamic belief, he received messages from God and wrote them down in what became the Qur'an, the Islamic book that instructs Muslims on how to conduct their lives.

Rituals and Holy Places. One of the prevalent rituals for Muslims is the month of Ramadan, during which time they are required to fast from dawn to sunset (this is not required of very young children, the elderly, or pregnant women). Ramadan is also a time when Muslims thank Allah for his blessings during the past year. An additional requirement during Ramadan is that all Muslims must help the less fortunate with both cash and food gifts. The Eid, or day ending Ramadan, starts with an elaborate breakfast; then Muslims go to a mosque or special park for prayer. Best restaurants near me

An equally important Muslim celebration is Eid-I-Milad-un-Nabi, the birth of the prophet Muhammad, on the twelfth day of Rabi-uh-Awwal, which is the third month of the Muslim calendar. In addition to special gatherings in mosques, where the story of the life and mission of Muhammad is told, large groups of Muslims parade through the streets singing praise to Muhammad. Even private homes are decorated (as are the mosques) in celebration and praise of Muhammad.

Another important Muslim religious festival is Shab-I-Barat, which is held on the fourteenth day of Shaban, the eighth month of the Muslim year. The belief is that on this day the lives and fortunes of mankind are registered in Heaven for the coming year. During Muharram, which is the first month of the Muslim calendar, the martyrdom of Imam Husain, the grandson of Muhammad, is commemorated. For the first nine days of the month the death is recounted, and then on the tenth day, which is the day he was murdered, there are barefoot processions with persons carrying banners relating to the tragedy of his death.

Other religions in Pakistan also have special festivals/rituals and holidays, with Christmas and Easter being the special ones of the 750,000 Pakistani Christians. Christmas coincides with the birthday of the Ali Jinnah, acclaimed as Pakistan's founder, so both Muslims and Christians celebrate on this day.

The main festival of the Buddhist community is Baisakhi Purnima, the day on which Buddha was born; it is the same calendar date when later in his life he is believed to have attained his great wisdom of enlightenment.

Parsi residents of Pakistan celebrate their New Year (Naoroz) on 21 March. Approximately fifty-five hundred Parsis live near Karachi.

View over central Karachi, Pakistan's first capital. Set on the shore of the Arabian Sea, it is a center of commerce and industry.

View over central Karachi, Pakistan's first capital. Set on the shore of the Arabian Sea, it is a center of commerce and industry.

Pakistani Hindus also have a number of festivals; the two most special ones are Diwali (Festival of Lights) and Holi (Festival of Colors). The Festival of Lights is held in Lahore at the Shalimar Gardens, which are filled with multicolored lights and where folk music and dances are performed.

A colorful and interesting festival is held in North-West Frontier Province in April, in the Peshawar stadium. Events include the Khattak famous dance of the Pathans and musical concerts; tribal people participate in colorful costumes.

During Eid, tribesmen gather around the shrine of Baba Kharwari in Ziarat Valley, and wrestling and marksmanship contests are held. A large number of people visit it regularly to offer sacrifices in memory of the saint.

The Quaid-I-Azam Residency in Ziarat Valley was Ali Jinnah's residence during his last illness and now houses relics of him and is a highly revered sacred site. It was originally built in l882 by the British and used by the agent to the governor as his summer headquarters.

Takht Bhai is one of the holy places of Buddhism. The Buddhist monastery of Takht Bhai stands 500 feet (152 meters) above the plain on the hill. The Buddhists selected this spot to construct a religious complex where the monks and students could pursue their rituals and studies. The main stupa is surrounded on three sides by chapels in which images of both the Buddha and Buddhisattva were installed.

Makli Hill, near Thatta town is where more than one million graves of kings, queens, saints, scholars, philosophers, and soldiers are located. Gravestones and mausoleums are considered masterpieces in stone carving representing different eras and dynasties.

Death and the Afterlife. Shab-I-Barat is also celebrated as a remembrance day of deceased family and friends. Special illumination of the mosques takes place and food is distributed among the poor. It is also a time when children participate in fireworks. After distribution of the food the Qur'an is read and prayers are said; then most Muslims visit cemeteries and put flowers and lights on the graves of deceased family and friends. Family vacation packages

Medicine and Health Care

At a seminar at Aga Khan Medical University in September of 1998, medical experts reported that perinatal mortality rates in Pakistan were alarmingly high, with an estimated 54 deaths per thousand births. A 1990–1994 national health survey reported that eighty-nine children per thousand under age five died in Pakistan from pneumonia, diarrhea, vaccine prevention diseases, or a combination of them, with most of these deaths occurring in the first week after birth. Best restaurants near me

A number of programs have been undertaken to attack polio; the World Health Organization and Japan have participated. At the end of the twentieth century, there were one hundred thousand deaths from and at least twenty thousand new cases of paralytic polio each year.

A survey by the Federal Bureau of Statistics in Pakistan indicated that about 50 percent of the basic health units were without doctors and that about 70 percent of government health facilities are without any female staff. Only about 56 percent of the country's people have safe drinking water and just 24 percent have good sanitation.

Programs are underway to expand basic health services for women, develop a women-friendly district health system, and both strengthen and improve human resource capacity to sustain women's health development.

Secular Celebrations

Official national holidays include: Pakistan Day, 23 March; May Day, 1 May; Independence Day, August 14; Defense of Pakistan Day, 6 September; death of Ali Jinnah, 11 September; and birth of Ali Jinnah, 25 December.

The Awami Mela or People's Festival of Lahore held annually each March, is a six-day pageant that features equestrian sports, cattle displays, and enormous crowds of people. Special events include polo, animal dances, large band displays, acrobatics by camels, dancing horses, parades, and folk dances.

Another festival in Lahore is Basant, when the sky is filled with thousands of colored kites in celebration of the coming of spring. The color yellow is associated with the festival, everyone dresses in yellow and mostly yellow foods are cooked. Best restaurants near me

Often a national holiday is declared when Pakistan's national cricket team wins a major international match.

The Arts and the Humanities

Support for the Arts. The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) has established the National Gallery, the Sadequinn Gallery, and the National Music and Dance Center. They also regularly hold exhibitions, seminars and theater workshops.

In the early 1970s the National Film Development Corporation was formed to use film to make people aware of social and cultural values. The corporation holds film festivals regularly.

Literature. Faiz Ahmad Faiz is considered to have been Pakistan's greatest poet, and there is a national holiday celebrating his birth. Pakistan has been referred to as a land of poetry, and it is said that nearly every Pakistani has written some poetry.

Graphic Arts. There are a wide variety of graphic art examples, including handpainted clay products, the hand design for batik products, and block printing called Ajrak. Glazed pottery with handpainted designs is common throughout the country, and artistic work in clay goes back thousands of years.

Pakistani handicrafts are as varied as the ethnic backgrounds of the craftsmen and include work in wood, beaten brass and copperware, pottery, and jewelry, a wide variety of fabrics that feature embroidery, and the hand-designed carpets for which Pakistan is internationally recognized.

Performance Arts. There are so many dance and music performance arts in Pakistan—many unique to the ethnic culture of the performer—that they are almost considered common rather than unique. Music and dance are done in the both classical and folk form. Usually the performer wears a costume that features ethnic design.

Just as the costume worn by the performer identifies the tribe or ethnic group, so does the music or performance. For example, while dancing in a circle is the basic formation for Pakistani folk dances, there are also many versions of the Pathans' khattak, but they all begin with dancers in two columns accompanied by pipe and drum music. There is the Jhoomer in Baluchistan, which involves spinning around at top speed, as men do on dark nights by the light of flickering torches. The women of Punjab do the jhoomer in what is referred to as a romantic fashion. Also in Punjab, the juddi starts with girls singing to the beat of a drum; then they join in a circle and start to dance. Still another dance of Punjab is the bhangra which is described as being like rock and roll and which is always done at the beginning of the harvest season. The Ho Jamalo originated in Sind but is popular throughout Pakistan. It is a dance that is performed as part of a victory or celebration.

There are four main families of musical instruments in Pakistan and more than six hundred Pakistani musical instruments; the most well known are the sitar, veena, rabab, sur mandal and tanpura. The most popular of all the instruments is the sitar but a two-piece drum, the tabla is reputedly the most important accompaniment for all Pakistani music and dancing. Nearly all the instruments are used primarily for solo performances; the Western concept of orchestral music is not part of the Pakistani musical heritage. However, Western instruments such as the piano, violin, and accordion are now often included in Pakistani concerts because they are adaptable to Pakistani music. Family vacation packages

Several other musical instruments are used, particularly the dhol, a double-sided drum that is usually hung around the neck and played with sticks, while the dholkit is smaller and played by hand. In addition, the flute is often used.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

In the social sciences, one of the major concerns is the low rate of literacy in Pakistan. Efforts are being made and outside the educational establishment to address this concern. Another social concern is that frequently young children must work—most often in carpet manufacturing jobs—to supplement the family's income and sometimes to provide the sole income in the family. As a result, the children do not have time to attend school. Efforts made to address this problem have often involved trying to find work for the parents. Family vacation packages

In the physical sciences one of the largest problems is that because of ever-increasing population growth, natural resources are often misused, with land being lost to desertification, waterlogging, and soil erosion. There is increasing contamination of groundwater and surface water from agricultural chemicals as well as from industrial and municipal wastes. Because of the important role of agriculture in the overall economy of the country, agricultural production is and will continue to be greatly threatened by land degradation unless solutions can be found rapidly.

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User Contributions:

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nice and infomative information we all use to read it if i will git informationn about it i will share with thwe people

2ahmed⚠

its good but i came ova here to find things abt politics .....abt the first prime minister but i didnt get it so u shd hav written abt tht also .....but stilll its really very informative.....u get 9.5/10

3BEYONCE⚠

GR8 WORK !!!

U GUYS ROCK !!!!!!!!!

4shahid⚠

It is nice informative article and may be updated with changes taking place on day to day

5erin⚠

thank you soo much.

i have been looking everywhere!!! and once i found this i got everything i needed.. you saved me!!

6Shazia⚠

I find it very productive information and it really helps me alot in my assignment.

7Naila⚠

thank you soo much i had too do a power point and once i found this site i got every thing i needed soo thankyou soo much

8Emily82⚠

This information helped me a lot. I got to finish my computer project thanks to this.

9Salman⚠

Information at it best.concise ,informative and helpful.

thanks

10Rachel23⚠

this helped out a lot with my social studies project. Thanks for putting this up, whoever did. i just need one last thing. What do people in Pakistan wear as far as clothing goes?Best clothing retailers

11Aadil⚠

This is very helpful. Thankyou. I just wanted to know one more thing that why was the capital of Pakistan changed from Karach to Islamabad? This is one of my Pakistan Studies questions and I haved tried looking everywhere but I can't find any good information so can u kindly help me. I will be very thankful to you.

12jamiracle⚠

thanks for da enfotrmation yall helped me get an ''A'' on my project on da history of pakistan thanks alot!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

13Ayesha⚠

i m an indian muslim & my boy friend is pakistani & looking to get married, this article helped me in knowing everything about pakistanis & their culture which is of use to me, it found it much better than the wikipedia, i should give it a 5 star rating

\*\*\*\*\*

14noori⚠

this helped out in doing my project..!thanks a lot!

15Jadidayah⚠

I thank u guys so much for this it helped me get project done in history..this really helped me i got my project and essay done because of this information...i just want to know wat did Pakistan wear for clothes???Best clothing retailers

16Ali⚠

Great! But couldn't find much on why Pakistanis immigrated to Canada

17abbas ali⚠

can you give the cultural festivals of each province.

18hooda⚠

Great! Actually i know why CAPITAL CITY turn to Islamabad,,because situated on north, easy to stand by for any attack from Indian army,,easy..I love this articles

19Nol⚠

i think this page is very useful. can u tell me more about Hyderabad? because i have boy friend there, plsss reply me after read this, thanks very much

20toobi⚠

i dont like dis webpage at all i wanted 2 learn bout industries of pakistan but there iz nothin about it

21Jenn biebel⚠

Really good information!!! Religion covered EVERYTHING but i needed to know about clothing for my assignment and theres nothing here on clothing...!Best clothing retailers

22iyam malik⚠

wow" one wrods ...Amazing! n i loved this country ^\_^ its great n very large country of pakistan.i have come from indonesia.

23i m Rashid i m pakistani and i am muslim⚠

i want to you all of people you give me knowledge about my country thanks to you all may Allah give you all successful!

24anas shaikh⚠

very informative,nice and relevant topics a key source of knowledge about Pakistan our beloved country

25fausat⚠

CAN A PAKISTANI GUY GET MARRIED TO A GIRL FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY ( NIGERIAN GIRL)

26navdeep⚠

can Pakistan government run without the help of american funding.if yes than how.

27k⚠

This information is great. I have been researching music and the arts of pakistan and this has helped. Many thanks

28Julie⚠

Thank you very much!I am becoming part of a Pakistani family and it is very helpful since my family is not from close to Pakistan. You have helped me to understand a lot about their traditions and I appreciate it!

29Amy Tobiness⚠

This was very helpful. Thank you so much for your hard work in collecting the information. I kept thinking "this must have taken them forever to research and write." Thank you for your very much appreciated work and time.

30Maria⚠

Found more of what I was searching for, The information is awesome!!!

Nicely Done=)

31Yesenia⚠

This article has a lot of a lot important information. It is very interesing and informative. I love to learn new things, and I will educate others on this informations as well. Awesome

32chaizi⚠

hey.. thank you for this informative site. i was really informed and educated about Pakistan. I am really at a careful study of Pakistan because i wanted to be there... sometime... and i liked to stay there even for good... thank you again:)

33Austin⚠

Thanks. This site really helped on my project. You rule. :D

34Nightat⚠

very informative,an intensive study , very good job done. I may request for one correction please! The Folk dance performed by girls in Punjab is known as Luddi not Juddi , Refence Performance Arts paragraph2 line no7. correction may please be made if possible

35farwa⚠

this page is very informative.we gain many knowledge from this page...

36Muhammad Tayyab⚠

You Summarized Pakistan well.Information was quiet helpful.

37Wabiha Zehra⚠

It's an informative article but I come here to search about the dresses but unfortunately I can't get any thing about it :(

38salman Ahmad swati⚠

it is realy good information about pakistani society. and i appriciate u

39zeng xin reiner cheung⚠

THANK YOU FOR ALL THE INFORMATION THAT YOU GAVE IT ON US IT IS SO VERY HELPFUL TO ALL RESEARCHERS THAT RESEARCHING ABOUT THE CULTURE ABOUT PAKISTAN THANK YOU VARY MUCH

40meraj ahmad⚠

i am always eager to know about the history Pakistan and due to this information i am totally satisfied.

you have done a great job.

i want to know that what the history of pakistan tells abuot mahatma gandhi ?

please send me appropriate answer on my email id - merajahmad01@yahoo.@com

thanks

41SHAY⚠

great info helped me with my paper alot, but in rural areas the women are treated worse like OBJECTS theres really a two sides to this.

42chocolate⚠

I think over all, it's good, very informative, thanks a lot ^^. But I would like to point out: the Qur'an wasn't written by prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself. It was sent down to him & he memorized it by heart. Arabs at his time didn't rely on writing, they relied on memory; and at that time, people's memory was really good. The prophet (PBUH) was illiterate, so he couldn't have written it. After his death, it was written by his faithful and trustworthy companions.

I just wanted to clearify this point... Thanks agian... ^^

43tiina⚠

brilliant and clear description of Pakistan-thank you!

44samer⚠

THANK U!!!this document helped me a lot in my project thanks a lot!

45Ali Zain⚠

AwsOme information about culture of pakistan , i like it :) Amazing .

46mushtaq ahmed⚠

this page is very informative.This information helped me a lot.i loved my country.thanks

47shahid chohan⚠

that is the best way to inquire the great pakistan and peoples of pakistan

proud to be apakistani

48usman baloch⚠

Its very vibrent and exclusive site providing detailed info about pakistan and its culture.

in pakistan there is much more literary work going on , in urdu , and all other pakistani languages like punjabi, sindhi, pushto and balochi.

besides poetry many individuals are working on other sides of literature like novel, drama, short novels and so on .

49sonia⚠

i will go to pakistan maybe after 2mons. with my pakistani fiance :)) now i know ur culture ! very nice .. but i need adjustment :D

50Noor⚠

I like this web site for over Pakistan history in internet and knowledge in word wide introduction of Pakistan culture and motivation in over country

51Joe⚠

Could you show the history of pakistani hairstyles? its for an art project, it would really help :|

52zaza⚠

Good Facts helped me with my project, the clothes that they wear are saris and shalwar kameezs

53zaza⚠

Good Facts helped me with my project, the clothes that they wear are saris and shalwar kameezs

54showbizzle⚠

Lots of elaboration! But could use updating some updating on other information. Such as, foods, culture, what they like, what they don't like, etc. But overrall, this is a 6 out of 10.

55masooda fazal⚠

this article is informative but i come here to search cultural dresses which is not found there.

56jeeya⚠

I LIKE THIS PAGE IT IS QUITE INFORMATIVE BUT I DID NOT GET ANY INFO ABOUT SOCIAL PROGRAM

57armina corpuz⚠

very informative i learn a lot! I hope more information more especially in there cultural dress @ dishes also! Thank's!

58mehwish⚠

it is an informative page and it really helps me for my assignment.

59sheenfaith⚠

THIS IS VERY INFORMATIVE PAGE AND REALLY HELP ME IN MY DAY TO DAY KNOWLEDGE

60noor⚠

its really a great work and very true picture of PAKISTAN. i appriciat you guys. well done and keep it up.

61m aman⚠

nice but I need information about Urdu language when and how it create and start

62waheed⚠

very nice much informative its realize the problem pakistan faced by pakistan

63mahi noor⚠

THANK U!!!this document helped me a lot in my project thanks a lot!

64sonam ch⚠

thanks very much this helped me to learn more things about pakistan.nice and noble country it is

65mitch⚠

This website was very helpful but it could use more information...What kind of people live in pakistan?

66sanam⚠

i like this but now pakistan is passing very critical condition we individually thinks over it

67mubashir⚠

Remarkable i learned alot about information of pakistan

68urmila⚠

I like this, this is very helpful to know the culture of pakistan.

Thanks

Urmila

Mumbai

69farry⚠

i want to know about the general values of pakistan and how much values have changed?

70Jalal Hameed Bhatti⚠

Thank you for visiting my website 'Pakistanpaedia" and leaving your valuable comments. Although, I have tried to include much on every facet of life of people of Pakistan, I agree lot more needs to be done.

Your research on Pakistan is astounding and I will definately take a sue from here to make my site wholesome and informative.

71Eni Merryana⚠

i have boyfriend.. he is pakistani from gujranwala.. i am indonesian.. can i marry with pakistani?? or pakistani marry only with pakistani??

72jason⚠

i just needed to know the customs for my social studies project but this site is good

73FARHAT KHAN⚠

I M PAKIISTANI. I M HAPPY TO SEE THIS.IT IS GOOD SOURCE OF INFORMATION

74Mushhood akhter⚠

This is very helpful for me because i m make a booklet on the pakistan

75Adriana⚠

Thanks a lot!! It really helped me for my counrty project for social studies. I was trying to find in other sites the Arts and literature of Pakistan, and here I found it.

Thanks!!

76t⚠

What type of clothing do they wear? And what is the transportaion systems like and the education system?

77mansoor⚠

all over the tradition and cul;ture of pakistan is very old its countless in the history of the world, since the existance of the sub continant and too before that its time line is coming, the big thing is that any thing which has existance that changes with passage of time but the culture and traditions of pakistan are coming since that time from where it took birth and coming up continuesly till today.

the coustoms of the areas in pakistan are some a bit cahnge on the basios of locality & ancestoristism all are very joy full.

78SKY⚠

you need info on culture issues. other wise Great!!!

79chestnut brown⚠

THANK U FOR THE INFORMATION ABOUT PAKISTAN. I JUST WANNA KNOW IF MUSLIM PEOPLE IS LEGAL TO THEM HAVING ANOTHER WIFE? OR I CAN SAY IS THERE ANY LIMITATION FOR HAVING MANY WIFE IN THEIR LIFE?

80wasim ahmed⚠

This is really an informative article about pakistan and pakistani culture. I learn a lot from this and get benefit. Actually lot of people want to know about pakistan even pakistanis don't have a knowledge about their beloved country. I am thank to all who co operate in this useful work.

81Fouzia Amirali⚠

Thanx it is v informative I hope u keep on updating it.

82nightwing⚠

very helpful i really like it it helps me a lot :}

83kamalkhan⚠

i love pakistani culture.Thans it is informatiion I hope u keep on updating it.

84parth sharma⚠

I would like to thank the whole team of this article,as being a school student it is a great helper to me, please keep this progress up

85ayesha ahmed⚠

Woah, thankyou! This really helped :') Being a school student, this is basically all I needed.

86Abdul Karim⚠

i realy learnt a lot from this. very informative covering almost all the area for Pakistani culture, tradition politic in very summerized form.

87MUHAMMAD WAQAQS⚠

That u say about culture of pakistan is much postive.

88myunghee kwangsun⚠

thank you for the information about Pakistan. the content of my research paper is already complete. kansamhamnida :)

89mushtaque ahmed⚠

pakistan is the country of diverse cultures and traditions.

this is a great information for the pakistani as well as the foriengners

we love pakistan as our sweet home land

90amina⚠

it is an informative article, from which i have learnt many more.

91gracie⚠

i have learned more then history class this is so good every one should use this :)!!!

92Esha⚠

A very informative site which will help me alot with my project about pakistan.Great work.

93zia naz⚠

thanks for giving very productive and useful information about pak, its covers all type of information about our pakistan

94jl⚠

thanks in this source this helps me to do my project...

95sweeto angle⚠

very nice information please provide some information about youth of Pakistan

96Zaheer⚠

Please someone help me about pakistani male and female dresses history with pictures please please please my id is

Zaheerahmad982@yahoo.com

Thanks

97Alexis Kinney⚠

thanks 4 all ur gr8 info i have more than i need thanks again

sincerly,alexis

98Samin Sayed⚠

Hi! This is very informative but there is nothing about the national sports or the national clothing

99Rizi⚠

Asalam\_o\_Alaikum !This is more informative for me Fanx a lot .

100shahbaz sharif⚠

i like pakistani culture . pakistani culture is the most beautiful culture .

101Jefferey Alan Harper⚠

This comment is very important. I'm new at this and I'm only in Middle School. I found this report to be very helpful and informational. Thank you for making my first time doing research worth waiting for.

102sumi⚠

This is very informative for me thanks.IT HELP ME A LOT.

103abida⚠

hi, i am from pakistan and i really like. I will give you 10 out of 10.

104Jadyn⚠

I am doing a report on Pakistan so I need help. So please help me I need to know what kind of music there is in Pakistan

105Shawn⚠

Helpful Pakistani information for use in an assignment. I would like to reference this source (APA) to acknowledge such a useful article. Please provide to add as a reference. Thank you.

106Aqsa Sheikh⚠

You guys did a great job. It helped me a lot while gathering information about what is essential while teaching social studies in Pakistan.

Thank you!!

107Asif⚠

Graet work. It does need some attention in music, and liberal arts area where there is a long tadition. Also science and culture a place where there is a history of innovation for thousands of years including one nobel prize in science in recent history. Also anitiant cities (from thousands years ago cicilizations) like Indus civilization, Mohingo daro culture and others needs to be mentioned. Muslim influences to teh society and great Mughal empire should be mentioned in more details. I admire the efforts but hope some additions can be made to be more inclusive. Under "Linguistic Affiliation" heading the language name has a spelling error, it should read as "Punjabi" not Punjaki, this is the language spoken in teh largest populated province of Punjab.

Again great work. Thanks

108abduls⚠

Nice job writer, I would appreciate if you please keep updating the history. you may hire free lancer writer to upload the information or make it wiki-editable by registered users, so that masses may share their personal experiences as well.

Good luck !

thanks once again

109Hanggi Slave⚠

This website is amazing! I have this boring ABC book for world geography and mine is on Pakistan; ALMOST EVERYTHING I needed was on this one website! I owe you so much. Next time try to touch on more fun stuff and not as much economy. Again, thank you! You should start your own online encyclopedia that's is more trustworthy than wikepida. Just an idea!

110michael⚠

Very useful information.I now understand the culture and social issues in Pakistan

111abi⚠

Great information. I almost have my five pages written. Thank you so much!

112Samrah malik⚠

it's a comprehensive sort of information.it defined the complexity and diversity of culture in true meanngs bt i hve useful suggestion for you that this article wl prove more effective through illustrations.so u must work upon it.

113Eka Susanti⚠

this is a great website!! i have got much information from this website, so thank you so much and make it more informative.

114Diva⚠

Very useful information. This is what I really needed to hv a more understanding of the culture. Thanks

115Waqar Baloch⚠

best information i understand the culture of our country. best of luck

116Nawab Waqas Mehmood⚠

I need a assignment on this when i find it...Bundle of thanks

117jubert⚠

THIS WEBSITE WAS SO USEFUL BECAUSA MY TEACHER WANTS ME RESEARCH ABOUT PAKISTAN AND THEN THIS WEBSITE HELP ME THANKS

118waqar⚠

Thanks it gives me idea for my upcoming wedding. And know more about my future husbamd. It helps me to decide.

119Amna⚠

Thanks guys!! It really helped for my school project. :)

120mary gale tiauson⚠

Thank you very much.The author gave us full information about the country from its geographical location down to its history of the people,government,economy,project of improvement ,main industries,agriculture,way of life of the people,religion,cultures sports,literature.Different main cities and from the old capital city to the new capital.More important that pakistani people is a mixture of different tribes.

121Sierra Morgan⚠

This is a lot of facts on Pakistan that I need to know about it

122shanila⚠

This information gives a lot information about pakistan's culture

123shmile⚠

This website was really awesome. It helped me alot and because of this website i aced my social studies project. Also my other project, the topic was on the history of Pakistan. I am so thankful. Once again thank you very much. Jazakumullah

124hussain⚠

hello culture of pakistan,God Bless You.i am so happy that my country is a great culture,and good things for eating,cold and hot seasan all the year avilable.beautifull Pakistan i love you more .

125jim⚠

I LOVE MY BEAUTIFULL COUNTRY PAKISTAN culture of Pakistan I am so happy that my country is a great culture and good things for eating thanks beautifull Pakistan.

126Part arbic⚠

wow i never knew that much about my culture and thanks for all the positive input this really helped.

127Keshia⚠

Great job you did a fantastic job with this it was very useful to my book report

128Splat 3.0⚠

I am doing a project on Pakistan and this really helped

129amelija⚠

i searched up something else and this came up although it was helpful it was not what i was looking for because me to is doing a project on Pakistan

130areebmahmud6⚠

very helpful and needed information. i also read british, australia, pakistan,chakmas culture. you people should paste this in news papers and T.V.

131fazal mian⚠

I found very informative very good article they need some changes with the passage of time (population ).

132Star⚠

Who is the author of this article? When was it electronically published?

133Vanecia⚠

This has helped me a lot because I've been struggling to find the right website so thank you very much.

134howard spiegel⚠

I have no real comment I just wanted to post something random.

135Lafuare Noelllafufele⚠

so i didn't really read this, but it sounded pretty good. Hug Mon i want money,like lots of it, but ur website sound like a scam. I feel like you should just deliver the money by hand. Here is my address. Somewhere in the world, Earth, The solar system, the milky way.

136Ben⚠

How do people in Pakistan live?/What is there lifestyle like?

137liana⚠

hi, I'm going to marry Pakistan man, is it true that Pakistan man are honest and love their partner too. I am from Malaysia. I'm worried because our age range is far too different, and I have also experienced household failure twice.

138Tauqeer Ahmad⚠

hi liana, It is true that Pakistani men are honest but remember that not all of them. So as a Pakistani I would like to advise you please have a plan B in your mind. If you need any info feel free to get in touch.

139Cody Benson⚠

There is good info on here, but I didn't find anything I needed. I give 7/10 rating

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

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Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

Culture of Pakistan forum

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Toggle navigation

Countries and Their Cultures

Countries and Their Cultures No-Sa Culture of Palau

Palau

Culture Name

Palauan (Belauan)

Alternate Names

Pelew (archaic English), Los Palaos Islands (Spanish)

Orientation

Identification. The name Palau may be derived from the Palauan word for village, beluu (Pelew). Some trace the name to the Spanish word for mast, palao.

Palau comprises several cultures and languages. Ethnic Palauans predominate, inhabiting the main islands of the archipelago. Descendants of the Carolinean atolls, especially Ulithi, settled on Palau's southern atolls of Hatohobei, Sonsorol, Fannah, Pulo Anna, and Merir. Southwest Islanders, as these Carolineans are called, speak Nuclear Micronesian languages. Today most live on Koror and also speak Palauan and English.

Palauans recognize a series of expanding identities, from the village of one's father, one's mother, one's village, or one's island, to the Palauan nation as a whole. Overseas, Palauans retain strong links and identification to their homeland, while developing their own variations on Palauan identity. Shared schooling and work experiences have resulted in some elites considering themselves Micronesian.

Location and Geography. Located in the western Pacific, the Palauan archipelago is the westernmost portion of the Caroline Islands, which are in turn part of the Micronesian geographical subdivision of Oceania. East of Mindanao in the Philippines, Palau is 722 nautical miles (1,340 kilometers) southwest of Guam. Palau's three hundred volcanic and raised coral islands and atolls rise up from the Philippine Plate, with the highest stone outcrops reaching about 720 feet (2,220 meters) on the largest island, Babel thuap. The islands have a total land area of 191 square miles (495 square kilometers). The weather is hot and humid, with annual rainfall around 150 inches (3,800 milimeters). The flora and fauna are tropical, but Palau is best known for its 70-mile-long (113-kilometer-long) barrier reef which encloses spectacular coral reefs and a lagoon of approximately 560 square miles (1,450 square kilometers), a divers' paradise.

The capital and major population center is Koror, the small set of islands to the south of the main island of Babelthuap. In 2004 the capital will be relocated to Melekeok on Babelthuap.

Demography. As of 1995 the resident population of Palau was 17,225. It was 71 percent urban. The demography of Palau must be understood in historical perspective. Estimated at fifty thousand prior to European contact, the number dropped to about thirty-seven hundred people by 1900. The population then began a slow growth that finally accelerated from 1945 through the 1960s.

Fertility has stabilized at 2.1 children per woman, with a death rate of 7.4 per thousand. In the late twentieth century, the natural population growth has been counterbalanced by outmigration. While the number of Palauans has been relatively stable at about thirteen thousand, including the peoples of Hatohobei and Sonsorol, an estimated seven thousand Palauans today reside overseas for a total population of around twenty thousand.

The most important demographic shift of the late twentieth century was the increase in resident foreigners, from 4 percent of the population in 1973 to 25.5 percent in 1995. The largest and longeststanding community was then Filipinos (2,654 workers and their dependents), followed by other Asians (738), Americans (535), other Micronesians (467) and Pacific islanders (232). By 1999 Asian workers had increased to 5,250.

Linguistic Affiliation. Palauan is considered an Austronesian language of a Western subgroup,

Palau

Palau

which along with Chamorro (Mariana Islands) is considered separate from the other Micronesian and Pacific languages grouped under the label "Oceanic." English and Palauan are official languages; elders also read and speak Japanese. The Palauan language incorporates Spanish, German, Japanese, and English loanwords.

Symbolism. Most of Palau's important cultural symbols are derived from its chiefly past, in particular the gable of the community meetinghouse, bai. This impressive thatched building was the center of political, social, and artistic life. Today the decorated bai gable is used in most national and state seals and to decorate Palauan buildings. Other important symbols include the circle subdivided in four, representing wealth, and the half shell symbol of the giant clam shell, which also represents the foundation of Palau and the creation of humanity from the sea. The image of the traditional Palauan mother at the time of her first child ceremony symbolizes the wealth and fertility of this matrilineal society. Symbols of nationhood include the national flag, a full golden moon on a blue background, and the national anthem.

History and Ethnic Relations

Emergence of the Nation. Archaeologists estimate that the islands were first settled approximately 4,000–4,500 years ago. Palauans participated in the wide-ranging Micronesian trade system, with some interaction with Malay traders. In the nineteenth century Palau was loosely part of the Spanish Pacific. After the Spanish-American War in 1898, Palau was among the islands sold to Germany. In 1914 the islands were occupied by the Japanese, a control later confirmed as a League of Nations Class C Mandate. The United States took possession of the islands in 1944, during World War II. Starting in 1947, Palau was part of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, under the administration of the United States. Palauans chose not to affiliate with the remaining islands of the territory in the Federated States of Micronesia, instead establishing their own constitutional government in 1981.

While the majority of Palauans preferred free association with the United States, ratification of a Compact of Free Association was delayed by constitutional nuclear-free clauses, which required a 75 percent suspension vote of the people to conform with the compact. Palauans also feared U.S. military land use. Between 1983 and 1991 Palau conducted seven plebiscites and experienced escalating violence, including the assassination of the first elected president. After a three-year cooling-off period, and clarifying statements by the United States on the conditions under which the U.S. military might be present on the islands, the compact was approved, the trusteeship terminated, and the nation formally recognized by the United Nations in 1994.

National Identity. The concept of being "Palauan" grew during the century of colonial administration, drawing together those previously separated by villages, clans, and cultures. While the disruptions of the compact plebiscites pitted Palauans against one another, the plebiscites also cemented support for the national constitution.

Ethnic Relations. Palauans are inclusive in their conceptualization of being Palauan, incorporating long-term residents according to Palauan custom. The constitution confirms the citizenship of all those of Palauan heritage. Ethnic differences between Palauans and Southwest Islanders are declining in importance in the face of increasing numbers of Asian foreign workers.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Palau is highly urbanized, with 71 percent of its population residing in Koror and Airai on the south of Babelthuap. Those without land rights on Koror live on land leased from the government, generally in single- or two-story houses of wood or cement with tin roofs.

The bai gable is a common architectural feature. Village communities still have bai meeting houses, a few in traditional styles. Today's government buildings are large air-conditioned cement structures. The future capital, Melekeak, is influenced by classical architecture. The national congress, named the Olbiil era Kelulau (House of Whispers), symbolizes the process of quiet consensus rather than open public debate of issues.

Food and Economy Best restaurants near me

Food in Daily Life. Palauans enjoy a strong domestic economy based on the dual importance of protein ( odoim ) provided by men and starch ( ongraol ) foods produced by women. Each clan has certain recognized food taboos, and there are special foods for titled individuals and for pregnant and lactating women. The extended family system was organized around a series of clan exchanges of food and related valuables—at the time of the building of a house, taking of a title, birth, and death.

Today, imported rice is a staple food that has been integrated into the exchange cycle. A basic meal comprises a starch food, preferably soft or hard taro, tapioca, or rice, and a protein food, normally fish. Coffee and breads or cereal may instead provide a fast breakfast. While starch and protein foods still comprise the basic categories, the Palauan diet is strongly enriched by Japanese and American foods, and more recently by the various cuisines of China, the Philippines, and Korea. There are many restaurants, and local markets feature both Palauan and imported food. Beer is commonly consumed and a local brewery has been established.

Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions. Special foods vary by state, village, and occasion. In the past a special drink made from a molasses derived from coconut sap was served to chiefs and elders; it was valued for its medicinal benefits and its religious meanings.

Nearly every weekend Palauan kin groups gather in the modern equivalents of clan exchanges for house parties and funerals, and to celebrate a woman's first child. Classmates and workmates also join in the festivities and exchanges. Rice and store-bought foods predominate in these exchanges, in addition to taro, fish, and pork. Best restaurants near me

Basic Economy. The production of root crops and fishing still provide a strong basis for the Palauan economy. Large taro swamps are worked by women in each of the villages, and men fish primarily from large outboard motorboats. Foreign workers are now employed in the farming and fishing industries and also work in household food production.

On this subsistence basis there is a strong wage economy. Of the Palauan population sixteen years of age and older, 58 percent are engaged in wage labor, with a male participation rate of 68 percent and female rate of 51 percent. About 40 percent work in the government sector.

Payments associated with the Compact of Free Association between the United States and Palau accounted for 55 percent of 1999 revenues. These payments began in 1994 and are front-loaded within the fifteen-year agreement. Major infrastructural development projects are funded by the compact and by international aid.

Land Tenure and Property. In the past, lands, titles, and wealth were held by the clans and controlled by senior female and male elders; in this matrilineal society, however, those related through a senior female had a stronger say in such areas than those related through a man. Each clan controlled taro fields, a named house plot, and other lands. There were certain village lands: those for the chiefly meetinghouses, men's clubs, and dock houses, as well as some public lands. Certain lands could also pass individually from a father to his children. Best restaurants near me

The majority of lands were alienated during colonial control; these lands were returned to Palau in the 1980s. Certain lands were retained by the new nation for public buildings such as the hospital and government edifices. Otherwise, land may be owned only by Palauan citizens.

Commercial Activities. The traditional Palauan economy was an integrated system of trade and exchange. One could earn Palauan money by performing certain tasks, such as house and canoe building, or through the preparation of certain foods. One also earned wealth for one's clan by participating in the food exchanges, with taro the

Men building a wooden boat. Fish are Palau's main export, and the annual catch may be up to 780,000 pounds (291,000 kilograms). Best restaurants near me

Men building a wooden boat. Fish are Palau's main export, and the annual catch may be up to 780,000 pounds (291,000 kilograms).

standard for Palauan money. Commercial activities have been added to the traditional economy. Raw and cooked foods are prepared for sale in markets and stores. Carved storyboards are produced for sale mainly to visitors. A full range of contemporary commercial occupations have been added, mainly in retail sales, construction, and housing services.

Major Industries. The major industry at present is the construction of public infrastructure, funded by the Compact of Free Association and foreign aid. Tourism and fisheries are major export earners; agricultural production is primarily for local consumption.

Trade. Importation of capital goods associated with infrastructural development constitutes over half of all imports, with imports of foods and live animals at 13 percent. Imports are primarily commercial, totaling $65.9 million (U.S.) in 1998 (a decline from $79.6 million [U.S.] in 1996). Total exports, composed of predominantly fish, were $3 million (U.S.)in 1996. The annual fish catch fluctuates between 500,000 and 780,000 pounds (186,500 and 291,000 kilograms). Best restaurants near me

Tourism is the country's fastest growing industry, with foreign visitors increasing nearly threefold from 23,398 in 1990 to 54,745 in 1999. It is estimated that tourism contributed $65 million (U.S.) to the economy in 1995.

Division of Labor. Except for certain highly specialized tasks such as master builder, master fisher, or master farmer, men and women of all ages traditionally performed basic productive tasks, moving into management positions in the clan and village as they aged. The main division of labor at this time is by nationality, with Palauans and Southwest Islanders holding the primary positions in the governmental sector—in management and the professions—with increased participation by foreigners in private sector positions. Filipino and Chinese workers are primarily engaged in production and service occupations.

Social Stratification

Class and Castes. In the past, members of the highest ranking clans of the village were also the wealthiest, controlling state and village as well as clan monies and resources. Leaders were responsible for caring for their descendants and dependents.

The chiefly system is declining as new systems of stratification based on educational attainment and wealth develop in concert with increased participation in the world economy. Foreigners generally fit into the stratification system according to the level and status of their wage-paying job.

Symbols of Social Stratification. In the past there were few symbols of social stratification, other than women wearing Palauan money pieces around their necks, chiefly men wearing a dugong (sea cow) vertebrae bracelet or adze. Today fine clothing, houses, fast speedboats, and four-wheel-drive cars are signals of personal achievement.

Political Life

Government. The Palau national constitution was ratified in 1981. It is modeled on the United States constitution with a popularly elected president and vice president, two-house National Congress, and a judiciary. There are sixteen states based on historical village-states, each with a governor and state constitution.

Leadership and Political Officials. The president and vice president are the highest recognized elected officials. There are no political parties. The Ibedul of Koror and the Reklai of Melekeok continue to be recognized as paramount chiefs of Palau. The states are comprised of a number of villages, each of which has its own male and female chiefly councils. A council of chiefs from each state advises the national government. At the state level both elected governors and traditional leaders are recognized. The level of integration of the elected and traditional leadership varies by state.

Social Problems and Control. There is a national police and judiciary. Palau is experiencing many of the social problems of societies undergoing rapid transformation. High consumption of alcohol contributes to accidents and assaults especially involving young men. Marijuana is grown and sold in the islands, and imported drugs such as "ice" (cocaine) are a problem among the young. The paramount chiefs are working with government officials on youth programs and programs that aim to control alcohol and drug use.

Military Activity. Palau does not have a national military, although the young men's clubs of the village-states are still active; in the civil unrest of the 1980s these clubs were often called in to establish and maintain order. Some Palauans do volunteer for service in the various branches of the U.S. military.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The constitution mandates a strong program of health and educational support. Education is free and mandatory through high school (grade twelve), with support services for those who do not graduate. Private religious elementary and high schools (including Catholic, Protestant, Seventh Day Adventist, and Palauan Modekngei) are supported by school fees as well as government contributions. Medical services are provided at low cost through the Belau National Hospital and clinics, and there are several private medical clinics. There is a national social security system for those who have contributed through taxes upon their wages, and there are both government and private retirement programs.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Semigovernmental nonprofit organizations include a community action agency, head start programs, and the Belau National Museum. Environmental concerns are strongly represented by the Palau Conservation Society, and local offices of the Nature Conservancy.

Gender Roles and Statuses

Division of Labor by Gender. In the past there was a strongly gendered division of labor in daily work tasks, with men in charge of fishing and the construction of houses and community buildings, and women in charge of farming and shellfish collection. Today both men and women are active in wage labor, and gender is of little importance except in national political offices, which are rarely held by women. There are women physicians, lawyers, and business managers, and the first Palauan woman serves on the Palau Supreme Court.

The Relative Status of Women and Men. Palauan society recognizes complementary roles for men and women. The traditional governing village council was male, with a female chiefly counterpart council. Senior women were integrally involved in leadership: they selected (and could remove) the male titleholders. Senior women still have strong voices in clan decisions on property and wealth controlled by the matrilines, because money from exchanges enters the clan through the woman. Changes in legal inheritance, however, are eroding women's power.

The Ngardmaun State Office Building in Babeldaob Island. Palau's government is modeled on that of the United States.

The Ngardmaun State Office Building in Babeldaob Island. Palau's government is modeled on that of the United States.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Marriage. In the past marriages were arranged, with intermarriage among members of the high clans, but at present, individuals may select their own partners. Within the clan marriage is not permitted to relatives reckoned through either the father or mother to four generations. Marriage may be formalized through the court, church, and/or traditional ceremonies involving the exchange of prescribed foods and wealth between the clans. Divorce is common, especially among younger couples with few children, and may be initiated by either husband or wife. In the past most adults would marry; today, there are increasing numbers of single or widowed individuals. Best restaurants near me

Domestic Unit. The basic unit is the telungalek —people descended from one woman. In the past households were comprised of three- or four-generation extended families. Today, there are increasing numbers of nuclear family households, particularly among the young.

Inheritance. Lands, titles, and wealth traditionally passed through the matriline, with decisions made by senior female and male elders. Today, social security payments and intestate estates pass to the wife and children of the deceased, a major transformation of inheritance practices.

Kin Groups. Beyond the telungalek are recognized lineages and clans that may extend beyond the village or state. Certain clans are associated by past histories.

Socialization

Infant care. At the time a woman's first child is born there are special ceremonies: her female elders gather, organize a series of hot baths, and present the young woman to the community in a public ceremony. During this time the infant is cared for primarily by female relatives, who bring the child to the mother for nursing. Care of infants is dispersed among family members, and it is common for children to be adopted by their grandparents. Men are active in caring for their young children, especially boys.

Child Rearing and Education. In the past, children learned through observation and working alongside adults. Today there is a formal education system beginning generally with head start or kindergarden classes, followed by elementary and secondary schools.

Higher Education. Secondary education is universal, with most Palauans bilingual in Palauan and English. There is a two-year Palau Community College which trains students from throughout the region and also feeds into four-year systems predominantly in Guam and the United States. Palauans enjoy high standards of education and literacy.

Etiquette

Respect toward elders and leaders is still pronounced. In particular the head is considered sacred and should not be touched.

Religion

Religious Beliefs. Christianity has been established in Palau for the past century, with Catholic (44 percent) and Protestant (29 percent) churches predominating. There is also a syncretic Palauan religion, Modekngei, which in 1995 accounted for 11 percent of the people.

Palauans still recognize Palauan gods and their totemic embodiments, refraining from eating clan totems. Christian beliefs and indigenous practices often coexist.

Religious Practitioners. Ordained priests, pastors, and Modekngei leaders are highly respected leaders of religious ceremonies, and there is strong lay and community involvement in the churches.

Rituals and Holy Places. Major Christian rituals and holy places are recognized, in addition to indigenous village-based shrines.

Death and the Afterlife. Funerals remain one of the most important of all Palauan rituals. As in the past this is the occasion for a major gathering of the lineages and clans, organized primarily by the female elders. Transfers of food and wealth are made to settle the affairs of the deceased and for a deceased man, the obligations to his wife and children, who return to the woman's natal house. Although general graveyards were established in the nineteenth century by colonial administrations, it is still common for an individual to be buried in the stone platform of the house or lineage. Best restaurants near me

Medicine and Health Care

Local Palauan medicines of leaves and herbs and Palauan medicinal and massage practitioners are still valued, although Palau has also fully incorporated Western medicine. The Belau National Hospital provides a high standard of services, relying in some cases on medical referrals to the Philippines and the United States. There are male and female trained physicians and surgeons, as well as nurses. There is an active dental service and village-based public health services.

Secular Celebrations

Palau celebrates a range of national holidays including Constitution Day (9 July) and Independence Day, many American holidays, as well as an extended Christmas/New Year's period.

The Arts and Humanities

Support for the Arts. The Belau National Museum, which opened in 1955, was begun privately with strong local support. The government of Palau is considering funding a new national museum as part of the capital relocation project. Palau has twice sent delegations to the Pacific Festival of Arts and will host the 2004 festival.

Literature. Poetry is the most developed of Palauan literary arts (in Palauan and in English), with several well-known poets; little is available, however, in published form.

Graphic Arts. The graphic arts are highly developed in Palau. In the past the village meetinghouse was the center of both visual and performance arts. The end gables (bai) of these houses and the interior beams were decorated with low-relief painted carvings, depicting histories of the village and its relationships with other villages. Most of the older houses (depicting sailing ships and planes as well as Palauan scenes) were destroyed during World War II or by typhoons, and the few extant and newly constructed gables today depict pre-European Palauan styles.

Carved wooden storyboards, derived from the beam carvings, are a highly developed art form, primarily for sale to foreigners. Carvers of storyboards, shell jewelry makers, and weavers may earn considerable income. Watercolors of traditional village scenes by the late Charlie Gibbons are highly prized. Palauan artists also work in oils and linocuts.

Performance Arts. Dancing is a highly developed art form. Traditional dances are performed by village groups. The women's dances are stately and performed by two lines of women, while the men's line dances often include war stances and stick dances. Oratory is highly developed, with senior elders performing historical chants and pieces from

Palm trees surround a traditional men's house. The bai gable is an important cultural symbol.

Palm trees surround a traditional men's house. The bai gable is an important cultural symbol.

a number of musical genres. In village meetings there are also informal theatrical skits and clowning in informal dancing. Contemporary Palauan music is composed and performed in nightclubs and on public occasions, with local diskettes and CDs offered for sale.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Palau has long been a site of research in marine biology, building upon the scientific skills of Palauan master fishermen. Scientists at the Micronesian Mariculture Demonstration Center were the first to successfully spawn giant clams in a laboratory environment, and to develop programs to build stocks of endangered hawksbill turtles. The Palau International Coral Reef Center for scientific research, coral reef management, and educational programs, funded by Japan, is due to open in 2001. A private Coral Reef Research Foundation studies the biochemical properties of marine invertebrates, especially sponges, in cancer research.

The Palau Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs—which includes the Palau Historic Preservation Office, Belau National Museum, and Ministry of Education—operates aggressive programs in cultural conservation, counteracting strong American influences in education. In conjunction with the construction of the Babelthuap road, major archaeological and oral history projects are under way.

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—K AREN L. N ERO

User Contributions:

1Kim⚠

I found this very informative and it answered most of my questions. Thanks!!

2Ron Levy⚠

Great article. I was there in the late 70's as a physician in training from the internal medicine training program in Hawaii.

At that time there were no paved roads and the terminal at the airport was an open air thached hut. The first bridge to town was still under construction so you had to take the barge. There were many old chiefs with tattoes from head to toe. One of the only motorized pleasure boats was owned by the hospital. I had my own boat driver and after making hospital rounds we would take the boat out to see patients in various villages....then we would go spear fishing. I have some great pics I could share.

3Archangel⚠

im from palau so i knew most of this stuff. it taught me stuff i didn't know though. this is interesting. Keep up the good work!

4Carol⚠

Very informative.

Palau is a perfect example of a developing country experiencing hyper development, moreover, it is evident that these changes are eroding family, cultural and social values. Drawing from the a comment posted here by Ron Levy, much has changed since the 70's.

I suspect the challenge for this country is to become self sustainable in the long run without depending heavily on foreign assistant to subsidize economic activity.

A great place to start is how to generate jobs that would be attractive for educated young adults to return home and contribute to this society.

5lorraine⚠

I'm doing a Power Point Presentation, and I was wondering If someone from my beautiful Island of Belau help me.

6gheno⚠

good information i im palauan this is good to know about my history YES

7elizabeth⚠

I LEARNED ALOT THAT I DIDNT KNOW WHICH IS COOL.MY MOM WAS BORN IN PALAU .

8Vonlei⚠

Im a proud Palauan and appreciated all the factual information. I can actually tell my fellow foreign friends to read this because its interesting and well put together. Continue the awesome work!

9Keene Isao⚠

This is very interesting. i didn't know much about our culture but now i truly understand not all of it but most of it.

10Ed Baggerly⚠

Excellent article. Please note: in third paragraph "...with the highest stone outcrops reaching about 720 feet (2,220 meters) on the largest island..." - should read 220 meters

11jessica⚠

thanks so much! it helped with my sociology homework

12hunter⚠

hello i love your article its very interesting I'm doing a topic on this at school and i needed this information thank you whoever wrote this for giving me this info it was very helpful

13Summer⚠

Thanks for this, needed help for my ethnography paper which is about Charlie Gibbons. Wish this had more information though...

14chris tulop⚠

I want to meet my real dad. I am guamanin an I haven't seen or heard from him. I am almost forty and I want to see him. If anyone can help me my number is (316)559-5584. Thank you. My name is chris tulop. Thank you and I hope my dad gets this before anyone. Love you dad no matter what happend or happens k . Love you. My dad name is emmanuel tulop and my mom name is debbie castro.

15nurmaida jukoy⚠

i like reading the culture,dressing and dancing that palau has i did enjoy my self watching thier images and videos. i hope to read more on this next time.

16motol⚠

this was very interesting for cuz the last time i was in palau was like 3 to 4 years ago. but im so proud to be palauan i just wish i knew how to write it cuz now all i noe how to do is talk in palauan... sometimes i wish me and my family never moved but we did so oh well...

17Airaiboy⚠

To Ron Levy, I would love to see those photos of yours. I am Palauan and I was raised in the States since a very young age. I have slight memories of the old days, well not quite 70ish but towards the 80's and during the transitioning stages I guess I would call them. I would really love to see those pictures that you have. I would like to see how it looked like back then. Respond if you read my comment thanks.

18Henri Westland⚠

I am a Dutch engineer, introducing innovative new ways to tackle global warming. In my opinion we should reduce infra red radiation. Fighting CO2 is not possible and is extremely expensive. I am in the Philippines now. I was wondering if my sailing yacht is welcome in your beautiful, typhoon free, blue waters of the Pelau Islands. Greetings from Henri

19Sam⚠

I'm Palauan, too and I'm pretty impressed with the accuracy of this information. Most documents written about us contain at least a few errors, but this was written well. Whoever wrote this did great research!

20user⚠

this was so informative! it answered all of my questions. it was even enjoyed reading it!

21user⚠

Answered all my questions. Will be returning to this site in the future. I highly recommend Every Culture.

22Jorella Tudong⚠

Well, Alii!! Ngak mak chad er Belau! I am Palauan also, full blooded, lived there all my life and was born there, moved to Arkansas on July 25th of 2011, and I gotta say some of these things I really didnt know!! I enjoy learning some facts of my beautiful home of Palau!! Post more if there is any...

23Bernadette⚠

This was very interesting and useful. I have a research paper to write and these information would be of great use... I also did not know much about my own culture and I am glad that I would get the chance to research on it and tell people about it.

24yana⚠

Thank you so much! This was of great help in my term paper in Economics.

25Sonia⚠

Hi. In my homeland, Sabah Malaysia, there are Bajau Laut, also known as the Pala'u people. Mainstream researches suggest that they are from the Philippines. Anyways, I wonder if these people are somehow related to Palau, or perhaps even originated from Palau. Has any academic research been done on this? If yes, i would love to know about it. Thank you.

26Sonia⚠

Oh, by the way, i read in wikipedia about Palau, and found out that Negrito people once dominated Palau, before they were displaced 900 years ago. For your information, Negrito people are also one of the indigenous groups in Peninsular Malaysia. Most of them still live in remote rainforest areas.

27Spenser⚠

Hi,

I'm writing a short book about Palau and would like to include some of your information. If that is okay with you it would greatly be appreciated. I'm writing this book for school so we can write a book on something that interests us. We also are going to try and publish our work so I would like to get your permission.

Thank you so much,

Spenser

28Shannen⚠

Oh thanks alot for writting this article.. It really help me with my school power point...

29Sabi⚠

It is very imformative and beneficial to high school students especially those who majored in Tourism & Hospitality.

30RevJerryFales oms⚠

I'm an ordained minister here in the united states of america. do i need a ministers licence or register my information to the government there in palau? to do a wedding ceremony in palau?

31Jade⚠

I'd like contact for anyone in Palau who might have information for Mbuke Island relatives who settled in Palau many years ago.

Mbuke Island is in Manus province in Papua New Guinea.

32shyamal⚠

hi,i want to ask that how many hospital are there in palau and how many orthopedic hospital are there in palau

33Elma Pascual⚠

It's really interesting about their culture and planning to visit palau and hoping to meet a Filipino ftiends.

34Lisa K. Abraham-Rengechel⚠

Alii!

I am Palauan, born and raised. I really appreciate writers who do their research. Thank you! You did an awesome job on my country. Well written, information are accurate, and very ethical (professional).

Thank you :-) Kmal Mesulang

35Allen Murphy⚠

My father was part of the Comprehensive Inventory of the Micronesian Islands study 1947-1948 as a member of the University of Oregon anthropology team. His main efforts were to record the language and customs of the people. He spent the year in Uliman in Ngaraard on the east coast. I recently found his notes and his dictionary and am in the process of transcribing them. A sample can be found as a comment on Google Earth view that shows a photo of the Elementary School. He describes the graduation ceremony of what must have been the first graduating class. For years, he talked about his life there and the man across the trail named "Siro" or "Shiro".

36mikneiah⚠

thanks this helps me on my social study

thanks alot

37Jhosiah⚠

This was very useful I used it for my social studies as for the people in Palau I hope to visit there soon.

38Tom Thomsen⚠

My stepfather was from Palau. Got to visit in the early 70's. He was considered to be very important in Koror. Had tattoos from ankle to neck done at a men's house (traditional raised floor structure). We, being haoles (and we were children) were not allowed in. I could see the artist tapping Yogi's back with a stick and a sharp object to make the tattoos. I don't recall any paved roads. There were concrete building with walls blown off from WWII with people living in them. And...the rock islands were beautiful. That's what I recall...

39Francisca Main⚠

It is very informative and beneficial to our Micronesian children as well as to those who don't know very well about our history. Thank you very much!

40IARA⚠

very useful I used it for my research.. Thank you , next

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

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Culture of Palau forum

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1. Culture of Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip

Palestine, West Bank, and Gaza Strip

Culture Name

Palestinian

Orientation

***Identification.***Palestine is the name the Romans gave in the second century C.E. to a region of the present-day Middle East situated on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea west of Jordan. The name is derived from the Greek *Palaestina,*or "Land of the Philistines," a seafaring people who settled a small coastal area northeast of Egypt, near present-day Gaza, around the twelfth century B.C.E. Also known as the Holy Land, Palestine is held sacred by Christians, Jews, and Muslims, some of the most important events in each religion having taken place there, especially in the city of Jerusalem.

***Location and Geography.***Palestine's geographical area has varied greatly over the centuries, as the land was conquered repeatedly by the great empires that came to power in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and parts of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria were once part of Palestine.

The Gaza Strip is a narrow sliver of land about eighteen miles long (twenty-nine kilometers)and five miles wide (eight kilometers) on the Mediterranean Sea between Egypt and Israel. It is mostly flat and sandy, with little fertile soil. The West Bank is about ninety miles long (one-hundred-forty-five kilometers) and thirty miles wide (forty-eight kilometers) and is surrounded on all sides by Israel except to the east, where it abuts the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. The West Bank is fertile in the north and mostly barren in the south.

***Demography.***The estimated 2000 population of Gaza was 1,132,063, approximately 99.5 percent of whom were [Palestinian Arab](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Palestinian_people.html). The West Bank estimate was 2,020,298, with approximately 83 percent Palestinian Arab and 17 percent Jewish. About half of the population of the West Bank is under age fifteen.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Like the Jews, the Palestinians are a Semitic people, and the languages of the two groups are similar. Palestinians speak primarily Arabic and Jews speak a Hebrew derived from that of the Bible. The two languages have some of the same words and sound similar to people unfamiliar with the languages.

***Symbolism.***The Palestinian flag, consisting of three bands of (top to bottom) black, white, and green with a red triangle on the flagstaff side pointing to the center of the white band, is a symbol of Arab unity.

Another popular symbol in Palestine and the rest of the Arab world is the eagle of [Saladin](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Saladin.html), named for a [twelfth-century](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/12th_century.html) warrior who united Arabs to defend Islamic territories against the Crusaders. It was depicted on Egypt's 1954 Liberation Flag, which was a variation of the Arab Revolt Flag of 1917.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Because of its location at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, and Europe, Palestine has been the battleground of the great powers in the region throughout its history. Conquerors of the region included Egypt, Assyria, Macedonia, Rome, Byzantium, Arabia, and Turkey. Settlement in the area is believed to date back to about 8000 B.C.E. , to the village of Jericho in the West Bank.

By about 1000 B.C.E. the Hebrews had established the kingdom of Israel, which later split into two kingdoms, Judah and Israel. The area later changed hands among Assyrians, Babylonians, and Greeks. In the first century B.C.E. the Romans conquered the region and drove out most of the Jews.

Around 640 C.E. as the Islamic religion spread across the Middle East, the area fell to Arab Muslim armies. Many historians believe that modern-day



*Palestinian Authority*

Palestinians are descended from these Arabs. Except for brief periods during the Crusades, Palestine remained in Muslim hands almost continuously, becoming part of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century.

With the World War I (1914-1918) defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Britain was mandated by the League of Nations to govern Palestine. During the war, both Jews and Arabs had been given conflicting assurances regarding control of Palestine. The British had given their support for Arab control over a region that the Arabs believed included Palestine. Britain had also pledged to support a Jewish homeland in Palestine, however.

Also, during the late nineteenth century, Jewish immigrants had been returning to Palestine in increasing numbers as they fled European and Russian persecution and sought to return to their homeland. Jewish immigration steadily increased after World War I, increasing tensions between the Jews and the Arabs and often resulting in violence.

With the coming of World War II and the Holocaust, there was a surge in Jewish immigration, exacerbating the problem and forcing Britain to relinquish its mandate and turn the problem over to the United Nations in 1947. That same year, the UN voted to partition Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states, a plan the Arabs did not accept because they wanted all of the territory. The Jews did accept the proposal. Naming their state Israel, they declared its independence on 15 May 1948. Five Arab armies immediately attacked Israel. After the war, the West Bank was controlled by Jordan, and the Gaza Strip came under Egyptian rule, but Israel controlled the rest of Palestine. More than half a million Palestinians were displaced from their homes during the turmoil, many fleeing to the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and other Arab countries. Nineteen forty-eight thus marks the beginning of an ongoing struggle to build a Palestinian nation, as those displaced by the war have since that time agitated to return to a Palestinian homeland. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), formed in 1964 under Egyptian leadership and led by Palestinian politician [Yasser Arafat](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Yasser_Arafat.html) beginning in 1969, emerged as the main voice of the Palestinian people.

Israel and its Arab neighbors have endured many wars since 1948. In the 1967 Six Day War, Israel captured the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, among other areas. The West Bank and the Gaza Strip are often called the Occupied Territories, and most of the residents are Palestinian Arabs. Many have been refugees in the Occupied Territories since the 1948 war. Israel also annexed East Jerusalem, a revered holy site of Jews, Muslims, and Christians, in 1967.

Another major milestone on the road to statehood was reached in December 1987 when a traffic accident in the Gaza Strip sparked the *intifada,*an often violent, twenty-year-long campaign of civil disobedience and nationalism in which militant Palestinians vowed to extinguish Israel and the Israelis. The PLO used this time of turmoil to engage in negotiations in which it renounced terrorism, recognized Israel's right to exist, and proposed the creation of a Palestinian state.

The intifada intensified peace talks, and in 1993 Arafat and Israeli prime minister [Yitzhak Rabin](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Yitzhak_Rabin.html) signed a historic peace accord calling for eventual Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), a new governing body created to assist in self-rule for Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, began administering these areas in 1994, achieving yet another breakthrough in the creation of a Palestinian state. Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank reached another milestone in 1996 when Israel withdrew its troops from most of the area and they elected Arafat as president of the Palestinian National Authority.

***Ethnic Relations.***The modern-day conflict between Israel and the Palestinians dates back to World War I and the conflicting promises to Arabs and Jews regarding a homeland in Palestine. The years since the war have been marked by enmity, violence, and terrorism as each group seeks to assert its claim to a Palestinian homeland.

After decades of violence between the two factions—and decades of international attempts to bring stability and normalcy to the region—peace seemed no closer at hand in the early days of the twenty-first century. Amid ongoing peace talks, fierce violence erupted in October 2000, claiming more than three hundred lives and leaving thousands wounded.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Thousands of Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip live in refugee camps that have gradually become permanent settlements, while many others live in comfortable homes in modern towns.

In a traditional village, one-story houses made of white stone predominate. They usually have a kitchen, a sitting room, bathing room, and small bedrooms. Many homes have gardens and are surrounded by a high wall with a gate. Wealthier families sometimes have two-story homes, the top used for living quarters and entertaining, the bottom for utilities and storage. Some homes have [indoor plumbing](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Tap_water.html) and electricity.

The crowded refugee camps are equipped with small cement-block huts with corrugated metal doors and roofing. Food is prepared on a metal grate placed over a container of charcoal. Thin mats placed on the floor serve as beds. People bathe and wash clothes in metal drums filled with water from a community well.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Palestinians often buy snacks or light meals from street vendors as they go about their daily business. It is customary to eat the main meal between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. Many dine on *falafel,*sandwiches made with balls of deep-fried hummus, or grilled lamb sandwiches, called *shwarma*. Pita bread is usually a part of every meal. Other popular dishes include lamb, eggplant, chicken, and rice. Also popular are pastries, usually made with honey and almonds or pistachios.

Drinking coffee or tea is a major social activity for Palestinian men, and conversations and business deals often end with several cups.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***A favorite dish served at weddings, feasts, and funerals is *mensaf,*a large platter of rice covered with a rich lamb or goat stew and pine nuts.

***Basic Economy.***The Palestinian economy is based almost completely on agriculture, with livestock, fishing, and some small industry making a smaller contribution. Palestinians depend on Israel for about 90 percent of their external trade.

The West Bank is largely a region of small villages where agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. The chief crop is olives, which are produced on about half of the cultivated land. Other important crops are grains, fruits, and vegetables. Agriculture also dominates the economy of the Gaza Strip, the main crops being citrus fruits and vegetables.

Both the West Bank and Gaza are heavily dependent on Israel and oil-producing Arab states for jobs. Forty percent of Gazans commute to jobs in Israel, earning more than one-third of Gaza's gross national product. After the Israeli occupation in 1967, the West Bank became heavily dependent on service-sector jobs generated by the strong Israeli economy, and Palestinians came to dominate the construction industry in Israel.

The Palestinian economy was dealt serious setbacks in recent years. Jobs in Israel became much more difficult to obtain after the *intifada*began in 1987 and as tensions between Israelis and Palestinians



*Palestinians farming land near Efrata, West Bank. Agruculture is the foundation of the Palestinian economy, especially in the northern part of the West Bank.*

increased in recent years. The Palestinians went on frequent strikes and Israel barred them from the country, hiring workers from other countries to replace them. The Palestinians also lost another major source of income when many lost their jobs in Arab oil nations because they supported Iraq in the Persian Gulf War in 1991. High unemployment plagues both Gaza and the West Bank.

Palestinians are hoping the new Gaza International Airport, opened in 1998, will boost the economy. Produce can now be shipped directly to Europe rather than having to go through Israel first. Also, in the late 1990s foreign investment began flowing into new industrial zones in an attempt to create more jobs within the Occupied Territories.

***Major Industries.***The West Bank supports a few small industries, including textiles, food processing, cement manufacturing, and the manufacture of toys, furniture, clothing, and shoes.

***Trade.***Since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, the Palestinian economy has become very dependent on Israel's, especially for jobs and as a market for agricultural products. Most of Palestine's exports—consisting of fruits, vegetables, and cooking oil—are exported to Israel.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***For the most part, Jewish Israeli settlements in the West Bank are separated from Palestinian communities. Most of the best roads, shopping facilities, jobs, and services are found in the Israeli areas, and Palestinians resent this.

Adding to the frustration and anger of ordinary Palestinians is the fairly recent emergence of two distinct cultures within the Palestinian community. At one extreme are the Palestinians who were educated in private schools and often lived in the United States or Europe before their parents returned to their homeland in Palestine, many after the 1993 Oslo accords, carrying their children with them. Many of the returnees get the best jobs through social or political connections, and many flaunt their money and automobiles. At the other extreme are the majority of Palestinians, those who have lived in Palestine throughout the Israeli occupation and who spend their days doing menial chores in poverty.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Elite Palestinians often sport the trappings of privilege and political connection. They live in nice homes, often have two cars, and frequently employ maids. With their



*Haradar settlement on the West Bank.*

connections, they can easily move freely in and out of the Palestinian territories, an extremely difficult proposition for the poor. To many, the gulf between rich and poor may pose a bigger problem than achieving the goals sought in negotiating the final sovereignty status of the territories.

Political Life

***Government.***In 1993 Israel and the PLO, in their first direct talks, signed a historic agreement calling for limited Palestinian autonomy in Gaza Strip and Jericho in the West Bank as a first step to Palestinian sovereignty in the Occupied Territories. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was set up as an instrument of Palestinian interim self-rule. By early 1996, most of the rest of the West Bank had come under Palestinian administration.

The PNA includes the eighty-eight-member Palestinian Legislative Council, an elected body, and Yasser Arafat, elected president in 1996. There is also a twenty-member cabinet appointed by the president. At the beginning of 2001, however, Arafat alone was the de facto "government" of the Occupied Territories.

The PNA has set up a judicial system. It is also responsible for local government, education, commerce, industry, agriculture, labor, health, taxation, and tourism, among other matters.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***The leading figure in the Palestinian fight for statehood has been Yasser Arafat. At the beginning of 2001, he was the chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, the president of the Palestinian Authority, and the head of the Central Committee of Fatah, the major political faction within the PLO.

***Social Problems and Control.***The biggest problem for the Palestinians at the beginning of the twenty-first century was the ongoing struggle for a homeland in Palestine and the right to self-determination. Unemployment and poverty are also huge problems. Many young Palestinians—who constitute a majority of the population of Gaza and the West Bank—have never experienced life outside a refugee camp. Their lives have been shaped by conflict and violence, rampant unemployment, and continual unrest.

With ongoing violence continually shattering hard-won peace accords, however, a Palestinian state—and peace and stability in the Middle East—still seemed elusive at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

***Military Activity.***Established in May 1994, the Palestinian Police Force includes the Palestinian National Security Force, the Palestinian civil police, the civil defense force, the Preventive Security Force, and the General Intelligence Service. Quasi-military security organizations include the coast guard and military intelligence.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

The Palestinians receive substantial international aid, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) handles most of the needs of the refugees, about half a million of whom still live in camps. In addition to health centers and hospitals, which provide free basic health care, the UNRWA supplies educational and social services, as well as money for the unemployed needy. The UNRWA also supports special groups such as people with disabilities and the elderly.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Many Palestinian men consider it unacceptable for women to work outside the home, so women are usually restricted to homemaking or local cottage industries. They also frown on women wearing Western-style dress, preferring them to dress in the traditional Muslim *jilbab,*a long jacketlike dress, with a scarf to cover their hair.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***As in other Arab cultures, men are at the center of Palestinian life. The family patriarch makes all decisions regarding living arrangements, children's marriages, and money. Obedience to one's father or husband is one of the highest indicators of honor in an Arab woman's life.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Although polygamy is a common practice among Arab men, with as many as four wives allowed, most Palestinian men have only one or two wives.

Traditionally, when a man and woman wish to marry, the man approaches the woman's family as a prospective husband. After declaring their engagement, the couple and their families get to know one another before the wedding. In urban areas and among university students, couples may marry without the older family traditions. A wedding calls for a big celebration, with singing, dancing, and feasting. The couple exchanges vows in a simple Muslim ceremony called the Katb al-Kitab.

***Domestic Unit.***Extended families tend to live together in the same household. It is unusual for young people to have their own place before they marry and have children. Frequently, married children also live with their parents. Elderly parents are nearly always cared for at home by the families of their children.

If a man has more than one wife and can afford a large house, each wife gets a separate set of rooms. More often, the houses are small and afford little privacy.

***Kin Groups.***Family clans dominated by the patriarchs of each group once played a major role in Palestinian society, but these were based on land ownership that no longer exists, so clans have lost their importance. The extended family remains, however, as the strongest social unit.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***A people with one of the world's highest birth rates, the Palestinians care for their children with pride. An infant boy's circumcision is an occasion for celebration. Extended families help in caring for infants and young children.

***Child Rearing and Education.***Because about half of the Palestinian population is under age fifteen, education is a prime concern. The school system in Gaza is based on Egypt's and the West Bank's system is based on Jordan's, and there are numerous literacy and cultural centers at all learning levels. Schools vary, but most children get a free public education, from kindergarten through high school. Children from well-to-do families may attend an Islamic or a Christian school.

***Higher Education.***Obtaining a university degree is a high priority for Palestinians. Palestine boasts eight universities and four colleges, all of which grant bachelor's degrees in arts and sciences. A few also offer graduate programs, and Al-Najah University awards a doctorate degree in chemistry.

Etiquette

Palestinian men shake hands on meeting, and women kiss one another on the cheeks. Palestinians are friendly and hospitable, and neighbors pay one another frequent short visits at which coffee, tea, and sweets are shared. It is considered polite to turn down a dinner invitation to avoid imposing, but the host will continue to insist on the guest's company. Proper dress is essential in displaying good manners. Both men and women cover their heads, and women must always cover their shoulders and upper arms.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Muslims are the predominant religious group in Palestine, comprising around three quarters of the population, and Islamic practices prevail in the territories. Most Palestinian Muslims belong to the Sunni sect.

The word Islam means "submission," to the will of Allah (God) and obedience to his commands. Muslims believe that the prophet Muhammad (c. 570-632 C.E. ) received Allah's commands from the angel Gabriel and that these revelations are recorded in the Koran (or Quran), the Islamic holy book. The Koran sets forth rules for everyday behavior as well as religious doctrine. Islam is inseparable from dayto-day life, so religion, politics, and culture are all bound together in Muslim communities.

***Religious Practitioners.***An *imam*(spiritual leader) delivers the weekly sermon at a mosque.



*An official inspects magnetic identifications at the checkpoint between the Gaza Strip and Israel. Conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has resulted in decades of violence and created a need for tight security.*

Islam has no priests, and the imam usually has a full-time job in the secular world.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***Devout Muslims pray five times a day, bowing toward the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Muhammad. They are summoned to prayer by the call of a *muezzin*(crier) issuing from the minarets of the many mosques that dot the Palestinian skyline. Daily prayer is one of the "five pillars of Islam." The other four are the testimony of faith ("there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is Allah's messenger"), giving to the poor, making at least one *hajj*(pilgrimage) to Mecca, and fasting during Ramadan and other religious holidays.

Palestine contains many sites that are holy to Muslims (as well as many that are holy to Christians and Jews, hence much of the religious conflict in the region). The most revered to Muslims are the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosques, built in Jerusalem on the site at which Muhammad is believed to have ascended to heaven on a night's journey known as *al-Isra' wa al-Mi raj*.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Palestinians observe a three-day mourning period when someone dies. Family and friends offer condolences and recite the Koran. Neighbors serve meals to the deceased's family and their guests throughout the three-day period. The deceased's death is observed again at the forty-day anniversary.

***Medicine and Health Care.***In the West Bank, with its vast refugee population of more than half a million, the [United Nations Relief and Works Agency](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/United_Nations_Relief_and_Works_Agency_for_Palestine_Refugees_in_the_Near_East.html) provides health, educational, and social services. More than thirty health centers and hospitals provide free basic health care. Special services are also provided for the elderly and people with disabilities.

The Arts and Humanities

***Literature.***Like most Arabs, Palestinians regard verse more highly than prose. The work of the highly esteemed poet and writer Mahmoud Darwish, like that of many Palestinian writers and artists, is highly political and deals with the Israeli occupation and the plight of the Palestinians. Darwish's "Identity Card," which graphically paints the Palestinians' dilemma, is one of the best-known works by a Palestinian. Darwish's work has been translated into the major languages. He also composed Palestine's Declaration of Independence. In *The Wind-Driven Reed and Other Poems,*Fouzi al-Asmar evokes the Palestinian longing for a homeland.

Palestinian-Israeli writer Emile Habibi, a longtime representative in the Israeli Knesset, began writing in response to a leading Israeli politician's statements that the Palestinians did not exist; otherwise, they would have produced their own literature. Habibi went on to write a series of short stories and novels, one of which was translated into sixteen languages.

Many Palestinian writers and artists live outside Palestine as émigrés. Palestinian-American Edward Said is a well-known historian and essayist. Said's *Peace and Its Discontents*and other books explore Palestinians' problems and aspirations. Other highly regarded émigré writers include Liana Badr and Hassan al-Kanafani.

One of the greatest Palestinian fiction writers is Ghassan Kanafani, whose short stories in *All That Remains: Palestine's Children*depicts the aimlessness and desperation of Palestinian refugees.

The works of many leading Palestinian writers are translated in Salma Khadra Jayyusi's *Modern Palestinian Literature.*

***Graphic Arts.***Because Islam forbids the portrayal of people and animals, most Arab designs feature plants, leaves, or geometric shapes. Many Palestinians are skilled in [calligraphy](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Calligraphy.html) and illustrate verses from the Koran in beautiful designs and sell them at art shows. In larger tourist cities such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Ramallah, craftsmen sell woven rugs and tapestries, leather goods, pottery, and ceramic jars. Also available are crafts made from olive wood and ivory: jewelry boxes, scenes of the Last Supper, crosses, camels, and mosques.

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—R OBERT H. G RIFFIN

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_1)

**Cindy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice Information give; detailed and understandable

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_2)

**Safa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great reference! well done... it's real.. simple and easy to understand.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_3)

**vicki**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the great info! gave a great outline for the understanding of the conflict and the roots behind it! kudos!

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_4)

**YASER**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

GOOD INFORMATION, GOOD OVERVIEW, TO KNOW MORE PALESTINE AND PALLESTINIAN

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_5)

**jack**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

nice writing there, i understand everything in there.

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_6)

**Bob Ali**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very nice, masyaAllah. great information. i find it very helpful in my research.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_7)

**Monika**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank god, in a form of language that i can actually understand.

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_8)

**RandomStranger**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you..this information helped me find out what to write on my research paper :)

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_9)

**MARK GALLEGOS**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THE REPORT PROVIDES USEFUL INSIGHT ABOUT DAILY LIFE, THE IMPACT OF HISTORY ON THE CULTURE; THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CULTURE TO STAY STRONG AND TO GROW IN TURMOIL; THIS IS USEFUL AS I PREPARE POLITICAL ASYLUM CLAIMS FOR YOUNG PALESTINAIN MEN.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_10)

**Mariah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great information. I had little knowlegde of Palestine and the Palestinians, they seem so interesting and friendly! Thank you

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_11)

[**samuel welsh**](mailto:samuelwelsh400%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

well ballanced  
  
Its good to see ballanced perspective .  
One can apreciate both cultures by this

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_12)

**Shannon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you! I was just wondering what type of clothing they wear?

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_13)

[**Elisabeth Letriz**](mailto:luciousliz2envy%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks,I enjoyed reading this information,Beautiful culture!!

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_14)

**Sarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good to know. I really like this site. This website is great for searching and learning things too. Thank you for the amazing information!

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_15)

**betty**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Cool Website and it helped me a lot for project !!his is a really good website !!!  
It has Geography and culture and different kinds of things !!!  
XOXOXOXOX

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_16)

[**mohammad**](mailto:mhdelth%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

YES this is the culture of Palestinian people, many problems but she still love Pease

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_17)

[**heyam**](mailto:heyam%20[at]%20qcc%20[dot]%20qattanfoundation%20[dot]%20org)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

please I want to know who the writer of this page because I write about the Palestinian generation Identity , and I want to know more about this from writer of this page

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_18)

**Susan Dargie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for this information. We are two New Zealanders who wanted to find out why there are problems so we did an internet search and your information came up. This has enlightened us and now we can understand the situation better. At present we are teaching in an Arab country and it has been a precious experience living among Musulim people. Understanding breaks down barriers and builds bridges. It is important to listen to one another and show respect for differences. Thank you for helping us to do this.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_19)

[**Dhirendra**](mailto:dhirenrana%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative compilation. Much appreciated. To restore dignity of the poor Palestinians, Palestinians should encourage Small Industries and promote indigenously produced goods. Arab world can surely provide financial support to achieve this.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_20)

[**Hendusaile**](mailto:varnya007%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for the information, it was very useful. Saladin is the Western writing, it should be Salah ah-Din.

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_21)

**Jordan D.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, after reading your article I say it was compiled well for the most part but there are a couple issues I think you should primarily address. You seem to refer to the term Palestinians as Synonymous with the term Arab/Muslim throughout the article which should be adjusted. For example, you state that polygamy is common among Arab men, when in reality Polygamy is only practiced among the Muslim population of Palestinians. Although Palestinians are an Arabized people, like the Lebanese, Syrians, and Jordanians, they are [linguistically](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Linguistics.html) and culturally Arab in the modern day but retain a distinct [ethnic identity](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ethnic_group.html) that is not Arabian. You refer to Palestinians being descendant from Islamic Arabs who came north from Arabia during the Islamic conquest, but you fail to mention how Palestine was a Christian state of Byzantium and before that a Roman state, it was not until the Islamic conquest where the majority of Palestinians began speaking Arabic as their primary first language.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_22)

**Emmanuel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

AWSOME !!website!It helped me alot for this project i am doing at school!

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_23)

**ikram**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this country . the poeple of this country is very nice .  
and the man of this country is very Brave

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_24)

**Nathan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello everyone,  
I may be moving to the Palestinian territory soon to receive my new job. As a westerner, can anyone provide me with leads on Expats forums for westerners in that area? I googled the net on forums in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, unfortunately, didnâ€™t come back with much. Your help is greatly appreciated.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_25)

**Io**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a very nice, detailed exposition. It is hard to find good information about Palestine.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_26)

**amber Kate agoncillo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Are palestinians allowed to marry christians. Coz I am falling in love to one.

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_27)

**SAMGLADIATOR**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I AM IMPRESSED, GOOD INFORMATION YOU GUYS IT SAYS EVERYTHING THAT I NEED FOR MY REASERCH PAPER.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_28)

**KAI**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

COOL INFORMATION I JUST WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE EDUCATION THAT PALESTINIANS HAVE.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_29)

[**Manab**](mailto:mbkalita%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very well documented.. Easy to understand though i have read "Oh Jerusalem" long time ago.. From Assam India.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_30)

**Mira**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi there,  
A Palestinian from the West Bank here. There's a lot of dated info here (for example the education system following Egypt and Jordan- that started gradually changing when the Palestinian Authority was established in the 1990's) and also a very generalized perhaps even orientalist read of the Palestinians society (family patriarch makes all the decisions in the family .. hmm ya maybe during my grandmother's time although judging by her character I doubt that too hehe.. gender equality is still a struggle but things are certainly not as bleak or monolithic), this is just to give couple of examples. I just wanted to point that out for people who are genuinely interested to look beyond this one source.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Palestine-West-Bank-and-Gaza-Strip.html#Comments_31)

[**Astrid**](mailto:Aly0497%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Love the article  
Whatâ€™s one of the safest city in Palestine to visit? Can a women go alone or with another girlfriend?

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Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

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Countries and Their Cultures

Countries and Their Cultures No-Sa Culture of Panama

Panama

Culture Name

Panamanian

Alternative Names

Panameño (Spanish)

Orientation

Identification. The Republic of Panama is a former Spanish colony in Central America with a mixed population of Creoles, mestizos, European immigrants, Africans, and indigenous Indians.

Location and Geography. The country is a natural land bridge connecting the South American continent with Central America. The isthmus runs east-west in the form of an inverted "S." Low mountains run through most of the country, leaving a gap in the center that is nearly at sea level. The Pacific coastline, with the Azuero Peninsula jutting south to define the Gulf of Panama, is longer than the Atlantic coastline. The area of the country is 25,590 square miles (74,046 square kilometers).

Demography. In 2000, Panama had approximately 2.816 million inhabitants, 700,000 of whom lived in Panama City, with another 300,000 in the immediate suburbs. The urban elite is primarily Creole, mostly of Spanish descent. There are also populations of Spanish, Italian, Greek, and Jewish origins. There is a longtime Chinese community, and a small Hindu community lives in the capital, Panama City. The largest demographic group is the interioranos ("interior people"), who are classified as "Hispano-Indians." This group is largely mestizo (mixed European and native American), and its members consider themselves the "real Panamanians." Some interioranos grade imperceptibly into an acculturated native American population known pejoratively as cholos, who refer to themselves as naturales ("natives"). Together, these two groups constitute 70 percent of the population. There are four officially recognized Indian ethnic groups (the Kuna, Guaymi or Ngawbe, Embera, and Waunan), which number fewer than 200,000. People of African descent account for 15 percent of the population. These "Afro-colonials" descend from slaves who were imported in colonial times. They speak Spanish and are Roman Catholic. The "Afro-Antillean" group descends from Caribbean residents who came to work on the construction of the Panama canal. They speak English, French, or an English patois at home and are mostly Protestant.

Linguistic Affiliation. The official language is Spanish, but English is used widely in business, especially banking and tourism, and by some people of African descent.

Symbolism. Some coins bear the image of Urraca, an Indian chief who resisted the Spanish conquests, but most coins depict Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, the discoverer of the Pacific Ocean.

History and Ethnic Relations

Emergence of the Nation. Panama became an autonomous nation because of its function as the custodian of the transisthmus shipping route—the "path between the seas." It gained independence in 1903 as part of an American-sponsored revolt against Colombia that led to the signing of a treaty granting the United States the right to build the Panama Canal.

The Spanish discovered and conquered Panama between 1502 and 1519. At that time, it was referred to as the Castilla de Oro, a source of gold and potential converts. From 1519 through 1538, the area that is now Panama was a base for soldiers sent to conquer the Andean civilizations in South America. After 1538, it was used as a land route to Spain's South American colonies and a transshipment point for Andean gold. From 1568 to 1671 there was series of pirate raids, and in 1671 Panama City was sacked by buccaneers under the command

Panama

Panama

of Sir Henry Morgan. Local traders engaged in smuggling until Spain shifted the official gold route to Cape Horn, and the area entered a period of commercial decline.

After independence from Spain and union with Colombia in 1821, the isthmus again became an important transit route. Slavery was abolished in 1852. The United States completed a railroad across the area in 1855 to expedite movement to the gold fields in California. After failing to build a sea-level canal in the 1880s, the French sold their concession to the United States, which conspired with the elite in Panama City to declare independence when they could not obtain a favorable treaty from Colombia.

From 1903 to 1978, the United States controlled the Canal Zone, a five-mile strip on both sides of the canal. Residents of that area were called "Zonians" and remained American citizens even after three generations of residence. These mostly white employees of the Canal Company lived an isolated life and were prejudiced against the Panamanian population. In 1977, after lengthy negotiations, President Jimmy Carter signed a treaty that abolished the Canal Zone as a colonial enclave, arranged for Panamanian ownership of the canal in the year 2000, and provided for the closing of American military bases.

In 1925, the United States intervened in a revolt by Kuna Indians on the northeast Atlantic coast and established a tribal reserve. The Kuna enclave has been successful. In the 1930s, the United States' military hired Kuna laborers to work at army bases. After the transfer of sovereignty over the canal, those workers migrated to Panama City.

National Identity. Panamanians do not consider themselves former Colombians. From 1578 to 1751, Panama was the seat of a Spanish real audiencia (court of chancery), with Spanish lawyers and a governor or captain general. The presence of this judicial-legislative-executive government body led to the building of a sense of independent nationhood.

Ethnic Relations. Unlike the former Canal Zone, the government has always repudiated racism and segregation. Because of its nationalistic policies, the government also forbade the use of English in public schools, thus discriminating against the black population.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Survivors of the burning of Panama City in 1671 rebuilt a walled bastion on a rocky promontory to the west. This became the home of the colonial administration and the Creole elite, who lived in two-story mansions. Outside the city walls was a neighborhood of free blacks living in thatched structures. Farther out were the cattle ranches and farms of the elite, which were staffed by slaves. The walled city survives as the Casco Viejo, and the areas adjacent to it are now densely populated slums. Because the former Canal Zone abuts the old city on the north and west, the growing population was forced to fan out along the bay to the north and east. On the Panamanian side, city blocks were plotted along radial avenues. Bella Vista, a gracious area of Art Deco mansions for the elites grew up in the 1920s along the bay. Farther inland there were working-class tenements. On the "Zone" side there was parkland, with occasional housing clusters. The government is transferring that housing to private owners but is committed by treaty to conserve the natural rainforest areas of the former Zone to prevent the canal from silting.

A few neighborhoods of upper-class walled villas have appeared. Large middle-class subdivisions are being built away from the city center. There are scattered apartment blocks of public housing for workers. Several shopping malls cater to the needs of a city with heavy traffic and an extensive bus system. The major downtown center is the banking district along Via España just past the old aristocratic Bella Vista and next to the first luxury hotels. This and nearby areas have high-rise offices, hotels, and apartments.

Colon on the Atlantic side is now a lower- and underclass settlement abutting the free trade zone. The largely Jewish, Italian, and Arabic entrepreneurs of that zone live in Panama City high-rises and commute daily in small airplanes.

The dominant architectural structure remains the Panama Canal. Inaugurated in 1914, it is still an engineering wonder in which Panamanians take pride.

Food and Economy

Food in Daily Life. Unlike other Spanish colonies, Panama's subsistence agriculture never depended on corn. Game and fish were always sources of protein, and corn is eaten mainly in the form of thick cakes called arepas and maize gruel. The Kuna roast bananas and boil them in a soup dish that consists of water squeezed through grated coconut meat, fish, and fowl or a game meat. This dish resembles the sancocho eaten by many non-Indian Panamanians—a soup of poultry or meat cooked with root vegetables and corn. All the towns and cities have Chinese restaurants, a legacy of the Chinese who came to work on the railroad in the 1850s.

Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions. Upper class families are likely to serve fresh seafood at weddings, baptisms, and other celebrations. Their cooking style tends to be continental. Interioranos, in contrast, value beef. Their traditional Sunday meal is tasajo, smoked and cured beef with the flavor of ham. Family vacation packages

Basic Economy. Before 1502 the native populations practiced slash-and-burn agriculture, growing a variety of root crops. When the urban elite bought rural property, they turned to cattle raising and exported the meat and hides. Livestock production is still an important economic activity, even on very small landholdings, and parts of the rain forest have been converted into pastureland. The naturales and Indian groups still practice slash-and-burn agriculture and do not raise cattle. Afro-colonials engage in coastal horticulture and fishing, as do the Kuna. The unit of currency is the balboa, which is pegged to the United States dollar.

Land Tenure and Property. The San Blas Kuna have had a tribal land reserve since the 1930s. The government is in the process of setting up large reserves for the Guaymí, the Embera, and the Kuna of the Bayano. Interioranos tend to divide up their holdings among many heirs, so that over time properties become quite small, intensifying migration to the cities and to northern and western frontier areas to clear the rain forest and to claim government forest lands through "squatters' rights." Urban migrants are similarly involved in large scale land invasion in idle lands on the periphery of the city. Some of these are planned, others are spontaneous.

Commercial Activities. Interioranos have a system of rural markets and fairs in which locallyowned shops are tied to Chinese shopkeepers and

A Kuna woman applies paint to her face in the San Blas Islands. Four Indian ethnic groups are officially recognized, including the Kuna.

A Kuna woman applies paint to her face in the San Blas Islands. Four Indian ethnic groups are officially recognized, including the Kuna.

wholesalers in the towns. Since the 1960s, Panama has become an international banking center.

Major Industries. Panama never had a plantation economy. Today agribusiness specializes in the production of sugar and bananas.

Trade. The economy relies on transit, transhipping, and banking to earn foreign currency. Panama exports coffee, bananas, beef, and tropical hardwoods. As a major international transshipping center, all types of the world's industrial goods pass through Panama, which keeps or imports electronics, automobiles, and a wide variety of luxury goods. Panama also imports petroleum, as it has no oil fields.

Division of Labor. As of 1997 estimates put 18 percent of the labor force in agriculture, another 18 percent in industry, and 67 percent in service. Of these sectors agriculture is the least productive, accounting for only 8 percent of the gross national product, with industry at 25 percent and services at 67 percent.

Social Stratification

Classes and Castes. The urban Creole upper class, known as the rabiblancos ("white butts"), mingles socially with Americans, Spaniards, Italians, and the oldest segment of the Jewish community, the Sephardic Jews, who came to the country in the 1890s. Prosperous merchants in the small Hindu community worship at a prominent hilltop temple. The Chinese community includes a few wealthy commercial families, members of the professions, a middle class of shopkeepers, and a few very poor recent immigrants. It is perceived as monolithic. People from the interiorano community, other mestizos, and some blacks have also risen to wealth and prominence through the professions, government, and business and services. These people do not intermarry with the old elite. The large urban middle classes consist of interioranos, mestizos, blacks, and educated Indians, especially Kunas. Family vacation packages

Symbols of Social Stratification. Class division is not rigid, and the elite is not resented. It is closely linked to the symbols of the republic through its descent from illustrious ancestors and the founding fathers of independence from Spain and Colombia, many of whom have streets named after them.

Political Life

Government. The republic is a constitutional democracy. Panama inherited from Colombia a binary system of liberals versus conservatives, both of which agreed on opposition to the presence of the United States in the Canal Zone. In 1940, these were eclipsed by a nationalist movement led by Arnulfo Arias, who employed fascist rhetoric and methods and was deposed during World War II. Elected again decades later, Arias was deposed again. Omar Torrijos, a military leader, instituted a corporatist, welfare-oriented state with a new constitution that declared him as head of government above a subservient president and cabinet. Although there was a legislative assembly and local councils throughout the republic, the regime was largely a command structure. It borrowed funds from abroad to build an infrastructure, including electrification and education, and united the public behind its effort to gain control of the canal. Torrijos died in a plane crash in 1981, and shortly after his death the military leader Manuel Noriega took over the civil government. After refusing to recognize the results of the 1989 elections, Noriega had the legislature declare him president. Five days later, the United States invaded to protect the Canal, restore democracy, and eventually arrest Noriega for drug trafficking.

Leadership and Political Officials. In the aftermath of the invasion, the Defense Forces were abolished, and Panama has come to have a lively and openly debated political life. Political leaders include members of the old elite. Most persons in public life tend to be middle class, of urban or interiorano origin.

Social Problems and Control. Crime is scarce outside of certain slums in Panama City and Colon, where robberies are common. International drug smuggling is a problem in jungle areas near the border with Colombia. Drug cartels, however, are not reputed to maintain bases within the republic. Panama has never had a leftist guerrilla movement. All the regimes have been able to contain social tensions without endemic violence.

Military Activity. The armed forces have become a police force with a limited defense role. Although the United States vacated its bases, it retains the right to defend the canal against an attack from any source.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Many social welfare programs were initiated by the Torrijos regime in the 1970s. Today there is a social security system of public hospitals and rural clinics, and the bureaucracy encourages local people to seek outside aid for development projects. The retirement policy for civil servants is very liberal, providing a modest pension after age fifty. The current trend has been to favor privatization and self-help programs.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Many international organizations, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the World Health Organization (WHO), operate locally. Fundación Dobbo Yala was founded by indigenous professionals to represent the native American groups and channel foreign aid funds for educational and development projects. Native Lands attempts to protect indigenous land holdings and reserves.

Gender Roles and Statuses

Division of Labor by Gender. The current president is a woman, and women have reached the top levels of all the professions, especially government service and education. However, there is almost no feminist movement, and relations between the sexes are traditionally Hispanic, with a double standard for sexual relations. Prostitution is legal, and workers in highly visible urban brothels claim to have been secretaries or schoolteachers from other republics whom hard times forced to emigrate in search of economic survival.

Relative Status of Women and Men. In the role of Carnaval Queens, young unmarried women enjoy the very highest symbolic status in almost every municipality in the republic, since all celebrate carnival. Similarly the Kuna Indians revere adolescent girls, and celebrate their coming of age in an elaborate three day ceremony, the inna suid, which culminates in the young woman's hair being cut off down to the scalp. Women enjoy public equality with men, and are seen on the job and in public places such as restaurants, mingling freely with male family members, while being accorded deference and respect. Family vacation packages

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Marriage. Although Guaymí Indian leaders may have more than one wife, other Panamanians marry only one spouse at a time. Divorce is permitted under liberal terms by the Civil Code. Couples of African descent on the Atlantic coast tend to live together without marrying. These unions frequently dissolve as men and women may find new partners during the weekly pre-carnival Congo dances.

Domestic Unit. The ideal family unit for most Panamanians is the nuclear family of a married couple and their children. The Kuna Indians, however, prefer to have new husbands go to live with their brides in the latter's house. These then become extended families around a grandmother, her husband, and her married daughters and their husbands.

Inheritance. Kuna Indians inherit their houses from their mothers. All other property is inherited equally among all heirs from both parents. In the rest of Panama the Civil Code provides for a similar system. In the absence of a will, a deceased widowed man's property goes equally to all his children, male or female.

Kin Groups. Kindreds, networks of related nuclear families, are very important to the urban elites. Upper class persons are likely to give parties, for example,

View of the Panama Canal. Opened in 1914, the canal is an engineering marvel and a source of pride among Panamanians.

View of the Panama Canal. Opened in 1914, the canal is an engineering marvel and a source of pride among Panamanians. Family vacation packages

attended only by relatives. Interioranos and naturales also value similar extended family networks. One man will be a pioneer in frontier areas, for example and his and his wife's relatives will follow. Such extended families are opening up the frontier areas.

Socialization

Infant Care. Increased rural-to-urban migration has emptied some villages, especially those of coastal blacks and some interioranos, of young adults. Children live with their grandparents; in extreme cases, there are villages that skip a generation. Among the Kuna, male labor migration has left wives behind in matrilocal households to raise children.

Child Rearing and Education. The educational system is effective through the primary school level. Official literacy rates are as high as 90 percent, and an assumption of literacy prevails in daily interactions in the cities.

Higher Education. The University of Panama is state-supported and has a long history. The Catholic University of Santa Maria la Antigua is its major competitor.

Etiquette

Panamanians are formal in dealings with strangers. There is a minimum of greeting behavior in public, and manners tend to be stiff and not courtly. Once included in family and friendship groupings, a stranger can be incorporated into a party-going network quickly. Dress tends to be formal despite the tropical climate.

Religion

Religious Beliefs. Panama is 85 percent Roman Catholic. Traditional beliefs and practices have been maintained among the native American groups despite a history of missionization.

Rituals and Holy Places. The most important ritual is Carnaval. The capital closes down the five days before Ash Wednesday, and a young queen chosen by charitable organizations presides. A competing "more authentic" celebration takes place in Las Tablas in the interior. Coastal blacks celebrate the Congo, which starts in January and also is presided over by a queen in each community. Its male and female dance groups perform each weekend. The colonial port city of Potrobelo on the Atlantic coast is the site of a shrine to an icon of the Black

Men surround a bull and spectators watch from behind a fence on the Plaza Colonial as they prepare for a bullfight. Family vacation packages

Men surround a bull and spectators watch from behind a fence on the Plaza Colonial as they prepare for a bullfight.

Christ, an object of great veneration and of an annual pilgrimage that attracts great numbers during Holy Week.

Medicine and Health Care

The construction of the canal led to the conquest of yellow fever and advances in public health. A legacy of that period is safe drinking water throughout the republic. Gorgas Memorial Hospital specializes in tropical medicine. There is one world-class private hospital, Clinica Paitilla, and several crowded public hospitals.

Secular Celebrations

Panama celebrates two independence days, on 3 November from Colombia and on 28 November from Spain. Festivities tend to be low-key, however, although school children parade in most localities. New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are occasions of much merriment, with children burning effigies of Father Time at midnight in many areas. Larger towns in the central provinces hold rodeos for cowboys almost every Sunday.

The Arts and the Humanities

Support for the Arts. Funding from banks has helped art galleries thrive, and local artists are in great demand. The National Institute for Culture (INAC) and the school system both support graphics arts education. Other than that support mainly stems from the open market in art and native and local crafts. A private group, the National Association for Concerts, contracts with local and foreign performers for classical music concerts. The best museum is the Museo del Hombre Panameño in the former railroad station.

Literature. Panama has a number of writers producing short stories, novels, and poetry. Rogelio Sinán is a successful poet and novelist who has acquired an international reputation, but most writers produce for the local market, where they are well received.

Graphic Arts. The Kuna Indians are world-famous for their molas, applique textile panels in geometric or representational designs. The Embera Indians produce basketry of very high quality, as well as wood carvings in tropical hardwoods.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute runs Barro Colorado Island, a wildlife station inside the canal waterway. There are numerous social scientists, but none has fully described the overall national culture.

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—A LEXANDER M OORE

Also read article about Panama from Wikipedia

User Contributions:

1sandy⚠

i thought that this site was very helpful and well organized. It answered all the questions i was looking for and i would deffently use this site again!

2Carboni⚠

My grand-father Pietro Carboni and his brother Raffaele worked as diggers at Panama channel for 4 years from 1904.

I wish to know some information about the list of the diggers and photos of these workers.

with regards

Gian Piero Carboni

3kurastin⚠

I thought that this site was very helpful and well organized. It answered all the questions i was looking for and i would deffently use this site again!

4Meera⚠

I really liked your site, it helped me A LOT with my project. Before, I didn't know that Panama is a country! I thought it was a state or something!. But now, I learned new a beautiful things about Panama and I would like to have my honeymoon there :)

All respect,

Meera

The United Arab Emiraties

5Sharon⚠

I found this article very helpful in my further understanding of the culture of Panamanians. Thank you. I will certainly visit this site again.

6Jessica Verano⚠

Thanks, this site was very helpful. Panama is such a cool country. I've done all my reports on it!

7daniel⚠

Great information on the history, culture, religion, ethnics, and etc on the people of Panama. I should be visiting Panama in March 09 for the second time...lovely place ..someone from CANADA

8cutie lexi⚠

i thought that this site is very useful.

if i had to grade this site i would give it a 9 outta 10. :D

good job to all that made this site,

p.s gave all correct answers i needed for a research paper :D

9Alexandra⚠

thanks for the information it helped alot and now i know alot about Panama and their life

THANKS Sincerly,

Alexandra Barnett

10hiva⚠

its perfect and useful im from iran .i really like it .i use it alot for my research

11Ericka⚠

i love panama and i want to go back , i still live in Costa Rica but my heart is there

12Kate⚠

Such a helpful site! Definitely helped me a lot with my project, I would love to visit there someday (I'm from Canada REPRESENTING!!)

13Marcus⚠

I really appreciate the information you have on this site. I found many things on this site that I couldn't find anywhere else. The information is good and easy to understand.

Thank You,

Marcus

14ami patel⚠

nice very nice, has goot information, but i was wanting to see more about the festivals, that would have been nicer, perhaps you can add more of that?

15jenny⚠

thanks for this informations,...it helped me a lot in my research paper for my marketing subject! Panama is really a beautiful country,...

16Risha014⚠

yea i agree with the others, this site helped me lot thanx!! You guys keepup the good work!! i'd like to visit panama some day!!

17Jimothy McCray⚠

I thought that this article was a magnificent piece of art. I am planning a trip to Panama and this article helped understand some cultural differences that I will have to adapt to for the next few year. Thank you so much for the help. I can't wait to go to Panama now!

18wowzers⚠

Good site for research on a project. :) It has a ton of information. Good Job! :)

19???⚠

WOWZERS! What a great site for reesearch. A boat load of info. (no pun intended, considering the Panama Canal, lol) Thank-you!

P.S.: User: Wowzers, you posted twice. XD

20Lynne Tesla⚠

My maternal grandparents, Dr. Earle Urweiler and Margaret Urweiler, lived in the Colon area near the canal between 1900 and 1927. They moved to Panama in the early 1900's. We have a very old newspaper picture of them on the first ship that went through the Colon lock. I am interested in finding out some history of the American Zone in Colon in the 1900's. My mother Eleanor Urweiler Bullard graduated from high school in Colon I believe in approximately 1927. I also have a very old drum which may be from the Kuna's but I am not sure. I am also interested in finding out the history of the drum.

21step⚠

The font and colors used for this site are not appealing to the eye. It made it difficult to read. Information was helpful though!

22james⚠

I was stationed at Howard AFB, which is now gone. I am also married to a Panamanian-12 years. I think Panama was awesome. Now I have a place to build a home. Que bueno. I was immersed in the culture for two years and it was great. Viva El General. Reggaeton's real birthplace.

23Mileu Ray⚠

hey(: Panama sounds just as amazing as heaven! this information on this website was very useful to my knowledge! I did a concert there once but i didnt have enough time to go on the beaches, and explore. i am planning to go there soon, someone once told me the best time to go was in November.

24kenzie Boyce x⚠

Heeey! Thanks for all this information.It helped me get a really good mark in my world wide test :DDD thanks. Luv ya x

25Maya⚠

this website gave me tons of wonderful information. thanks for inventing this website.

26Brianna⚠

Fantastic work here, and it helped me all the way through. I needed something, and i'd look, and ta-da! Right there!

27brittany⚠

I think the article should give more information on panama's culture. for example how and where it started, also all the celebrations they have

28ashley⚠

Im pamamanian and this is very helpful :)From early periods Afro Panamanians have played a significant role in the creation of the republic. Some historians have estimated that up to 50% of the population of Panama has some African ancestry.

The descendants of the Africans who arrived during the colonial era are intermixed in the general population or are found in small Afro-Panamanian communities along the Atlantic Coast and in villages within the DariÃ©n jungle. Most of the people in Darien are fishermen or small scale farmers growing crops such as bananas, rice and coffee as well as raising livestock..

Other Afro-Panamanians are the descendants of later migrants from the Caribbean who came to work on railroad construction projects, commercial agricultural enterprises, and especially the canal.

Important Afro-Caribbean community areas include towns and cities such as Colon, Cristobal and Balboa, in the former Canal Zone,as well as the Rio Abajo area of Panama City. Another region with a large Afro-Caribbean population is the province of Bocas del Toro on the Caribbean coast just south of Costa Rica.

29Vanessa Brown-St.louis⚠

This Website is Very Helpful. ive always Wanted To Know More about mi abuela And abuelo But I Never had The chance To. This website Helped Me Find all Of The answers I was looking Forward to... thanks .:)

30Ed Collins⚠

Do you have Traditional Catholic worship in Panama - that is - the traditional Catholic liturgy before the Vatican II council of 1962-65? If yes, in what cities is the Traditional Catholic worship prevalent?

Thanks,

Ed

31trisha⚠

I was born in Ancon, Panama and am very proud to hear alot oof facts about my home counrty. My parents do pnot speek much of it but i have lost of pictures and i remember quit a bit of it. The p[ictures and my memories depict the beautiful jungle as our back yard. I remember when we were young my sister trying to climb a bananna tree and a monkey throughing his poop at her lol

32Brittany⚠

i had a big project due and this website was very helpful to me becuz i got really deep in the information and thanks to this website i got a " A".

33Ace⚠

Amazing! This website was very informational and extremely organized. Very helpful! Five stars!

34savaughna⚠

I like this article very much.It is interesting and also very fun to read and enjoy.

35daisy⚠

I have a question did men and women have specific roles in panama?

so far everything is really helpful for my project/report.

And i couldn't agree more this is an awesome website to learn and interesting as well.

36Brittany danielle E⚠

wow its great to hear some old facts about my country, im from panama and im afropan but any way my mom was born here and my 6 great grandfather actually worked on the canal back in the 1800's and its just great history to know ! im in estado unidos right now or (america) for those that dont speak spanish and i been here for 10 years its great and all but i miss panama im from elespino panama and every time i read things like this it brings me to my knees in tears cuz i miss it so bad, we had to move form panama when i was four years old ,i spoke spanish and everything but when i came to america all that vanished i mean i can speak it still but very little ! well i guess what im trying to say is keep the heritage alive and thats what your doing and for that i thank you !:)

37Lilly Davon⚠

I found this site super helpful for a report I'm writing in school, you're the best! Thanks, and to anyone reading this you would be very smart to use this site to your advantage, it really helps. To the person running this, try being a little more clear on the culture and adding some, thanks again!

38jayy⚠

Thanks for the help. It helped a lot for my culture credit for spanish

39Gigituz⚠

Great info. Please update the current president is Ricardo Martenelli a business mogal from the huge "super 99" chain. Oh I dont think that prostituion is legal since I left many many years ago..so please dont go by that.Otherwise pretty good info in confine mode.

40Hill⚠

Thanks for the website really helped with my heritage/family culture3 project.GLAS`AS!

41Vinyl Stickers⚠

Thanks for the recommendation. I found this site very informative and helpful for me regarding socialization and even it covers all the aspects of social activities.

42alex⚠

i love this web site it waz very helpful and answerd all my questions

43brittany⚠

I am doing a school project on Panama and was wondering what is a a role strain and conflict in Panama?

44Kimi⚠

Thank you for this very informative site. My daughter just left for a mission trip to Panama. I have very little knowledge about Panama but I feel as though I have something to go on now.

45PanamaCali⚠

Me being Panamanian and raised with alot of my culture ways I love this site because it gave me a lil more info about some other things that I didn't know about. I hope to visit my roots there real soon.

46panamapal⚠

I got an A on a project because of this site. Thanks everyculture.com.

47Bob⚠

i've never used this site before and it was very helpful for my spanish project so thank you everyculture.com

48Heaven Espinosa⚠

thank you for the help and i just wanted to say thank you very much

49KAYLA STRANGE⚠

To Much Info, Thanks [:-0) I needed it for my History Project. Thamk You again EveryCulture.com

50adolfo cachafeiro⚠

Wow... You have probably insulted Panamanians' self identity sense. Didn't you state that Panamanians do not consider themselves former Colombians?? Well, they also DO NOT refer to their fried corn cakes as 'arepas'!! We call them 'tortillas'!! Please correct that fact in your descriptions, or you will be persona non-grata to Panamanians.

51Liakat⚠

The part about social classes is really unclear. I have a cultural presentation on panama and I need the information. Please make it easier to understand.

52melissa gaskin-puello⚠

I am Panamanian.I found this information to be very helpful,because I came to the United States at the age of 4.I thank you for keeping the Panamanian Heritage alive.

53Juanita⚠

This information was very educational and valuable to me. I recently met someone that's a Panamanian and wanted to know of his culture so that I can better understand what his values were.

54shon⚠

The presiden/leader is not a women now, im not sure about before but now it is Rricardo M..

55Amin⚠

Excellent info. I was stationed in Panama for almost 3 years. I read a book recently that was written by Mary Seacole called the "Wonderful Adventures of Mrs Seacole in Many Lands." She wrote about her impression of Panama during the mid 1800 when she lived there and operated a business catering to mostly travellers (thru what later became the Canal Zone). Every Panamanian should read her personal account of what Panama was like during that era. I don't believe you will find a more truthful account of what it was really like than Ms Seacole's description.

56Bridget⚠

Hi, I luved read this website. My dad was station in Panama twice. The last time in Ft clayton, than retired from the army in 1976, and work for Panama canal cmiddion. I luv growing up there for about 15 yrs. Part of my heart will always be in panama. I hope to one day go visit again (been in California for about 27 yrs ).

57Dee⚠

I'm dating a Panamanian American man, he's cultured & spent his childhood summers there. He still has family in Panama. I'm impressed by this site I pray for the people and that one day I will visit first hand to see the Panama Canal one of the wonders of the world in person. My romance with Panama began in my teens long before meeting my prince. Thank you for sharing your beautiful country with me.Family vacation packages

58Carol⚠

I am mother to a son who is currently engaged to a Panamanian girl. Our dilemma is that her mother who is Panamanian says that in her culture the girl cannot ever be alone with the boy until their wedding night. The girl cannot even come to our home to get to know us unless they are with her. They could not go to proms or functions etc. He is however permitted to intertwine with her family, going to functions, going to their home and staying all day. They are getting to know and learn everything about their future Son-in-law; whereas we have and will not be given that same courtesy. How can we as parents get to know our future Daughter-in-Law if she isn't allowed to intertwine with our family? Is this really a Panamanian rule or should I be worried that they are trying to pull my son away from us? We hardly see him anymore because if they call he feels out of respect that he must jump and do whatever they need done. Just curious!

59morris middle school⚠

I use this website every day to help me with my history homework

60Ana⚠

This site is very informational and helpful i would love to use this again for more research.

61Patrick⚠

this site is very cool that i use this site all the time cause it has all the information that you need for your project in the classroom and the teacher can trust it so i advise everybody to use this site alright i have to go bye guys i love you and thanks for the site

62Tiffany⚠

This site helped me with a school project I have been working on for two days on panama. Thank you

63Orlando.⚠

My wife and I would be visiting Panama soon. This info is indeed helpful for our short stay over in the city. Sorry we won't have a longer time to share in the Panamanian experienceFamily vacation packages

64Mina⚠

this website helped tuns with my project thanks! :)

65Joseph⚠

We have a Spanish school here so we meet a lot of visiting Americans and Canadians who appreciate this site. We think that though this summary is short it is quite accurate.- SpanishPanama

(But Dear Carol #58 above- that is true with a very small minority, but sounds like your instincts may be telling you something,..so "OJO!"

66reygan⚠

this site really helped me with my Spanish project.

67riley childress the 5th⚠

this website helped me on my socal studies work and project plz make more of this plz :)

68Amy⚠

I'm learning so much with that word on my leads pad.to be good.so I love to learn about that

69Panama study girl⚠

Good source of information, very helpful. I needed this for my panama report. :>)

70IsabelV160⚠

The information was almost accurate, you just have to update the president, we choose president every 5 years, the current president is Juan Carlos Varela 2014-2019. Some things that offend panamanians are:

-say that Panama is in South America

-call them Colombians

-imitate our manner of speech

-taunt us for not being known beyond the Panama Canal, Zona Libre de Colon or by Carnavales

-call tortillas 'arepas'

Also, teenagers tend to display more affection to their friends, they hug each other, kiss each other, even rest in each other's lap sometimes, but don't misunderstand, this is between close friends.

Reggaeton isn't the only music we hear, we have different tastes depending on the person.

people tend to make parties on sathurdays, sometimes celebrating i don't even know what, they tend to be very loud to me.

Teen pregnancy and school desertation happens.

many basic things are cheaper in Panama

it rains 8 months, the other 4 months are dry and hot. In a morning it could be sunny, then in the evening rain enough to cause an inundation.

if you want to know more, e-mail me.

71Carlos MÃ©ndez⚠

Need a tourist guide or trusted connection for transportation and cheap rooms reservation?

Let me know!

72mathews mwaba⚠

I think panama is awesome and iam looking forward to come work at Conte panama when it is complete done.

73ic⚠

great awesome liked moving i think panama is awesome

74Dev⚠

I have one question what cultural elements did the Americans leave behind

75Nilsa⚠

Where did you get his information?"Because of its nationalistic policies, the government also forbade the use of English in public schools, thus discriminating against the black population." Could you cite the year(s) when this happened? I'm 55 yrs old and I learned English in public school in Panama. Even today English is a subject taught in public schools. I would like to know when that happened.

76Aliceon⚠

My name is Aliceon. Thank-you so much for the information above. It helps so much and will hopefully continue to help others.

Sincerely,

Aliceon Candace

77Aliceon Candace⚠

Thanks for the information that you put above. It helps so much and is very detailed. I hope that the information will continue to help others when they read the helpful and specific knowledge that you have generously shared into the curious world.

Best of luck to Continue with Sharing Information,

Aliceon Candace - Reader of Countries and their Cultures - Forum - Panama's Culture

78tuna⚠

I like this website in general, and I'm doing something for Social Studies right now so I need this site, but I wanted to study the Cayman Islands, but they didn't have that "country"? Can someone change that, please? Its a REALLY cool place, trust me.

79Jacqueline Lam⚠

I find this site informative and helpful. I am a marriage and family therapist, I would like this article of Panama culture could elaborate more details about the family law in Panama, such as child protection, the legal right for common-law couples, custody, divorce and alimony etc.Family vacation packages

80hannah⚠

Dow anyone know that religion and language were the precolumbian civilizations and africans forced to learn by the spaniards? why?

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Name:

E-mail:

Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

Culture of Panama forum

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1. Culture of Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea

Culture Name

Papua New Guinean

Alternative Names

*Niugini*(Pidgin English)

Orientation

***Identification.***Papua is probably derived from the Malay word *papuwah*("fuzzy hair"). In 1545, a Spanish explorer called the island *Nueva Guinea*.In 1884, the western half of New Guinea was officially recognized as Dutch New Guinea, the northeastern section became German New Guinea, and the southeastern quarter became British New Guinea. In 1905, Australia took over the territory, renaming it the Territory of Papua. After World War II, the British and German territories were combined and jointly administered by Australia as the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. In 1975, the country became Papua New Guinea or, officially, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

***Location and Geography.***Papua New Guinea consists of eastern New Guinea along with New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, and six hundred small islands and archipelagoes. The land area is over 178,000 square miles (462,000 square kilometer), with the mainland accounting for 80 percent. The western half of the island is the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya. To the south is Australia, and to the east and southeast are the Solomon Islands and other Melanesian countries. To the north and northwest are the Philippines, South Korea, and Japan.

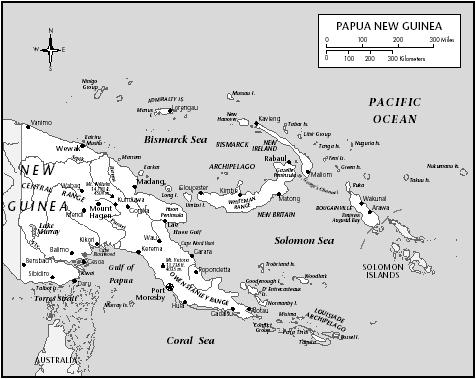
The central mountain chain extends the length of the island and is covered in tropical rain forest. Upland valleys and the headwaters of fast-flowing rivers descend to the coast through some of the world's largest swamps.

Papua New Guinea has a tropical monsoon climate and is generally hot and humid, although the climate varies from one area to another.

Over 75 percent of the nation is covered in rain forest. Swamp forest is found in the poorly drained lowlands, and sago palm is a staple food of the people living there. Around Port Moresby and in drier areas to the west are grassy plains and savanna woodlands.

***Demography.***The 1990 census showed a population of 3,761,954. Over half the population was under age 20. With an annual growth rate of 2.3 percent, the population topped four million by 1992 and is expected to grow to more than five million by the year 2000. Around 85 percent of the population lives in small villages and rural outposts; the other 15 percent is concentrated in ten major urban areas where most of the non-Melanesian population of about 25,000 resides. The largest cities are Port Moresby with a population over 220,000, Lae (90,000), Madang (30,000), Mt Hagen (45,000), Wewak (23,000), and Goroka (25,000).

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Well over one thousand languages are spoken throughout New Guinea. After Colonization, Papua New Guineans needed to communicate with one another and with outsiders. On German (and later Australian) plantations and wherever individuals speaking different languages met, a pidgin language referred to as Neo-Melanesian or Melanesian Pidgin developed. Now known as *Tok Pisin*("talk pidgin"), Melanesian Pidgin is spoken throughout Papua New Guinea. While English is taught in school and is the official language of business and government, Tok Pisin is a symbol of national identity and a preferred means of communication. Hiri Motu, a trade language that originated on the south coast in Papua among participants in a traditional trade network, is spoken only in that area.



*Papua New Guinea*

***Symbolism.***While preparing for independence and attempting to promote national identity, leaders and artists drew on symbols reflecting the nation's unique cultural and natural diversity and continuing traditions. The national flag is a rectangle divided diagonally from the top left corner to the bottom right. The upper triangle is red with a yellow bird of paradise; the lower triangle is black with five white stars representing the Southern Cross. Black, red, and yellow are traditional colors in many Papua New Guinean societies. Items of traditional exchange ( *kina*shells, pigs) are prominent on the currency. The Southern Cross symbolizes the country's close relations with other South Pacific nations. The national song, "O Arise All You Sons," reflects a commitment to Christianity in its references to God and the "Lord".

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Before colonization, an individual's identity was grounded in his or her kin group and rarely extended beyond the kin groups of close relatives and in-laws. While an individual may have shared a language and culture with tens of thousands of persons, only leaders and other unusual individuals spent time outside the villages nearest to his or her "place." After colonization, Papua New Guineans experienced political, social, and economic integration. Missionaries and administrators suppressed "tribal" warfare to allow freedom of movement and integrated villagers into the colonial economy as plantation workers and mission helpers. Missionary activities also led to the spread of Christianity and Western education; the building of roads, airstrips, and radio stations; and the shared experience of racial prejudice directed at local peoples by many whites.

Colonization and change were uneven, with island and coastal areas colonized before the interior and some groups resisting change for decades. Outsiders did not visit the highlands until the 1930s, and some areas were first contacted as late as the 1970s. Differences in education and economic development contributed to ethnic and class differences.

***National Identity.***In the 1960s, Australia moved toward liberating Papua New Guinea by establishing self-government and a House of Assembly and building institutions of higher learning to train an educated elite to serve the country.

The focus on higher education was matched by efforts to foster closeness and national pride among the students that would cut across ties with *wantoks*(those in the same language group) and flow outward to the rest of the country. Students were taught to express their experiences in poetry, music, stories, and art that dealt with the "beauty of village life," the opposite sex, pride in their cultures, and the question of how they could lead the country into the modern world without becoming selfish. Regardless of this soul-searching, class differences are emerging as educated parents with good jobs provide for their children's future, and there is increasing intermarriage between persons of different cultural background who mingle in school and at work. Communicating in English or Tok Pisin, many couples fail to pass on their mother tongues to their children, alienating their village kin.

***Ethnic Relations.***Before independence on 16 September 1975, a number of micronationalist movements threatened secession from a nation that many felt was a colonial invention. Papua Besena emerged in 1973 under the leadership of Josephine Abaijah. Its objective was to free Papua from Australian colonial rule and unification with the more heavily populated New Guinea. In March 1975, Papua Besena declared Papuan independence but did not go beyond that symbolic act.

In 1964, the discovery of copper in Bougainville resulted in the construction of a giant copper mine. It was argued that the profits from the mine would benefit all of Papua New Guinea. Bougainvilleans were suspicious of the motives of the Australians and the expatriate company and resentful of the mainland Papua New Guineans who were brought in to build the mine. In November 1988, a guerilla operation began that became the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). The conflict continued throughout the 1990s and has been difficult for the police and defense forces that have been pitted against fellow citizens.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Before European settlement, there were no towns. Thousands of villages and hamlets were connected by narrow paths, customs, and networks of marriage and trade partners. Bush material houses were temporary as people moved with their new gardens and as alliances dissolved and re-formed. Men spent their nights with other men and boys in elaborate men's houses, while their wives and female relatives slept and ate in smaller women's houses. Most villages were home to more than one kin group. With colonization, dispersed settlements were combined into larger villages for easier administration and the provision of education and health care. The first towns grew up around mission and administrative centers, near airstrips, or on hillsides overlooking good harbors. Towns were small, and homes and nonresidential structures were simple one-story buildings. The first Papua New Guineans to live in towns were men. Many workers were chosen from nearby villages to which they were expected to return at night, but some lived in servants' quarters ( *boi haus*) or company barracks. The exclusion of New Guineans from areas of European settlement was maintained almost up until independence. After World War II, there was an expansion of economic opportunities for both colonizers and local peoples, resulting in a rapid growth of towns and an increase in urban migration as men, and later their wives and children, came to town seeking employment, education, and excitement. The Australians tried to control the influx by building company housing for workers and their families and denying residency rights to other migrants, but that policy was only partly successful. "Squatter" settlements became stepping-stones for migrants who came to test the waters in town and migrants who wanted to save money to invest in their villages. They have become islands of safety in crime-filled towns as wantoks band together, apart from other groups.

Family vacation packages

In preparing for independence, colonial and Papua New Guinean officials built institutions such as the National Arts School, where students and other artists and architects used traditional and modern elements in designs for buildings in the capital and elsewhere.

Papua New Guineans continue to be ambivalent about the expense and violence of town life. Markets, parks, and shopping centers draw thousands



*Three men in a bachelor house in Omarakana, Kiriwina, Trobriand Island. Traditionally, even married men lived in separate houses from their wives.*

of visitors every day, most of whom are interested in observing the spectacle and meeting up with wantoks to gossip or plan group events. Airports are crowded with travelers' friends and families, onlookers, and unemployed youths observing the movements of people from around the world.

Family vacation packages

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Staples include starchy vegetables (wild sago, breadfruit, yams, taro, sweet potatoes, and rice) complemented by wild greens, several varieties of bananas, and coconuts, mango, and other fruits. Domestication of animals and hunting provide fowl, pork, and meat from birds, marsupials, turtles, and cassowaries. In riverine and coastal areas, fish and shellfish may form a significant part of the diet. Villagers cook two meals a day, boiling or roasting the food. Earth ovens are dug on ceremonial grounds for special occasions. Leftovers, sugarcane, and coconut milk are consumed while people work in their gardens. Tea is drunk at all times. Urban restaurants provide international cuisine to those who can afford it. *Kai*bars (fast-food stands) are popular. Food taboos vary and are often temporary, as with restrictions on pregnant women and initiates. Others are totemic, involving plants or animals that are symbolic of kin groups. Still others are relational; for example, a son-in-law may not consume food in the presence of his mother-in-law.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Papua New Guinea is renowned for ceremonial occasions at which hundreds of pigs or other valuables are distributed to guests. Competitive feasting ("fighting with food") between big men and chiefs features oratory, dancing, singing, drumming, and feasting that go on for days, along with the payment of bride-prices and other exchanges. Special drinks were rarely part of such ceremonies in the past, but now beer and alcohol are often part of major exchanges. Papua New Guineans celebrate nontraditional holidays such as Christmas and Easter, but rarely with the exuberance or expense involved in a traditional feast.

***Basic Economy.***Villagers produce most of their own food, and many townspeople plant gardens and rely on open-air markets for fruits and vegetables sold by village women using *kina*for currency. Urban supermarkets import an array of expensive foods and other items. Most residents rely on small trade stores for rice, sugar, tea, and tinned fish, as well as soap, clothing, blankets, kerosene lanterns, and matches.

Best clothing retailers



*A group of people gather in front of a store in Mount Hagen.*

***Land Tenure and Property.***Most land is vested in kin groups and allocated according to need. Individual land ownership is not common; individuals may own a grove of banana trees but not the land they grow on. While land normally passes from father or mother's brother to children or nieces and nephews, the intended recipients provide much assistance and gifts to the "owners" before the land passes to their care. Migrants who fail to participate in village exchanges risk being "dispossessed" in favor of people who have supported local landowners.

***Commercial Activities.***Commerce is centered in the towns. Papua New Guinea developed its own television station in the late 1980s, and radio news and entertainment shows reach most villages. Tourism brings forty thousand visitors a year, mostly to the Sepik River and Trobriands. The road system is limited. Port Moresby is cut off from the rest of the country except by air and ship. With most places being difficult to reach, there are many undeveloped areas and labor migration is high.

***Major Industries.***The major industries are extractive. In addition to gold mining and oil drilling, major industries include coffee, copra, cocoa, cattle, oil palm, timber and wood-chip mills, and tuna canneries.

***Trade.***Traditional artifacts and carvings are sold throughout the world but provide only a small income. Important exports are copper, gold, coffee, cocoa, copra, coconut oil, and timber. Imports include machinery and transport equipment, food and live animals, manufactured goods, and pharmaceuticals.

***Division of Labor.***Outside the cities there is little specialization. The village division of labor is by age and gender, with men and women cooperating to feed their families from gardening and other subsistence activities and children and older persons assisting in a variety of ways. Cash crops generally are owned by men, but men and women tend and harvest them. Urban specialization is served by local schools, and few residents are educated abroad.

Family vacation packages

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***There are no castes and only recent evidence of the slow emergence of classes. Economic inequality, however, cuts across ethnic and cultural boundaries. The common perception is of a country divided into "elites" and "grassroots," with the grassroots including most villagers and low-income earners in town and the elites being educated, higher-income persons, "coffee millionaires," and other entrepreneurs. Social interaction is intense as elites attend clan affairs and are expected to open their homes to wantoks at any hour.

There is evidence of growing disparities in the lifestyles and opportunities of elites versus grassroots and of the emergence of a middle class. Most villagers are not poor. Daily life is simple with few of the expenses of urban life. Villagers invest their cash income and traditional wealth in the social and political relations that maintain their place in village society. The elites and the middle class, however, must balance the expenses of living in town with investments in larger kin groups. While the demands of wantoks can act as a powerful leveling force, higher-income families are investing in productive businesses and ensuring that their children have the same class privileges they do.

Family vacation packages

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***There are many expensive restaurants and night spots in Port Moresby and other big cities, and the highways are jammed with imported cars. While some elites dress down for work and social occasions in clothes bought at secondhand stores or wear the grassroots fashion for women, the *laplap*and the *meri*blouse, many buy their clothes from fashionable boutiques and department stores or overseas. Wealthy citizens have invested in properties outside the country in anticipation of retirement or a people's revolution.

Political Life

Best clothing retailers

***Government.***Papua New Guinea is an independent Commonwealth nation that achieved independence on 16 September 1975 from the Australian-administered United Nations trusteeship. It is a parliamentary democracy with a governor general representing the British Crown, a prime minister and cabinet, and a 109-member unicameral, popularly elected parliament. The legal system is based on English common law. There is a Supreme Court in which the chief justice is appointed by the governor general on the recommendation of the National Executive Council. Other judges are appointed by the Judicial and Legal Services Commission. There is universal suffrage, and the voting age is 18 years. In 1977, the Organic Law on Provincial Government resulted in decentralization. There are nineteen provinces (former colonial districts), each with an elected assembly, premier, and cabinet. There is also a National Capital District. At the local level there are local government councils that lost power as provincial governments gained government resources and funds. Corruption and other difficulties led to the abolition of provincial governments in 1995 and their replacement with a local government structure headed by governors in each province.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Most traditional leaders achieved influence by building extensive networks of exchange partners and supporters. The characteristic "big man" was hardworking, skilled in oratory, personable, intelligent, generous, and the husband of more than one wife. Big men still exist, but their influence has lessened because they cannot control the global forces affecting their communities. Candidates for higher office must build multiple local power bases, an expensive and delicate political operation that often results in questionable campaign practices and eventual electoral disappointment and single terms of office. There are many political parties, and prime ministers must forge coalitions. Parties are unstable and hard to distinguish on the basis of substantive issues. Prime ministers rarely stay in office for the



*A man splitting a sago palm trunk using traditional tools.*

full five years, and parliament members switch parties frequently.

***Social Problems and Control.***There are both village and national court systems. Village courts use custom rather than English law, a situation that sometimes results in injustice from the point of view of the larger society. A chief ombudsman can resolve some conflicts between the two systems, but his reach rarely extends beyond Port Moresby. Policing a large and thinly populated country is difficult, and many citizens fear the police. Rural police sometimes compensate for inadequate manpower by using excessive force with lawbreakers; and urban police can be equally brutal. Crimes go unreported because citizens fear police brutality or prefer to handle the offenders, who are often kin, themselves. The police have been known to take the law into their own hands, as has the Papua New Guinea Defense Force. The nation's "law and order" problem is multifaceted, but the depredations of youthful gangs, outbreaks of rioting and looting, and the resurgence of tribal warfare are major sources of disorder and misery.

***Military Activity.***The nation's only major military action has been the ongoing conflict with the Bougainville Revolutionary Army. In the late 1970s and 1980s, there were fears of an Indonesian invasion across the border with Irian Jaya. A small guerilla freedom movement of no more than four hundred men used the sparsely populated border area to stage attacks against the Indonesian army and then flee to the Papua New Guinea side. Unwilling to contemplate war with the much larger Indonesia, Papua New Guinea used its armed forces to send refugees back across the border and capture rebels.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

There is little support for social welfare and change programs. There is no social security system, few institutions to help the mentally ill or handicapped, and no welfare programs or food stamps. Part of the problem is the government's need to spend money on roads, schools, and basic infrastructure for a population thinly spread over a rugged countryside. Another problem is the belief that the extended family or village will always care for its own. Nonetheless, Papua New Guinea has supported offensives against several social problems, including wife beating and the rise in AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Family vacation packages



*Houses in Eware Village in Morobe.*

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Nongovernmental organizations and voluntary associations help residents confront rapid social and economic changes. Organizations with multiple aid programs include the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the International Red Cross. AIDAB's Women in Development Fund targets women as beneficiaries of financial and educational support, teaching business and management training, giving women start-up funds, and encouraging family planning and women's political involvement. The UNDP office in Port Moresby officially opened in 1975.

Family vacation packages

Voluntary organizations include Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the U.S. Peace Corps, and British Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). Community Aid Abroad (Australia) and Ecological Enterprises support or enhance the work of the Papua New Guinea Integral Human Development Trust, a literacy and awareness resource group with twenty-three member organization that is involved in programs for progressive social change. It has trained over two thousand young men and women as village literacy teachers and runs an AIDS awareness program and the Cross-Cultural Awareness Program for immigrant workers and volunteers.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Village subsistence centers on horticulture, with men clearing forests and bush so that their wives can plant gardens and tend pigs. Some crops, such as bananas, sugarcane, and cash crops (such as coffee and cocoa) are planted and tended by men. While women often help pick cash crops, most of the income goes to men. Men build houses and fences, while women make grass skirts and net bags ( *bilums*). Women do the daily cooking, while men butcher pigs for feasts. Both men and women look after small children, with a father tending his infant while the mother weeds her gardens. In town, most women do domestic chores and child care while their husbands are at work. Women with jobs employ extended kin to do chores. In both towns and villages, men who do women's work are stigmatized as "rubbish men." Working women do not experience the same stigma, although they suffer prejudice and sexual harassment if they appear too independent and assertive.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Trobriand chiefs and others who go on open seas



*A decorative wood carving on a village hut in Kaminabit Village, near the Sepik River.*

*Kula*(exchange) expeditions and give away yam harvests at the annual yam festival gain authority and privilege, and a chief may have many wives and expect commoners to bow in his presence. However, without female relatives to participate in female exchange events and redeem matrilineage lands and honor, those men's power would evaporate. Among the Gende and many other societies, big men achieve their positions by investing in feasts, bride-prices, and other exchange needs of their partners and followers. To do this, big men need many wives and female helpers to raise food and pigs to give away. Hardworking women are a man's most valuable asset, and husbands who do not consider their wives' interests risk losing them to other men. Women's procreative power induces men to go to great lengths in initiation and other rituals to strengthen themselves for contact with women and achieve a balance or edge in gender relations. In the towns, men and women are redefining their relations. With less education and fewer job opportunities, women do not contribute much income to urban households and as a consequence suffer the infidelities and physical abuses of men who feel burdened by the demands of family and the high expectations extended kin place on employed men, especially those who earn high salaries. Village women help pay back their own bride-prices and assist men in raising cash crops. Some rural women earn money by selling vegetables in urban markets.

Family vacation packages

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***The choice of a marriage partner is rarely left to the individual. After initiation into adult society, young men and women spend time with the opposite sex in supervised courtship sessions. Ideal marriage partners are hardworking and attractive. Clan exogamy is a must, and parents hope their daughters will marry prosperous suitors whose kin pay large bride-prices and who will be good allies in exchange and war. Women pressed into incompatible marriages can return home or threaten suicide. If those strategies fail, young women may run away with lovers or commit suicide.

Family vacation packages

Men are more likely to be unmarried, as polygyny is practiced and big men attract a greater share of wives. In Gende society, as many as 10 percent of adult males are polygynous at some time. Divorce occurs even in areas where Catholicism is practiced. Often it is the women who initiate it, as men are loath to lose a female worker. After divorce, most adults remarry unless they are very old and living with children or grandchildren.

As Papua New Guineans become more involved in the cash economy and urbanization, marriage patterns are being transformed. Bride-price inflation is one response to economic inequality. The practice of women competing for men rather than men trying to attract women is having an impact on marital politics throughout the nation. Women are in an insecure position, especially urban women who must tolerate domestic abuse and infidelity to hold on to their husbands.

***Domestic Unit.***The basic village household consists of a husband, a wife, their unmarried children, and perhaps the husband's parents. Extended families live in adjacent houses, gathering frequently for meals, companionship, work parties, and ceremonies. Men's houses are no longer common, although young men may live with other bachelors. Household decisions involve consensus between able-bodied adults, although young wives defer to older members. Residence is usually patrilocal. Less common is matrilocality and avunculocality. Neolocality occurs only in towns. Even then, a couple may be joined by their parents and other kin.

Family vacation packages

***Inheritance.***Land and property rights generally pass from parents to children or from uncles to

A person wearing a mask

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

*Wife of Papua New Guinea chief applies face paint. Marriages are usually arranged, but women in poor marriages may return home or commit suicide.*

nieces and nephews. These kin relations are extended to other members in an individual's kin group. All these persons have an interest in the prosperity of the kin group, and those of the younger generation who contribute the most to that prosperity are likely to receive the most. Reciprocity is a key element, and nonkin can become "sons" and "daughters" of a group if they contribute generously to group affairs. While women generally do not use clan or lineage lands, they retain the option to do so by contributing to group exchanges.

***Kin Groups.***The important kin groups are patrilineal and matrilineal lineages and clans, Clan members do not necessarily live on clan land. Women marry out, and migrants move far from their ancestral territories to find wage employment and other benefits in town. All the members of a kin group, however, must participate in clan affairs, contributing to bride-prices and other exchanges and helping with initiation and mortuary ceremonies. Clans and lineages can shrink and disappear through deaths and indifference. Persons join other clans, allying themselves with their wives' clans or being adopted as children. An important asset is the land a clan's members hold in common. Land is valuable and a way of life for 85 percent of the population. It is also a form of social security for persons living in towns, most of whom actively engage in kin group affairs to maintain their rural option.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Most babies are born outside the village in a birth hut or garden house, where mother and child spend the first few days or weeks after the birth in relative isolation, gathering strength and hiding from malevolent forces. For the next several years, mothers nurse their babies, and the babies are carried everywhere and played with by adoring relatives. In many societies, there is a small feast when the baby, especially a first child, is around a year old to celebrate its existence and let the parents show their appreciation to all those who made its birth possible, including the mother's family and the bride-price supporters.

Family vacation packages

***Child Rearing and Education.***Child rearing is indulgent until age five or six for girls and a few years older for boys. Children explore their environment and run free most of the day. Corporal punishment is rare as people believe a child's spirit may leave its body if the child is hit or frightened. A troublesome child is left alone or ignored. If necessary, such children may be taken to the bush or a garden house to act out or sulk. Children are taught by example. Little girls follow in their mothers' and older sisters' footsteps, at first doing child minding or running errands, and later helping in the gardens. Boys spend a longer time playing with other boys but eventually collect firewood and carry water and, later, clear bush and hunt or fish with their fathers. Older boys and girls may go through separate initiation or puberty ceremonies to prepare them for marriage and adulthood. Rituals and taboos are elaborate, arduous, and sometimes terrifying. Young men and women are taught the meanings and responsibilities of their genders to prepare them for social responsibilities and marriage, including sexuality. Badness in children is not something parents blame themselves for; evil spirits may cause a child to be selfish and cruel, in which case, the parents hire a medium.

***Higher Education.***Higher education is a goal of many parents, especially for their sons. Many parents worry about the physical dangers urban life holds for women. The urban job market is competitive, and some parents are not impressed with the value of a high school or college education, knowing that education does not guarantee a job. Many school leavers and unemployed graduates cause trouble in towns and villages. Parents spend their education dollars on only the brightest, most socially responsible children.

Etiquette

In village society, etiquette centers on reciprocity and being hospitable to guests and unexpected visitors, Feasting exchange partners has an urban equivalent in parties where workmates and wantoks are welcome along with their spouses and children. Reciprocity is expected but is not always possible, putting barriers between individuals of different income levels. One custom that everyone can participate in is sharing betel nut ( *buai*). Relations between older and younger and male and female are relaxed. On meeting, men and women of different ages clasp hands or clasp one another around the waist. Couples do not openly express affection in public, but friends of the same sex may hold hands while walking. It is not rude to stare or for persons to crowd one another at counters or stand very close. In chiefly societies, commoners must bow before chiefs and are prohibited from eating foods reserved for the chief and his family.

Family vacation packages

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The first mission in eastern New Guinea was the London Missionary Society, which in 1871 set up mission teachers from the Loyalty Islands on islands adjacent to and on the Papuan mainland. Some New Guineans resisted the changes missionaries represented, while others accepted opportunities for new forms of wealth, power, and age and gender relations. Working for the mission sometimes provided young men with an income that allowed them to support and choose brides. Schooled in Christian ethics, young women often refused to have bride-prices paid for them. More often, Papua New Guineans have sought to blend old and new religions. Cargo cults aimed at acquiring the wealth and power of outsiders through blends of Christian and local rituals have been common. Today, indigenized forms of Christianity seek to control the human condition in a period of insistent and significant change.

Most societies have stories telling how superhuman beings created the natural world and society, inventing food plants, pigs and pig exchanges, male and female cults, sorcery, and other aspects of culture. In some societies, such deities are important in



*Tapa cloth stretched onto a cane framework is decorated by a painting of an insect.*

male and female cults; in others, they have little to do with present fortunes. Instead, sorcerers and witches, the spirits of deceased ancestors, nonhuman forest spirits, and monsters command the attention of the living. Another common belief is that the physical and nonphysical worlds are intertwined and that the well-being of living humans is directly related to the maintenance of proper social ties, adherence to taboos, and the propitiation of spirits. Except in the case of infants and the very old, death is not natural but results from wrongdoing or oversights on the part of the living.

***Religious Practitioners.***The pragmatic focus of their religions and the absence of a hierarchy is reflected in the intense involvement of Papua New Guineans in the ritual maintenance of their own spiritual and physical well-being. Only in a few chiefly societies do hereditary chiefs and their henchmen act as religious specialists. More generally, it is expected that all adults will acquire magic spells used in gardening, healing or preventing minor illnesses, and love magic. Many people possess a knowledge of sorcery or witchcraft. Big men often purport to be powerful spirit mediums and to possess both healing powers and deadly war sorcery. Witches are deviant or marginalized individuals who are suspected of using their relations with spirits and other cosmic forces to harm members of their own groups.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***Many rituals focus on health and fertility, such as male and female initiation rituals. Aimed at bringing about the maturation and future success of the initiates, initiation involves seclusion in the forest or a menstrual hut, fasting and food taboos, and body mutilation. Initiates seek contact with spirit guides who will help them throughout their lives and even marry spirit women on occasion. Initiation and other ceremonies focus on eliciting the help of ancestors and the living and are accompanied by the exchange of valuables and food. In preparation for war or in compensation for war deaths, a group may sacrifice hundreds of pigs to call forth the aid of the ancestors. Cannibalism and head-hunting—not universally practiced—were often aimed at rejuvenation or acquiring the bravery and good characteristics of the deceased, with wives eating a portion of their husbands' dead bodies to incorporate their virility and young warriors displaying enemies' heads as symbols of their own magic and efficacy.

***Death and the Afterlife.***When a person is near death or has died suddenly, mediums are called in to discover the causes and the identity of the sorcerer or witch who may have been involved. Appropriate rituals and sacrifices are performed to prevent death or free the deceased's spirit. Once death has occurred, relatives gather to express their sorrow, wailing and sometimes chopping off fingers, pulling teeth, shaving hair, or pulling out facial hairs. Burial is now common. In the past a corpse might be cremated, thrown in a river or buried at sea, or left in a tree to rot. The dry bones might be buried under a house floor to provide protection to the living with the jawbone worn around the neck of a relative or leader. Rituals believed to help the deceased accommodate to their new state occur at the funeral and at later mortuary ceremonies. Spirits may be encouraged to stay near the living. Some are sent off to a "place of spirits" not far from the living, on mountaintops or in the forest. Funerals and mortuary ceremonies are times to pay off the deceased's debts, recognize his or her accomplishments, and restore friendly relations among the living by exchanging wealth.

Medicine and Health Care

Along with plant medicines and traditional therapies for treating physical symptoms, patients and caregivers use rituals designed to overcome or ascertain the causes of sickness and mental illness, such as ruptured social relations, sorcerers, and ghost attacks. People make use of both Western and traditional treatments in dealing with symptoms while turning to traditional medicine to cure the underlying social and cultural causes of illness. Urban areas have adequate medical staffing in hospitals and clinics. Rural areas are serviced by a thinly spread system of aid posts and small health centers. Aid post workers have only the barest knowledge of first aid. Some village women are trained in midwifery and community-based family-planning services. Trained nurses and paramedics are rare, and doctors even more so. In 1992, there was one doctor for every six thousand persons. In rural areas, health care focuses on first aid and treating chronic diseases such as malaria and pneumonia. Attempts are made to deal with the special health concerns of women and children, including family planning, pregnancy and childbirth, and nutrition and growth. Infant and child mortality rates have dropped, with the most recent figures showing sixty-seven of every one thousand infants dying before the age of twelve months, but women's nutritional needs are not as well met. In many areas, women and girls are fed significantly less than men and boys, resulting in weight loss, anemia, osteoporosis, and greater susceptibility to illness. AIDS, gonorrhea, and syphilis are spreading. Urban use of alcohol, tobacco, sugar, and fatty foods has resulted in increased rates of disease. Medical, sports, and nutrition services and exercise classes are springing up in towns.

Family vacation packages

Secular Celebrations

There are many local and provincial celebrations, including New Year's Day (1 January), Easter, the Port Moresby Show in mid-June, Remembrance Day (23 July) to commemorate World War II, the Highlands Show in August or September, Independence Day (16 September), and Christmas.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***In 1972, the government established the Creative Arts Centre (CAC) to train and support individuals, stage exhibitions, and commission work for national and private projects. In 1976, the CAC became the National Arts School. After Independence, the government supported the arts to promote a national culture. The completion of the parliament building in 1984 marked the apex of national artistic culture.

***Literature.***After the 1960s, historians and others took a greater interest in oral history and folklore. Oral traditions relating to clan genealogies, initiation and mortuary chants, magic and sorcery, and the teaching of children about their cultures were collected and analyzed, and some were published. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was also an interest in modern Papua New Guinea writing in English. Publishing outlets include the journals *Bikmaus*, *Ondobondo*, and *The PNG Writer*. Autobiographies have been published by overseas companies and by the National Research Institute.

***Graphic Arts.***The National Arts School offers courses in graphic design, textile design, fine arts, and music. Students are encouraged to generate contacts and income for themselves and the school. In addition to helping with large-scale projects such as the National Parliament, the National Museum, and the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation building in Port Moresby, students have been involved in designing publicity for the Port Moresby Show, and making murals, carved screens, and sculptures for shopping centers. Pottery is enjoying a renaissance as potters combine modern techniques with traditional designs. Tourists buy replicas or actual artifacts in local markets and several shops in Port Moresby. Tourism and the international art market fuel cottage industry production of wood carvings. Colorful string bags are produced and sold by women.

***Performance Arts.***In 1975, the National Cultural Council funded the Raun Raun Theatre, a popular theater movement that attempts to transpose traditional cultural forms into contemporary theater and address the concerns of rural society.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

With the development of institutions such as the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), the National Research Institute (formerly the Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research), and the PNG Institute of Medical Research in the 1960s and 1970s, Papua New Guinea has become a place where local and foreign scientists and academics engage in long-term interdisciplinary research. Perhaps the social science that has gained the most has been anthropology. Other subjects taught at UPNG include biology, business and economics, education, law, and medicine. In recent years, the UPNG's law faculty, the Law Reform Commission, NRI, and other national bodies and visiting researchers have focused on a number of pressing law and order issues, including violence against women, rioting and political corruption, the resurgence of tribal fighting, gangs, and conflicts over compensation for resource development. The Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research in Goroka and Madang sponsors research on a range of topics, including sexuality, STDs, nutrition, growth and development, infant mortality, and the epidemiology of health and disease.

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—L AURA Z IMMER –T AMAKOSHI

**Also read article about**[**Papua New Guinea**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Papua_New_Guinea.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_1)

**Emmara.Kwangut**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What about the education curriculum.Does it introduce culture and  
beliefs along with education?

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_2)

**Martin Tonny**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

National Identity - PNG was unhappy with the education systema nd had developed a First Five Year National Education Plan in 1975. The comittee consiste only of Papua New Guineans.  
  
Your note on soul searching through dance music and story telling etc.. was never the focus in the education system. Instead the education system was directed towards removing a essentially colonial education system and train Papua New Guineas to go back to the village and farm their land becasue 80% of the genral popultion was still leaving the rural areas. National Identity was never the bond of contention then till 1985 When a Matane Report or Philosophy of Education was produced. It had strong affiliation to the National Constitution and that alone instilled the long lost feeling of National Identity.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_3)

**zay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi there . im very interest in this culture and i would like to explore it and understand it. so please if you have any informaton please email me it. also what i have relised is that the topic is mising power and authority infomartion and how this has changed over time .  
  
thanks in advance.  
  
zay

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_4)

**Zainab Kassim**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm very interested in this culture since i was 12 years old!and now im 21!when i first saw it in National Geography magazine! Papua New Guinea has a very unique culture!and your article tells alot about it!I loved it!amazing,good job! A big THANK YOU!!!!!!from Kurdistan/Northeren Iraq.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_5)

**leilani**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

png is a very unique and interestin culture. this is very helpful but is it updated to this time? has the modern world have an impacr in he way they live nowadays? just a question.. pls infor me later  
  
thanks

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_6)

**jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, Im trying to cite this for a research paper and does anyone have any idea when this was written and who wrote it thanks? Jessica

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_7)

[**nicole smith**](mailto:vampireobsessedfreak%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi so i have a country report on Papua New Guinea and i was wondering if anyone could give me anymore information or is or knows someone from this interestign country! Thank you so much!

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_8)

**Paal**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is the most accurate that I have come across on the www and I am Papua New Guinean, I do know. Yes, even though the missionaries landed here on our shores more then 100 years ago instructing christian principles and destroying some of our traditions and beliefs as pagan, unlike other countries in similar situations, we still to this day, hold onto our traditional beliefs of sorcery and witchcraft. People simply acknowledge that there is both bad and good spirits in this world.  
  
Sadly, our structure of traditional authority is slowly dying and we have a lot of restless youths who have nothing to do and live for.  
  
People do not understand the rule of law as it is a foreign concept inherited from Australia and ultimately the queen of England. Therefore people still resort to traditional forms of conflict resolution to solve their problems such as compensation. Yes, even if a woman is raped she can be 'righted' with compensation to her relatives. Though not in the towns where the Police presence is great but certainly in the villages where the majority of the people live. If that doesn't work, tribal fights are bound to happen especially in the Highlands. In the coastal areas they resort to sorcery and witchcraft if the compensation does not work out. Being a Papua New Guinean means constantly striving to make peace with other tribal members whether it be in the urban or rural areas. Making peace means contributing financially or in kind to every customary obligation such as weddings, births, deaths or compensation, when you are called upon or risk been an outcast of your tribe.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_9)

[**Cathy**](mailto:kdurigou%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a reply to 'leilani', yes there has been a tremendous mordern influence since the 2000  
especially since a foreign owned mobile phone company- Digicel came into the country. Previously the service provider was a monopoly- nationaly-owned subsidary of Telecommunication company (TELIKOM) B.Mobile.  
  
Competition between these two providers have drastically changed the face of 'communication' in PNG, these days (2005-2010) with many 'grass-roots' owning mobile phones, a gaget that was deemed an expensive, and luxuary item by majority of the people. Information from the ouside world is now conveniently transmitted to those who have 'internet' services accessible from their phones.  
  
Urbanization is rapidly spreading to the once sub-urban areas, population increase and education reform systems are changing the face of our society but yet we are threading carefully to protect our culture.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_10)

[**dan**](mailto:underthywings2%20[at]%20msn%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

When someone dies, the article says finger are cut off, hair is taken, teeth are pulled-are these things done to the deceased or the living?

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_11)

**lily**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website is fantastic it gives you all the info you could imagine!!  
i give it 10 out of 10

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_12)

[**SofÃ­a**](mailto:sofiamaria56%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I don't agree with you, Lily. Dr. Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi is writing from the Anglo-Saxon perspective and portrays a rosy and one-sided picture of the reality of Papua New Guineans since Australian--as heirs of British expansionism-- went into these territories. She doesn't mention a word about how Anglo colonizers and its corporate moguls appropriated and exploited this people and their resources and are still taking the biggest piece of the pie while destroying their habitats and dividing the population even more. She doesn't talk about how intense and consistent religious indoctrination has been since the beginning of their occupation.  
  
No; she isn't telling it all. There is much more than what you read here.

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_13)

[**Kyara**](mailto:sweetjessica51%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi. I have a research paper on Papua new guinea and I would like to know who wrote this. If you could get back to me on that, that would be grate. thank you.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_14)

[**Joshua H.**](mailto:joshuahatman%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this was a really helpful paper thank you for writing this and putting it up for others to use.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_15)

**belle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you very much for the useful information that you shared to us about PNG. I would be volunteering in Papua soon, and I am wondering if you can suggest websites (or any article to read) that I can visit to help me have more info about PNG and how to easily adapt to their culture. this will be very helpful for me. Thank you very much in advance and good job on this site!

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_16)

[**jay2**](mailto:maipjohnson73%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

png is very interesting..it is yet to develop due to political greed but the tradions and culture here is upholded in every society in the country because it is the pride and strenght of our inheritage...oh beautiful png..may GOD bless you...  
  
True PNG..

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_17)

[**Samuel Jack**](mailto:samuel%20[dot]%20jack%20[at]%20student%20[dot]%20pau%20[dot]%20ac%20[dot]%20pg)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Can you answer this question for me please? Many legal academics have challenged the distinction between law and custom. How best explain these challenges and what are your personal views?

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_18)

**maira**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

in response to Dan, these things are done to a close relative of the deceased.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_19)

**mongutshakeel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

TALK ABOUT HOW LIFE WOULD CHANGE IN A SMALL VILLAGE IF ELECTRICITY WAS BROUGHT TO IT

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_20)

**Alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Are Papua new guineans related to the people of Africa ?

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_21)

**Andrew**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Are there any issues of discrimination against people from Papua New Guinea who work in Australia due to there culture. What consideration could be taken when dealing with people from PNG either as co-workers or as a client.  
Thanks  
Andrew

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_22)

**marc**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it dident give me what i needed but a great website

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_23)

[**Sha~ah**](mailto:sronzb9%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is really great. It woul dbe a previlege for me to know the author.  
Thanks

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_24)

**Vero**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

a few extra comments to these people's comments.  
@soffia.. too tru! we were exploited and still are being exploited!.. our people were given salt and soap for gold, copper, oil, priceless kina shells, and stone axes, etc, which when it left our homelands they went and builds foreign cities! Home grown coffee and tea boomerangs back into its motherland with life-taking price tags!...therefore our youngsters are migrating into cities searching for this salt and soap, coz there's no tradition back in the villages... so we are a confusing developing countries. I do appreciate the few foreigners who geniunely come here to educate us see such things, but the rest, definitely is for themselves... say how many books have been written about PNG, making money in their own country.. how much of that do they put back to the originators.. so all is not well and good!  
@Dan .. only sibling or parent of a deceased who is so heartbroken, takes his finger or tooth out as a symbol of a missing loved one in the family

Family vacation packages

@Alex.. we are NO WAY NEAR related to Africans

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_25)

**Clifton Showell**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

They say my greatgreat grandfather was from Guinea. I would love to know if DNA could file the missing link I'm looking for.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_26)

**Black**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like the most recent country report on Papua New Guinea any more material will really be helpful. Email is Black@students.uonbi.ac.ke

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_27)

**Johnson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very nice comments here and I love that . I myself is from that country (Papua New Guinea) my province is Madang northern part of the country. Very nice comments here and I love that . I myself is from that country (Papua New Guinea) my province is Madang northern part of the country. Very nice comments here and I love that . I myself is from that country (Papua New Guinea) my province is Madang northern part of the country.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_28)

**martha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

why they paint their face?  
can somebody answer it. I need to know it because my art teacher give me that question.  
thank you

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_29)

**Kathrine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was given a topic on PNG Culture and I am doing a research on it, this article helped me started my essay.What are some role of women in a Traditional PNG Society? Please help list some for me, thankyou.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_30)

**Athena**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I liked this articled a lot! It gave me all the information that i needed!! Thank you so much now i know a lot about Papua New Guinea...

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_31)

**JAZ**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am a Filipina married to a Papua New Guinean and Im so proud to say that PNG is a very nice country. Its my second home actually.. well done..

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_32)

[**Wonderfulhumanity**](mailto:m%20[dot]%20rice%20[at]%20griffith%20[dot]%20edu%20[dot]%20au)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

So many amazing tribes and languages; were they absolutely totally genetically isolated from one another?  
Can anyone tell me if there was even a small percentage of marriages between different tribes.  
E.g. before colonial times, would men from one tribe sometimes marry wives from another tribe?  
Would children from one tribe be adopted by another tribe and eventually contribute to its gene pool?  
Many thanks for any help with this; and, would love to know if there's anything published on tribal intermarriages.

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_33)

**Emily**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi who wrote this article as i grew up there for 16years of my life and its so tru and would like to use this info

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_34)

**GEHEZO ADAM**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I THINK WE ARE MIXING THE TRADITIONAL AND WESTERN CULTURE WHICH IS CONFUSING AT THIS VERY STAGE OF MODERNISATION, CAN'T WE JUST FOCUS ON ONE AREA AND DEVELOP.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_35)

**GEHEZO ADAM**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

AS A CITIZEN OF THIS COUNTRY PNG I' AM WORRIED THAT AFTER 10 TO 20 YEARS OUR YOUNG GENERATION WILL LOSE THEIR IDENTITY AS PNG. THEREFORE I AM APPEALLING TO THE ELITES OF PNG TO STEP UP TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO UPHELD OUR UNIQUE CULTURE AND PRESERVE IT FOR FUTURE GENERATION.CONCERN PNG MR GEHEZO

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_36)

**Kulaia augustine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi I have grown up in my uniquie country and for the last 40 years of my life I have seen alot of changes in our culture and do agree with comments made by GEHEZO ADAM if somethng drastic cannot be done to save our unique culture now we might loose it forever..Note to forecast on there is ancient Babylon,Egypt,and china there is evidence they have a past history and so there is also basis for their future.If we aren't care ful our children will only be listening to tales..  
  
Iam currently studying in china fourth largest manucipality southwestern city of Chongqing in a military logistic engineering university and I will do my country presentation this month the best I can to show our unique diversified culture and Im extremely proud of my country.  
  
cheers ..LT Kulaia

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_37)

**alicia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i heard that there is a tradition in Papua that includes cutting the mother or fathers finger is it true ?  
if it is please tell me about it i need it

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_38)

**Simoi Emmanuel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is very interesting, as a Papua New Guinean I am proud of my culture and my country. And i strongly agree about what some of our very own people had said.. its about time our leaders should take into consideration how we came to be and try to preserve our culture because i believe with these changes that are happening today would realy hav an impact on the lives of our people and our future generation.. "proud png soul"

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_39)

**Hazel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is much more accurate in describing my country than others I have read up on the web.

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_40)

**David Wambi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is really interesting reading through, but I am really sad when seeing our unique cultures slowly dying out.

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_41)

**manthara**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

its nice to know that people from other countries are interested in my wonderful PNG am from the trobrian islands of PNG located in the southern part of the country ...an happy to see all the nice comments people are saying ..you guys should come see the country for yourself aspecially the 22 provinces ..all divers and wounderful .

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_42)

**Lee Kay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi, I am a citizen of PNG, i'm from the coast my province is Morobe..I am so proud of who ever wrote this article.. It's nice to see other countries who are also interested..You guys should come and see it for yourself, the beaches,rainforest,arts and craft and know more of our cultures and stories. It would be an adventure!

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_43)

**Casey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi.I am Australian and found an artifact called the 2 headed god from PNG. It say it is an tribal artifact No C763 i just want to let the rightful owner know that i have found it on a shore line in Queensland Australia after a big storm a while ago

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_44)

**nid**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi, this is a very informative piece and all credit to the Author! PNG is a rich culturally diverse country. I am from the East New Britain Province and have always been proud of the cultures and customs set and bound from our forefathers! If you truly would like to experience the land of the unexpected come and live amongst our people in the villages away from the hustle and bustle of town, politics and "latest technology". You will surely be amazed by how much traditional beliefs and customs still play a major role in our lives!

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_45)

**Agnes.john**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very helpful information. Thanks to the author for the time and effort put in this piece of writing.I

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_46)

**Arnel Gallardo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very Nice and nformative article...Thank you. I think PNG is an amazing place with wonderful culture and fun loving, hospitable and friendly people. I want to visit PNG someday...I hope I could get to know and befriend Papua New Guineans so that they can introduce me more to the culture, people and places...God bless PNG! (Please email me for more articles on PNG ...agall25@yahoo.com. Thanks.)

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_47)

**molly**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this really helped me on my presentain for a.p. geo. Thanks you proububly worked really hard on this!!!:)

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_48)

**Carol Winuan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

About the fender ideology, do we really have gender inequality in the Papua New Guinea?

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_49)

**Lomax**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Well done all constructive comments. Come and see PNG for yourself. It is a changing country Now.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_50)

**Mikes**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks everyone for your wonderful remarks, I always Love my country PNG best despite cultural differences and western influences we Still stand together to Uphold our Christian Believes as our fore fathers did honoring God first. Every citizen knows and fear the Lord that keeps us going as the Bible says, "fear of the Lord is the beginning of all knowledge and wisdom," even a drunkard, a drug addict, a politician, a public servant and the public at large knows and heard about the Loving Grace of God. With these I would like to uphold all PNGans for the wonderful culture that we have that makes us unique in the world with upholding the Christian faith.

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_51)

**Nancy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Where can i find more information ? I'm doing an essay on Guinea

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_52)

**Ashleey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi, I am a citizen of PNG, i'm from the coast my province is Morobe..I am so proud of who ever wrote this article.. It's nice to see other countries who are a interested in PNG

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_53)

[**kaun**](mailto:jneimo%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is absolutely perfect under the sun. It has been well known for it diversity in human, plants and animals as well. In the past the native Papua New Guineans claimed each of the territories which was owned by each language group as a nation of its own

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_54)

**jane castro**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What are the geography,people and culture,economy and resources,political status,and major problems of papua new guinea?

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_55)

**Dorish N Nowatuo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

As a PNG citizen,I a proud and thankful to whoever wrote this article. One suggestion only, could we update the poutlation figure plus other sections that are outdated? It would be great to have updated information.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_56)

**natasha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this site is fantastic as Papua New Guinean its great to hear how people have great interest in our culture

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_57)

**leo sulpan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm one of the papua new guinea intellectual being live and work in indonesia. I used to admire my country because it has a unique culture . My province is sandaun , bordered with indonesia ,we shared the bailetral relationship with them.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_58)

**Clementine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Awesome!! Thanks for helping my with my school assignment. I could NOT have done it without you.

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_59)

**raquan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

im looking for information about Papua New Guinea it is one of my favorite places

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_60)

**Jimaimah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this article. but however many things has changed from the life in the past. I am a Papua New Guinean, a teenager. however I think a lot of things which have been mention here has now becoming an history. Actually I was doing one of my history assignment and I came across this article, which had gave me a view into the life in the past.  
If interested in more current information about Papua New Guinea you can email me at this address. Jimaimah Gawi.student@pau.ac

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_61)

**simon Lesley Andop**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is very intersting and useful to the general public. And furthermore,it helps the New young generation to understand their historical part of their country,Papua New Guinea. Also helps other people of the worl how this county was colonized and where its located and do research on the tradition and cultural diversity

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_62)

**clyde kari akivi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

PNG is richly blessed with resources and many other things.

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_63)

**Paul Bare**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks very much to the publisher. It may seem that we can call ourselves Papua New Guineans, but we may not know every aspects that defines all people and their culture and heritage in our nation. Publicity boost the awareness of every individual and the different cultures that somehow unifies PNG to be it is today.

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_64)

**Chris Pohakiu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks to those who help PNG to become independent..

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_65)

**Absalom Yavai**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am doing a research based on the significance of signs and symbols in the cultural context of PNG and came across this. Very interesting to my own study.  
THANKS.  
MR. YAVAI

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_66)

**theresa sulum**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for this article really helped in my assignment

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_67)

**Kalovakavina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Most of the time, the media showcases the niugini islands, and the highlands region and people who know little about PNG tend to think that PNGeans look like africans, have frizzy hair and darker skin, however PNG is really diverse, we also have people that have lighter tone of brown skin, wavy hair to nearly straight, and they resemble people from the micronesian or polynesian regions or both and even melanesian mixed.These groups of people also have their own languages and cultures that are linked. some can be found in the manus islands and Bougainville provinces, but the majority are found in Central Province.  
I Want people to know how diverse we are, lest they think we are homogenous

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_68)

**Ismile**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Most helpful interesting information. Thank you to the author who published this.

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_69)

**Vada John Ron**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks to this nice and big article shown here.  
It really helped me in my assignment.  
I LOVE THIS WEBSITE!

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_70)

**warrior**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi yeah I'm working on my assignment right now and it is really haling.

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_71)

[**Diana**](mailto:dianasefomsc%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi! I am a proud PNG soul cruising Germany. This week I'll be doing a PPP at my school about the PNG Grass Skirts, Tapa Cloth, Meri Blouse, Lap-Lap and Bilums. I am so exited about informing my classmates a little about my PNG culture and traditional dressing. Go PNG!!

Best clothing retailers

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_72)

**Joey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Gonna do the touch down take a sip i'm working on my speech

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_73)

[**Brendan**](mailto:Brag12587%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This makes me cry knowing what my mother went through I couldn't even imagine be stolen from my mum its sickening but my mum is a very strong woman I love her dearly

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_74)

**Aloisia So-on**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi iam a pride Papua New Guineans  
I'm so thankful to this article it help me with my health, sociology and culture assignment  
Thanks  
GO PNG!!

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_75)

**Maxwell Sowei**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was given a topic a about Papua new guinea culture, what are the some of the examples of material and non material of Papua new guinea culture.

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_76)

**Limu Mou-Vagi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

How can this author of the article be acknowledge for the work that has been produced?

[**77**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html#Comments_77)

**Peter Yau**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What a superb work. Indeed, it partly enhanced my perception towards Melanesian societies and PNG's Social Fabrics which are intertwined in a more perplexing manner.  
  
\*However, What are some inevitable hybrid cultures which may emerge as a result of blending the dichotomies of the indigenous and western cultures in this contemporary world when PNG maneuvers to get acculturated with the vicissitudes of the modern world?

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Bottom of Form

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" [Panama](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Panama.html)[Paraguay](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html)

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Toggle navigation[](https://www.everyculture.com/)

1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Paraguay

Paraguay

Culture Name

Paraguayan

Orientation

***Identification.***The name "Paraguay" derives from the river that divides the eastern half of the nation from the western Chaco region. The vast majority of the population (95 percent) shares a Paraguayan identity, but several other cultural identities exist. The indigenous population is composed of seventeen ethnic groups from five linguistic families. Most immigrants have blended into the national population, but several groups have maintained distinct identities and cultures. Those groups include Mennonites, who settled in the western (Chaco) and the northern regions early in the early twentieth century; Japanese, who settled in agricultural colonies primarily during the 1950s and 1960s; and more recent Korean, Lebanese, and ethnic Chinese immigrants, who have settled in the urban centers of Asunción and Ciudad del Este since the 1970s. In the 1960s and 1970s, large numbers of Brazilian immigrant farmers moved to the eastern frontier region and became the backbone of the soybean export sector. By the 1990s, a second generation of Brazilians had been born and raised in Paraguay, and a few intermarried with the local population. These *brasiguayos*form a distinct subgroup.

***Location and Geography.***Paraguay is a land-locked nation of 157,047 square miles (406,752 square kilometers) in South America, surrounded by Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia. The inhospitable and semiarid Chaco forms the western part of the nation. Flat and infertile, much of it covered by scrub forests, the Chaco contains approximately 61 percent of the national land area but less than 3 percent of the population. In contrast, eastern Paraguay has rolling hills, richer soils, lush semitropical forests, and grassy savannas. The region so impressed early explorers that they called it a "second Eden." Temperatures are high in a humid subtropical climate in the summer months of October to March, while in the winter months of July to September night frosts may occur. Rainfall occurs throughout the year but is usually heaviest between October and April; annual variations can be extreme.

The capital, Asunción, lies on the Paraguay River at the point dividing eastern and western Paraguay. The city was founded in 1537 by Juan de Salazar y Espinoza, a Spanish explorer who led an expedition upriver from the fort at Buenos Aires. Befriended by the local Guarani, he established the fort of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción overlooking the bay where Asunción now stands. The Asunción *cabildo*(city council) was established in 1541. Asunción has dominated national society and politics since that time.

***Demography.***In 1999 the population was estimated to be 5,222,000. Approximately 95 percent of the population is mestizo. The population has more than tripled since 1950 and is growing 2.5 percent annually, with a total fertility rate of 3.8 children per woman. The growth rate has declined slightly from the period preceding 1975. The population is relatively young; 40 percent is under age 15, and only 5 percent is sixty or older.

Population figures for the ethnic populations are disputed. Estimates place the indigenous population at less than 3 percent of the national population. The largest groups are the Enxet Lengua, Pai-Tavyter, Nivaclé (Chulupí), Chiripá, and Mbyá. The Japanese settlers and their descendants are estimated to number about eight thousand, and the Mennonites approximately fifteen thousand. There are no reliable estimates for Korean, Chinese, and Brazilian immigrants and their offspring. The 1992 census counted only several thousand Korean and Chinese immigrants, but observers place their numbers between thirty thousand and fifty thousand.



*Paraguay*

Most observers estimate that between 300,000 and 350,000 Brazilians settled in eastern Paraguay in the 1960s and 1970s.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The majority of the people speak an indigenous language, although they do not self-identify ethnically as indigenous. Guarani, a Tupi Guarani language and the language of eastern Paraguay's dominant precolonial indigenous population, is recognized as an official national language along with Spanish. Spanish is the language of business and government, and Guarani is spoken in everyday life. According to the 1992 census, nearly half the population speaks both Guarani and Spanish in the home and 39 percent speaks only Guarani. In rural areas and among the lower social classes, Guarani is the dominant language. Although most schooling is conducted in Spanish, children are required to study Guarani as well. There is considerable lexical borrowing and linguistic code switching in informal conversation.

The use of Guarani Language does not imply indigenous ethnicity; it is the language of the national culture. The form of Guarani spoken in the national culture is somewhat different from that used by indigenous Guarani speakers, and many indigenous people speak non-Guarani languages. Religion, residence, and community affiliation—not language—are the cultural markers of indigenous identity. Historians attribute the prominence of the Guarani language in the national culture to extensive interbreeding between Spanish men and Guarani women from the earliest colonial times.

***Symbolism.***The most powerful symbols of the national culture are the Guarani language and imagery derived from Paraguay's national history, especially its wars. More than a means of communication, Guarani is a powerful marker of national identity that can be used to assert unity among Paraguayans of disparate social classes and political persuasions, especially in contrast to foreigners. Related images of Paraguay's indigenous heritage that also symbolize the national culture include traditional harp music, certain foods, and crafts.

The national territory and sovereignty and the great sacrifices Paraguayans made historically to defend that territory and sovereignty figure prominently in the national imagery and tradition. The War of the Triple Alliance (1865–1870), in which Paraguay fought against Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, continues to haunt the national consciousness and remains a potent national symbol. The Chaco War (1932–1935)also symbolizes the sacrifices Paraguayans have made to defend their homeland. Key battles are commemorated with national holidays. The dominant imagery is that of blood shed to defend the national patrimony.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***The origins of the modern population lie in the cultural and biological mixing that occurred in the earliest period of Spanish contact. The Guarani were horticulturists organized in chieftainships based on extended kinship. Although they traced descent patrilineally, they had matrilocal settlement patterns and alliances were formalized through the exchange of women. Few women came with the handful of Spanish explorers who established the fort of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción in 1537. The Guarani *caciques*(chiefs) exchanged women to formalize their alliance with the Spanish against the hostile peoples of the Chaco. The Paraguayan people trace their origins to the children of those unions.

National traditions of autonomy and pride also have their origins in the early colonial years. Distant from colonial centers and lacking the mineral wealth of other regions, the colony remained isolated and impoverished. The Spanish landowners and *encomenderos*(recipients of Colonial grants to the labor and other tribute of specified indigenous groups) sometimes overruled and even overthrew the appointed governor. Colonial politics were tumultuous, with intense rivalry among the early conquerors and between the settlers and their economic rivals, notably the Jesuit missions. Colonists also chafed under the economic dominance of Buenos Aires and taxation of their exports by the Argentinians. The colony faced military threats from hostile indigenous peoples, Brazilian slave hunters, and Portuguese attempts to annex part of the colony. Left to their own devices by the Spanish, the colonists had to defend themselves against those threats by raising citizen militias and arming themselves as best they could, and as a result the colony has been described as the most militarized in Latin America. The colony was so impoverished and isolated that visitors commented on the obsolescence of the colonists' arms. Until the final years of the colonial period, barter was the normal means of exchange and the economy was based largely on subsistence activities. This period thus established the tradition of ethnic mixing, local self-sufficiency based on isolation and poverty, the need to defend life and land against continuous threat, and resentment of economic exploitation by Brazil and Argentina.

These orientations were reinforced by the experiences of the nineteenth century. After Argentinians deposed the Spanish viceroy in 1810, they attempted to extend their control to include the territory of Paraguay. Paraguayans resisted and in 1811 defeated the Argentinian army at the battle of Paraguari. In May of that year, Paraguayans overthrew the last Spanish governor. After several years of political maneuvering, José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia emerged as the leader of the new republic and was elected perpetual dictator by the Popular Congress in 1816. Popular, iron-fisted, and fiercely nationalistic, Francia implemented policies that benefitted ordinary residents while limiting or destroying the power of the Spanish and creole elites, the Catholic Church, the mercantile houses, and the landed estates. Although he was derided by foreign critics and enemies as an isolationist madman who drove his country into poverty, scholars now argue that Francia expanded internal and external trade. However, he permitted trade only under his supervision, guaranteeing that the nation reaped the benefits, and strictly controlled the movements of foreigners in the national territory.

After Francia's death in 1840, the presidency was assumed by Carlos Antonio López and then, in 1862, by López's son, Francisco Solano. In 1864, Francisco Solano López declared war on the powerful Triple Alliance of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. The events that provoked López's declaration of war are debated. Although his motivations were long dismissed as megalomaniacal pretensions, some recent analysts have argued that López was forced into declaring war to preempt Brazilian and Argentinian designs to assume dominion over their smaller neighbors, including Paraguay. This disastrous war resulted in the death of most Paraguayan men and many women and children and destroyed the nation's economy. It also ended Paraguay's brief period of self-determination and relatively egalitarian prosperity. Only the intervention of the U.S. president, Rutherford B. Hayes, in 1878 prevented Argentina from claiming a large part of western Paraguay. Argentina became the middleman for most of Paraguay's international trade, and foreigners acquired vast expanses of the nation's land.

The War of the Triple Alliance left Paraguay a nation largely of small farmers engaged in the production of basic food crops for subsistence and local trade. Ethnically and culturally, the population was homogeneous, with the family serving as the basic socioeconomic unit. Although the small political elite that emerged after the war emulated European styles, the vast majority of the population spoke Guarani and led a subsistence lifestyle based on indigenous and Spanish customs interwoven by the hardships of life on an isolated and impoverished frontier.

***National Identity.***The national identity derives from these historical antecedents. Although the Guarani language is its most salient symbol, that identity is not based on an actual or mythologized pre-Columbian Guarani past. Instead, it has its origins in the fusion of indigenous and Spanish peoples in colonial times and was shaped by threats to territory and sovereignty from the earliest colonial times. The strong sense of national identity also has been nurtured by the homogeneity of the population throughout the country's modern history.

***Ethnic Relations.***Despite the alliance of the Guarani and Spanish peoples that gave rise to the nation, Paraguayan relations with indigenous peoples typically have been marked by hostility and exploitation. Spanish colonists faced continual threats from the indigenous groups in the Chaco and repeatedly launched armed campaigns against them. Although the Guarani gave women to the Spanish to cement their alliance, the Spanish took many more women, as well as food and other goods, by force. The Spanish also quickly organized to establish their control over Guarani labor through the *encomienda*system. While Francia recognized the land claims of some indigenous villages, Paraguayans later appropriated indigenous land through force, fraud, and bureaucratic maneuvers. Indigenous peoples remain at the fringes of the national society.

Relations with Mennonite and Japanese settlers have been limited to occasional bureaucratic and economic transactions. These immigrant enclaves, located primarily in remote rural areas, maintain their own economic, social, and cultural institutions and in most cases have greater economic resources than do the surrounding Paraguayan communities made up primarily of small farmers. Intermarriage is rare and is disapproved. Paraguayans perceive the immigrants as disdaining and rejecting the national culture.

In the 1970s and 1980s, critics charged that the influx of Brazilian immigrants threatened Paraguayan culture and national sovereignty in the eastern frontier region. However, most of those immigrants settled in ethnically homogenous communities, and there was little direct contact between them and the local population. Although there have been some confrontations between Paraguayan and Brazilian farmers over land, most conflicts have involved large tracts of land claimed by absentee owners rather than land farmed by immigrant settlers.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Until the mid-1970s, the majority of residents lived in rural areas, nearly all in the central region surrounding Asunción. Most lived on farmsteads in small adobe houses with palm-thatched roofs, with their fields surrounding the house. Towns were of typical Spanish colonial design, built around a central plaza and home to a few administrative, craft, and professional workers and shopkeepers. The central institutions of the national government as well as religious and educational institutions, commerce, and industry were and still are in Asunción.

Since the 1970s, the population has become increasingly urban, and by 1992, just over 50 percent lived in urban areas. Asunción is the largest urban center, with an estimated population of 550,000. The extension of roads, the construction of massive



*A brick kiln. The towns of Aregua and Tobatí both produce ceramic and clay work.*

hydroelectric works on the eastern border, and agricultural colonization programs drew people from the central regions to the sparsely populated border regions, especially along the eastern border with Brazil. Ciudad del Este, founded in 1963, is now the second largest city and a major commercial center, with an estimated population of 234,000.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Corn, *mandioca*(cassava), and beef form the basic diet. Typical dishes include *locro*(a corn stew), *sopa paraguaya*(a rich corn flour and cheese bread), *chipa guazú*(a cross between *sopa paraguaya*and a corn soufflé), and *mbaipy so'ó*(corn pudding with beef chunks). *Mandioca*root is commonly served boiled, and its starch is a main ingredient of several traditional foods, including *chipa*(a dense, baked bread of *mandioca*starch and cheese) and *mbejú*(an unleavened fried bread). The main meal of the day is eaten at noon and usually includes corn- or *mandioca*-based food. A wide variety of tropical and semitropical fruits also are eaten. Drinks made of *yerba maté*(Paraguayan tea) are ubiquitous. The tea may be drunk hot ( *maté*) or cold ( *tereré*), and medicinal herbs often are added. The leaves also may be toasted and boiled to make a tea that is served at breakfast or for a late afternoon snack.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Special family celebrations and social gatherings call for an *asado,*or barbecue, with beef roasted over open fires and accompanied by boiled mandioca and sopa paraguaya. Chipa traditionally is prepared for the major religious holidays of Christmas and Holy Week. Special meals during these holidays also may include an *asado*of beef or a pit-roasted pig.

***Basic Economy.***Paraguay's currency is the guarani, with an exchange rate of approximately 3500 guarancies to one U.S. dollar in 1999. Until recently the economy was primarily rural and agricultural. The majority of the population, peasant farmers, produced subsistence crops as well as cash crops of cotton or tobacco. Approximately 40 percent of the population is still involved in agriculture, and the majority are small farmers who engage to some degree in subsistence production. Agriculture, together with forestry, hunting, and fishing, accounts for 25 percent of the gross national product (GDP) and nearly all exports. Paraguay has few mineral resources, but its rivers have made hydroelectric power generation a major source of revenue. The manufacturing sector is small (15 percent of GDP). The economy also has a very large informal sector composed of thousands of urban street vendors, domestic workers, and microenterprises. An estimated 10 percent of the labor force was unemployed in 1996, and almost half was underemployed. Despite government promises of reform, public sector employment, long a major source of political patronage, has continued to grow, increasing 17 percent from 1989 to 1995.

Although the country is largely self-sufficient in the basic foodstuffs of corn, mandioca, and wheat, it depends on imports for processed foods, other consumer goods, capital goods, and fuels. Although many small farmers continue to rely on their own production for food, they have been drawn into the market economy to purchase processed goods such as soap, cooking oil, clothing, medicine, and other basic consumer items.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Land distribution is among the most unequal in Latin America. According to the 1991 agricultural census, 77 percent of the agricultural land was owned by barely 1 percent of the population. At the other extreme, small farms of less than 49.4 acres (20 hectares), accounting for over 80 percent of all agricultural holdings, occupied only 6 percent of the agricultural land.

Although the system of land tenure is based on private property, common practice and historical tradition play an important role in shaping notions of land rights. Peasants have long claimed the right to occupy unused public lands for agricultural purposes. Mechanisms for formalizing occupation rights were specified in twentieth century legal codes and the 1967 constitution, which recognized the right of every citizen to a plot of land. The right to own land for investment or speculation is viewed by the majority of the rural population as secondary to the right of peasants to use land for subsistence. While some peasants own clear title to the land they cultivate and some rent or sharecrop, informal occupation of land is widespread.

The private property regimen is complicated by a long history of bureaucratic fraud and ineptitude. During the Stroessner dictatorship (1954–1989), large tracts of land were illegally transferred to Stroessner's relatives and cronies, and some peasant and indigenous communities were violently displaced as powerful military figures took over their lands. Although most land claims have been regularized in central Paraguay, conflict over land continues to be a source of unrest in the eastern and northern frontier regions, where many titles are of questionable origin. Indigenous groups have lost vast expanses of their land and face legal and physical threats as a result of their efforts to gain recognition of their claims.

***Commercial Activities.***Agriculture and hydroelectric power account for the majority of commercial production. Major agricultural goods produced for sale include grains, oilseeds (soybeans), cotton, sugarcane, tobacco, meat and poultry, mandioca, fruits and vegetables, lumber, eggs, and milk. Large estates and immigrant settlers produce most of the grains, oilseeds, and beef. The Mennonites are known for dairy production. Small farmers produce mandioca, cotton, tobacco, and sugarcane as well as fruits and vegetables for sale on the domestic market. A multitude of microenterprises and artisans produce bricks for construction, clothing, furniture, and other small consumer items.

Because of lax border controls and low tariffs, resale and transshipment of goods account for a significant part of the commercial economy. These activities range from illicit transshipment of cocaine and other drugs from producing countries to the markets of North America and Europe to the resale of clothing, vegetables, and other inexpensive consumer items by individuals who purchase them in Brazil or Argentina and bring them into the country without paying import duties.

***Major Industries.***Aside from hydroelectric power generation, the major industries are heavily dependent on the agricultural sector. Small industries process flour, beer, cigarettes, soap, shoes, and furniture. There is some oilseed processing, meatpacking, and textile production, but most of the beef, cotton, and soybeans are exported in their raw state rather than being processed domestically.

***Trade.***No reliable figures on international trade exist because a large part of that trade consists of the reexportation and transshipment of licit and illicit goods. The major recorded exports include soybeans and cotton, meat products, and timber. Half of Paraguay's international trade is with nations in the Southern Cone Common Market (Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay). Brazil is the most important trade partner, followed by the Netherlands, which imports soybeans for crushing. Unrecorded reexports include a wide variety of goods that range from cigarettes to automobiles, contraband compact discs, and drugs. Paraguay's major imports include machinery, vehicles, spare parts, fuels and lubricants, and alcoholic beverages and tobacco, much of which is reexported. Brazil and



*An enclosed yard in Asunción. The capital is the center of religious and educational institutions, commerce, and industry as well as government.*

Argentina provide most of Paraguay's imports, followed by the United States and Japan.

Informal international trade centers on Ciudad del Este, which depends heavily on shopping "tourism." Brazilians and Argentinians travel to Ciudad del Este to take advantage of the low import duties to purchase consumer electronics, office equipment, perfumes, whiskey, cigarettes, and other consumer items. This trade, along with illicit trade through the area, has earned Ciudad del Este notoriety as a smuggler's paradise. Shopping tourism declined in 1997 and subsequent years, because of weakening economic growth in Brazil and Argentina and stricter controls by Brazilian authorities.

***Division of Labor.***A person's economic position depends primarily on education and social status, with access to many positions in the government bureaucracy and state enterprises and sometimes private enterprises also dependent on a personal connection with politically powerful benefactors. Among the poor and working classes, young children are expected to help assure family survival by assisting in agricultural production or working outside the home. Among small farmers, most agricultural labor is provided by family members. However, peasant farmers still practice a form of cooperative labor known as *minga,*in which at critical times in the agricultural cycle neighbors or kin work together to prepare or harvest each other's fields.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Wealth and income distribution are extremely unequal. A small elite owns most of the land and the commercial wealth and reaped most of the benefits of economic growth in recent decades. Recent surveys indicate that 20 percent of the population of the greater Asunción metropolitan area and 60 percent of the population in rural areas live in poverty. Indigenous peoples are the most impoverished. Mennonite and Japanese immigrants have established thriving agricultural colonies, while the more recent Korean, Chinese, and Arab immigrant groups are concentrated in urban commercial activities and reexportation. Brazilian immigrants are disproportionately concentrated in midsize commercial farming enterprises but also include extremely impoverished small farmers and laborers as well as wealthy landowners and middle-class entrepreneurs.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Language is an important marker of social status. Members of the upper classes primarily speak Spanish in public and in private, although they may understand Guarani. Members of the poorer social groups speak Guarani primarily or exclusively, and may have only a limited understanding of Spanish. The social distance between classes has traditionally been extreme, and peasants or workers were expected to show deference toward members of the political and landowning elite.

Political Life

***Government.***Paraguay is a republic consisting of the city of Asunción and seventeen additional departments, which are further subdivided into local administrative units known as *municipios*. The executive branch consists of the president and vice president, who are directly elected to five-year terms, and a council of ministers appointed by the president. The legislative branch is made up of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, which also are directly elected for five-year terms. The judiciary, including the Supreme Court, is appointed. In 1991, Paraguay initiated direct election of departmental and municipal executives and councils.

Contemporary political life has been shaped by General Alfredo Stroessner's thirty-five year dictatorship. After assuming power in a military coup in 1954, Stroessner ensured his control by fusing the ruling Colorado Party, government bureaucracies, and the military. Compliance to his personable authoritarian rule was achieved through a combination of brutal repression and patronage. Stroessner assured the allegiance of top military leaders and political cronies through grants of land, lucrative state contracts, and control of profitable smuggling activities. Benefits ranging from government posts to seeds were distributed to Colorado Party supporters, with the patron-client chains extending down to the poorest neighborhoods and rural towns. Although a formal judicial system existed, de facto adjudication was by the law of *mbareté*(the rule of the strong), in which the more powerful party or the party with the more powerful benefactor prevailed, thus ensuring the dominance of Stroessner's allies.

In February 1989, Stroessner was removed from power in a coup led by General Andrés Rodríguez. Although Rodríguez was a longtime Stroessner ally, he carried out his promise to lead the nation to a more democratic government. Freedom of the press, freedom of association, and other basic rights are recognized, and civilian officials have gained office through open elections. However, the Colorado Party remains strongly entrenched, and many of Stroessner's top allies and officials are still in high government and party posts.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Paraguay's two major political parties, the Colorados (National Republican Association), and the Liberals (Authentic Radical Liberal Party, have their roots in the period of the Triple Alliance. Affiliation with a political party commonly is based on family and personal ties. Both parties have hierarchical organizations with competing internal factions. In 1993, a new party, the Encuentro Nacional, was formed to challenge the traditional parties. Its strongest support is among younger, more educated urban voters. Several smaller parties also exist. There is little substantive difference among the major parties. Access to leadership positions is through the party hierarchy and personal ties.

***Social Problems and Control.***Paraguay has a civilian police force responsible for public order and a legal system based on French and Roman law. At the local level, justices of the peace and magistrates are responsible for administrative and criminal proceedings. There are also courts of appeal, the Tribunal of Jurors and Judges of First Instance, and judges of arbitration.

Street crime and violence increased during the 1990s with worsening economic conditions. The police force is widely perceived as corrupt and complicit in some crime. The judiciary has been the least affected among all the branches of government by the post-Stroessner political reforms, and local magistrates and justices of the peace are seen by many people as available for purchase, especially in rural areas. Government corruption at all levels is pervasive and contributes to widespread public cynicism toward politics and government.

Conflict over land intensified dramatically in the 1990s, especially in the north and the eastern border region. While there have been reports of peasant farmers taking up arms, most of the violence has been directed against them. Landowners (whether or not they have legitimate title) have employed private gunmen to defend their claims and have forcibly and illegally evicted occupants and destroyed their homes and crops. In the early 1990s, a number of peasant leaders were assassinated. The government has made no significant moves toward land reform and has acted slowly to resolve conflicting claims.



*A muchacho herding cattle into a corral.*

***Military Activity.***Under Stroessner, Paraguay was one of the most heavily militarized nations in the world, with an extremely high ratio of police and military personnel to civilian population. Military personnel enjoyed great benefits and power. Efforts to depoliticize the military since 1989 have been tenuous, and military privileges remain considerable. In April 1996, General Lino Oviedo led an attempted coup against then-president Guillermo Wasmosy. Although most of the military remained loyal to Wasmosy and the coup was unsuccessful, Oviedo later ran for and the won the Colorado Party's nomination for president. His candidacy eventually was nullified and he was imprisoned, but the resultant political uncertainty immobilized the government. Although the military has refrained from intervening directly in recent political affairs, it is never far from the halls of power.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The government runs a system of underfunded and understaffed public health posts and hospitals and provides retirement benefits for employees of the government and state enterprises and veterans of the Chaco War. Nominal government programs to benefit peasants and indigenous peoples are ineffective and corrupt. Religious organizations and nongovernmental agencies provide some social services and play a central role in promoting change.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Workers are represented through four major unions. Currently, three confederations of peasant organizations work to promote peasants' interests in national public policy discussion and occasionally intervene to support peasants in land conflicts. A number of regional peasant organizations assume similar roles at the local level and promote local development initiatives. A number of trade and business associations exist, the most powerful of which represent the interests of rural landowners and ranchers, cotton exporters, and grain enterprises. Since 1989, a large number of nongovernmental organizations and associations have been formed, with interests ranging from the promotion of sustainable development to advocacy for women, street children, and indigenous peoples. Although the number of people directly involved in these organizations is small, they play an important role defending human rights and promoting social change.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Although the dominant conception of gender roles gives responsibility for the domestic sphere to women while men dominate in the public sphere, women have long had a central role in providing for their families and are economically active outside the home. They played a critical role as workers in national reconstruction after the War of the Triple Alliance. They have always played an important role in agriculture, both in subsistence production and in the production of cash crops on small peasant farms. However, the economic contributions of women frequently go unrecognized because their agricultural work, and informal sector work performed within the household, are difficult to distinguish from domestic activities. Recent surveys in urban areas indicate that women constitute at least one-third of the economically active population. Women are employed predominantly in domestic service and sales and as office workers, while men are employed across a wider range of activities. Women also are more heavily involved in the informal sector than are men.

Women assumed more active roles in political parties and government after the fall of the Stroessner dictatorship in 1989, and several women now have high-level positions in political parties, the legislature, and government ministries. However, positions of power are still held overwhelmingly by men. Although men dominate the formal bureaucracy of the Catholic Church, women are important in the practice of folk Catholicism.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Paraguay is a conservative and male dominated society in which formal rights and privileges in many spheres were until recently denied to women. It was the last Latin American nation to grant women the right to vote (1961). Before the constitutional reforms of 1992, married women could not work outside the home, travel, or dispose of their own property without the consent of their spouses. Husbands had the right to dispose of conjugal property, including property the wife brought to the union, as they saw fit. The 1992 reforms modified those provisions, formally granting women equal rights and interests within the marriage. Women are also disadvantaged economically. A 1990 survey in the Asunción metropolitan area found that women earned only 56 percent as much as men. The earnings gap was larger for more highly educated and trained workers. Female-headed households are among the poorest in the society.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Marriages are formed by the choice of the couple and may be church, civil, or consensual unions. According to the 1992 census, 68 percent of women above age nineteen were in unions, of whom 78 percent were married in a church or civil ceremony. Legal divorce is rare, although unions are often unstable, especially among the poor. Although it is a conservative Roman Catholic society, Paraguay has long been characterized by unstable consensual unions and a high illegitimacy rate. Men's extramarital behavior draws little criticism as long as it does not impinge on the family's security, but women's behavior reflects on the family, and women are expected to be faithful if they are in a stable union.

***Domestic Unit.***Most people live in a nuclear family that consists of a married couple and their unmarried children or a single woman and her children. In 1992, 20 percent of households were



*A sub-tropical rainforest in the Mbaracayu Reserve. Only about one-third of Paraguay consists of rainforest; the other two-thirds are semiarid and infertile.*

headed by women. Extended households are rare, although relatively well-off urban families may take in the children of poorer rural relatives or those of an unwed female relative. The man holds formal authority within the family and is treated with respect by the children. The woman is responsible for managing the household, caring for the children, maintaining ties with extended kin, and often earning an income outside the home.

***Inheritance.***Land and other property pass by inheritance to a surviving spouse and then to biological or adopted children. The right to specify an alternative disposition of property is granted to the husband, but his wife may legally contest his decision.

***Kin Groups.***Family and extended kin are the most important center of loyalty and identity for individuals, and the ideal is an extensive and strong extended kin network. Kin may be called on to provide essential support and assistance in times of need, and the wealthy may mobilize extended kin to support their political ambitions. In addition to kinship ties by marriage and birth, great importance is placed on fictive kin ties established through god-parenthood. Parents select godparents for their children's baptism, confirmation, and marriage. Those godparents have special rights and responsibilities toward their godchildren and are expected to assist in meeting a child's needs if necessary. Children are expected to show their godparents special deference and respect, but ties to the godchild's parents (coparents) may be even more important and extend beyond the death of the godchild. Social equals and extended kin are preferred as godparents, although poorer parents may seek more influential benefactors as godparents for their children.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Infants are showered with affection and attention by both women and men of all ages. A crying infant will be comforted instantly by the nearest adult or older child. Infants typically are carried in the arms rather than in a sling or stroller. They usually are left to play on the ground or floor or are placed on a bed to sleep, although the use of playpens and cribs is common among the urban middle and upper classes. Parents expect infants to be active and responsive.

***Child Rearing and Education.***While middle-class and upper-class children are indulged and expected to devote themselves to studying and playing, the children of poorer urban and rural families are expected to assume productive work roles at a very young age. These children assist in agricultural work, household chores, and the care of younger siblings. It is not unusual for very young children to work as street vendors. Physical discipline is common, and children are controlled through the threat of physical punishment.

Formal education consists of six years of primary schooling followed by six years of secondary schooling. Primary education is compulsory from ages six to twelve, but there are not enough schools, especially in rural areas. Although poor families value education, their children often must miss classes or drop out an early age to help the family financially. In 1994, 90 percent of primary age children were enrolled, while only 34 percent of secondary age children were.

***Higher Education.***Possession of a university degree is an important source of social prestige and access to higher-status jobs but is available to only a small proportion of the population.

Etiquette

Greetings vary by social class, gender, and the level of intimacy of the parties. Except in formal business situations, upper-class and middle-class women who are social equals greet each other with a kiss on each cheek, whether they are acquaintances or are meeting for the first time. Male and female acquaintances in these social classes greet each other the same way. Men in all social classes shake hands in formal situations. Leave-taking follows the same rules.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Paraguay is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic. There are also several Protestant sects and small groups of the Baha'i, Buddhist, and Jewish faiths.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***In addition to Roman Catholic holy days and rituals, Paraguay honors the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception on 8 December. This day is celebrated with a pilgrimage led by religious and government officials to the holy shrine in Caacupé.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Beliefs and practices concerning death follow Roman Catholic tradition. The dead are interred in mausoleums, and the novena is traditionally observed, although this practice is declining in urban areas. Traditionally, All Saints' Day is celebrated on 1 November by decorating deceased family members' tombs and gathering in cemeteries to honor the dead.

Medicine and Health Care

Modern biomedical practices are combined with herbal and folk remedies. Public health clinics and hospitals are inaccessible to many people, especially in rural areas, and the urban and rural working classes and the poor often depend on self-medication or private pharmacies for medical treatments. Herbal remedies are used simultaneously with pharmaceuticals. Some herbal specialists exist, but most people are knowledgeable about the medicinal uses of common plants or resort to relatives or neighbors for advice on their use.

Secular Celebrations

National holidays include 1 January (New Year's Day), 3 February (Ban Blas, patron saint of the nation), 1 March (Heroes' Day), 1 May (Labor Day), 14–15 May (Independence Day), 12 June (Peace of Chaco), 15 August (Foundation of Asunción), 25 August (Constitution Day), 29 September (Battle of Boquerón, the anniversary of a key victory in the Chaco War), 12 October (Day of the Race, the anniversary of the discovery of America), 1 November (All Saints' Day), 8 December (Immaculate Conception), and 25 December (Christmas). Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Corpus Christi are recognized as national holidays and are observed according to the religious calendar.

The Arts and Humanities

***Literature.***The internal market for literature was constrained until recently by the poverty and the limited education of the majority of the population and by repression and censorship under Stroessner's dictatorship. Nonetheless, there is an active literary tradition. Most literature is in Spanish, although contemporary authors may include Guarani phrases and dialogue in their works. The most renowned contemporary authors are Augusto Roa Bastos and Josefina Plá.

***Graphic Arts.***Traditional folk arts include *ñanduti*(a spider web-like lace made in the town of Itaugua), *ao poí*(embroidered cloth), several kinds of ceramic and clay work (especially in the towns of Aregua and Tobatí), and silver filigree jewelry (centered in the town of Luque). Paintings by contemporary



*A forest cleared for farming in eastern Paraguay.*

artists are displayed in a number of galleries in Asunción.

***Performance Arts.***The country is known for slow and often melancholy harp and guitar music. Although European in origin, that music usually is performed in Guarani and reflects national themes. Music is performed by ordinary people for entertainment at social gatherings and celebrations as well as by professional musicians. Performances of traditional dance, including the bottle dance (so called because the performers balance bottles on their heads) and polkas are popular. Theater was introduced by Francisco Solano López, and in 1863 the first Italian opera by a touring company was performed in Asunción's National Theater. Theater today is centered in Asunción, and works occasionally are performed in Guarani as well as Spanish.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The physical and social sciences as well as the humanities are taught at the two major universities (National University and Catholic University), as are applied sciences (agriculture and engineering) and the professions. Funding for basic research and teaching is limited, and the faculties were under close surveillance during the Stroessner years. The independent Paraguayan Center for Sociological Studies was established in 1963, and has been the most important center for social science research. In the last years of Stroessner's dictatorship, other private social science institutes were established, and the number of private research organizations grew rapidly after Stroessner's fall. These institutes obtain most of their funding from international sources.

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—B EVERLY N AGEL

**Also read article about**[**Paraguay**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Paraguay.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_1)

**scie131-Q2ff assignment 10-1**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I really have no comment I am trying to send this information to my email address. This article will help me with my environmental science project that we have due on culture. I have had trouble finding this information, but now that I have found it, I would like to use it. In order to use it I need to send it to my email, in which I am having some difficulty doing. Sorry about the inconveneince.

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_2)

**Bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like this website alot, its very helpful. thank u. and goodbye :]

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_3)

**?????**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Would u mind trying to talk about the way they dress or that and talking about tourist attractions,sport food,music,religion and more because i am trying to do an assignment and it is due this Friday if u can try 2 help me with anything if that is alright by u though thanks.Sorry about the inconveneince.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_4)

**mercedes**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

AMAZING!!  
points out every true aspect i have over paraguay  
i agreeded, will agree, and still agree with it all

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_5)

**Kyla**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey thankyou so much for this article!!! i have a report on the culture of paraguay and this helped alot!!

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_6)

**Jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site was brilliantly informative for a project I have due tomorrow! I just wanted to say thank you and that this was one of the best online sources i found about Paraguay's culture! Thank you again!

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_7)

**Amazing.M**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i've lived in Paraguay for sooo many years,, but reading and doing a project on my home country really brings me more information.. thanks for giving me your half of information,,

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_8)

**LaZerrick**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey this is pretty decent. Good Job, you just helped me do my powerpoint for my class today. Wooohoo! XD

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_9)

**alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love you paraguay oy u rock  
  
  
  
  
  
  
i think that are a cool country i am doing am powetrpoint on u

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_10)

**robin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you. I am studying Epidemiology and am doing research for the culture of Paraguay.

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_11)

**allen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

im doing project any help. im on cultures. its great! paraguay is

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_12)

**Leemon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Reallyt helpfull on the report i am working on... i used all of my recourses from this sight AND i got a 100%!

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_13)

**lisa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi! One question I'm not sure I've gotten an answer yet from the sources I've found:  
  
What is the indigenous name of Paraguay? Is there a map of how it was divided by different types of indian groups? We're interested on pre-colonial information.  
  
Thanks.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_14)

**Samantha y Jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi, were on here getting information on Europe for our spanish project...this website is really helping!

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_15)

**Sarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow, this is really great! It helped me out a lot, thanks! Well-written, including many valuable facts. My only suggestion is that you say something about their clothing (if you can find any information, because I can't find any). Otherwise, you did great! Good job!

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_16)

[**aileen**](mailto:aileenvilla7890%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

im studyin paraguay for a social studies project and so far so good!!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_17)

[**sofia**](mailto:sofi_xoxo17%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

OMG.. all this information is so complete, thnx this site have the perfect information..

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_18)

**shelbi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love love love this site. so informative! i'm doing a report on paraguay and this site is perfecto! (; it has given me everything i need on one page! best site out there on parauay that i've seen so far! thanks!

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_19)

**#1justinbieberfan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think this site is good but u really need to mention the types of clothing they wear, music, religion, and mre because im doign a thing for my social studies class and i have to make a brochure for paraguay. so i really think u should update on this country!!! â˜»

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_20)

**ToriC101**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey, this site was really usefull, but I still need a few things. You should update some stuff, and put on some curent issues that are facing this country, and be more specific on the art and culture topics.  
Other then that, I found EVERYTHING else, so thanks, bye! :)

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_21)

**lex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is great love it!!! Thnx sooo much this really helped me out!!:)

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_22)

[**Drew Matthews**](mailto:drewduhmatthews%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I lived in Paraguay for 2 years as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, L.D.S., (Mormon. I find the article to be informative unbiased and very well written, my compliment to the authors for this synopsis.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_23)

[**julie zwol**](mailto:julz0807%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very interesting finding out about country my familily originated from which i do not know much about. thank you.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_24)

[**Saida Earnell**](mailto:saida%20[dot]%20earnell%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I trying to get information to be sent to my email for a project my son is doing in school. Plus I felt that this message was interesting and probably found out more about this country. I would appreciate it.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_25)

[**Skipper**](mailto:mcknappen%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

oh dude!, I have a spannish project due tomorrow on paraguy. I couldnt find any decent info. on any other websites, and then i stumbled upon this life saver. Thanx aton

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_26)

[**BUT MUNCH**](mailto:HASFKLFH%20[at]%20YYAJOO%20[dot]%20COM)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

how u all dern it was smexy love yall good bye miss u

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_27)

**Kyndal James**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks a billion. This really helped me on my Paraguay essay. You're a lifesaver. I wish I could just, like, give you a hug or something.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_28)

**suzzy q**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

really good info but not wat i was looking for... i was trying to see at what age you are considered and adult in paraguay... i would like to use that as a fun fact in my brochure for spanish class! but thanx

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_29)

[**cece**](mailto:ceceJACKSONN1%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is a very important information, it helped a lot

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_30)

[**NATTY**](mailto:NATTY12252%20[at]%20AOL%20[dot]%20COM)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WANTED TO SEE A TYPICAL PARAGUAYAN DRESS..WHERE CAN I SEE IT?

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_31)

**None of your buisiness**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the info on paraguay it help me on some spanish report i had to do  
  
Thanks live this website

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_32)

**1234567890**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Awesome website ithelped me with my social studies project

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_33)

**Glenn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good website. Does anybody know if Paraguay pharmacacies require prescription for steroids? I am traveling there for 1 year and shipping a"controlled substance" from Usa (there i have prescrition) is not allowed at customs.

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_34)

**Alyssa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

We will be hosting my sons room mate from college who comes from Paraguay. We are interested in what we could mail to his family that would be appropriate gift from the United States. What types of material goods are prized in Paraguay? Any information would be greatly appreciated. Any suggestions for what would be prized by women, men, and children would be of great assistance.  
We will await your kind reply.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_35)

**ellenkhay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this would help me ! and finally i get a complete infofor my papers!! yey thank you

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_36)

**keke**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks aton! i have a huge report and this artilce helped so much!

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_37)

**karee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

u guys should add what the major holiday is in paraguay and the people in paraguay celebrate it, if u don't have it already... I didn't get a chance to read the whole thing but i will eventually, I just skimmed through it really quickly because i have a report thats due next week and thats the only question that i can never find on any other website.

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_38)

**douglas**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the major holidays are Christmas and Easter... hope this helped everyone

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_39)

**alisha wright**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

where is the culture for paraguay i have to write an essay about it.

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_40)

**DETROIT ROCKS!**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WOW! this is really fascinating facts! I am so glad that I found this web site. I got all the facts that I need for my social studies project! pretty soon ill be in class presenting my booklet about Paraguay and getting an A on it! THIS IS AMAZING!!! :)

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_41)

**Tdog**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is really good! helped me alot! thank you very much!

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_42)

**Jacqueline**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Would you mind talking about the movement in Paraguay? :) Thank you and goodbye(;

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_43)

**Jacque**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Would you mind talking about what they do for entertainment???

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_44)

**Bridget Samuels**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you sooo much, this really helped me with my social studies project for Paraguay!

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_45)

**nim**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

cool project i can't find all the information there is too much to read

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_46)

**Diana C. Rodriguez**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Need information on the clothing women in Paraguay wear. What kind of material is worn and if headpieces are customary for women.

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_47)

**folake**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is loaded with all the information i needed to know about Paraguay

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_48)

**Carole**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am presently travelling through Paraguay: I feel that your information is greatly correct and represent the situation even as I write by what I saw myself.  
  
THANK YOU FOR MAKING EVEN CLEARER THE TRUE IMAGE OF WHAT PARAGUAY IS...

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_49)

**hasslehoff**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Paraguay food is great, it is just lovely and I cook it for my guests all the time. what a wonderful country I'm going to visit.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_50)

**Julianna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was a really resourceful site and thanks for helping me do this project on Paraguay...

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_51)

**Bella**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

First off I love this site. If you could, could you put on fun facts and/or the history of Paraguay?

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_52)

**Destiny**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the info. It really helped I'm working on a project for social studies this really helped. My teacher should be pleased.

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_53)

**Raquel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANKS THATHELPED ME SO MUCH WITH MY HOMEWORK. I LOVE THIS SITE SO MUCH THANK YOU For ALL THE HELP ON MY S.S HOMEWORK

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_54)

**Shopnil**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This really did help me on my essay. My teacher will be happy.

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_55)

**Sindy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Heyoo...I live in Paraguay and I gotta say..this is the best article IÂ´ve ever read about Paraguay. Hope you guys get to visit us sometime! :)

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_56)

**noah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

that is a good kind of website i think. i visit a school in germany. paraguay is cool! you are cool, paraguay!! love xx

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_57)

**billy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have A report and this go me all the facts and I got A+

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_58)

**Dave C**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am about to sponsor two Paraguayan children through Plan International. This article is an ideal primer for me, Proving all the info I need to be able to communicate with the family, raising an awareness to the cultural, social economic conditions in the country. Its so easy to cause offence if the social and traditional aspects of the community is not understood. Thank you for an excellent synopsis.

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_59)

**Reese Wyatt Allen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This amazing site helped me with my social studies project. Thank you so much!

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_60)

**>@g!N@**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow! this helped a lot. now I can finish my cultural project.

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html#Comments_61)

**FREEDOM**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Put it on your side this helped alot  
I LOVE THIS WEBSITE!

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

E-mail:

 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

[Culture of Paraguay forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Papua New Guinea](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Papua-New-Guinea.html)[Peru](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html)

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Toggle navigation[](https://www.everyculture.com/)

1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Peru

Peru

Culture Name

Peruvian

Orientation

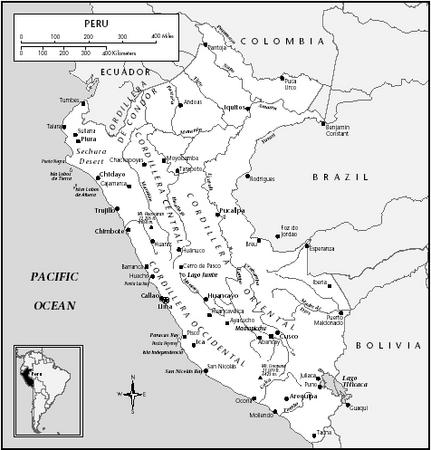
***Identification.***Peru has a long and rich history. The Spanish conquistadors Francisco Pizarro (c.1475–1541) and Diego de Almagro (1475–1538) received news of a mighty and rich empire lying just south of the present territory of Central America. The indigenous population of Panama referred to this powerful state as the land of Piru or Peru (word meaning "land of abundance" in the region's native Quechua tongue). The northern and central part of the South American continent was described as such in all the early chronicles and ethnohistoric accounts. Although the name Peru was used by foreigners to describe the indigenous Inca population, they called themselves the Tahuantinsuyu (meaning "the four-quarters" in Quechua). To this day, one of the most powerful groups to challenge Peruvian national identity is that of the contemporary Indian population, which at different times in history has seen itself as the rightful heirs of the Inca empire and has resisted European influence on its culture. The name Peru was pervasive during the colonial period and was used to denominate the larger sections of the powerful viceroyalty of Lima. Upon independence, Peru was the name given to the country.

***Location and Geography.***Peru has an approximate land area of 496,225 square miles (1,285,223 square kilometers) and is located in the central western section of the South American continent. It borders Ecuador and Colombia to the north, Brazil and Bolivia to the east, Chile to the south, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Peru's capital, Lima, is located on the coast, about 8 miles (13 kilometers) from the Pacific Ocean. Lima is home to almost a third of Peru's total population, with a total of two-thirds of the country's population living in the coastal region.

Peru is divided into three major regions. The western coast contains dry, desertlike regions to the north as well as to the south, with more agriculturally productive lands along the major valleys formed by the western-draining Andean rivers. The Central Andes run as the backbone of Peru and are comprised of two large mountain ranges with spectacular snow-capped volcanoes and temperate mountain valleys. The Andean mountains were the traditional home of the ancestral Inca kingdom. To this day, the Andes support many of the current surviving indigenous populations, some still claiming a direct Inca ancestry. Finally, in the northeast, the large region of Amazonian tropical forest has recently been the scene of oil exploration and political colonization projects. Peru's tropical forest basin also is the source of three of the major tributaries of the Amazon River, the Ucayali, Huallaga, and Marañón Rivers.

Since the 1980s, there has been the growing of impact of the *El Niño*(the child) current. This strong southern current, called El Niño because it occurs around Christmas, is responsible for a warming of the water temperature off the Peruvian coast that leads to great rainfalls, large-level floods along the coast, and periods of drought along the southern highlands.

***Demography.***Peru's population in 2000 was approximately 25 million. At the moment of conquest (mid-1500s), the original indigenous population numbered around 12 million. Only in the last forty years of the twentieth century was Peru once again able to reach that initial number, since the indigenous population had been almost completely decimated. Two-thirds of Peru's population is concentrated along the major urban centers of the coast and the rest is in the Andes, making the Amazon the least populated of its regions. There are four major ethnic groups in Peru: (1) whites (of European ancestry);



*Peru*

(2) mestizos (of mixed European and Indian ancestry—pejoratively referred to as *cholos*); (3) Indians (of Native American ancestry); and (4) Afro-Peruvians (of African descent). Accurate statistics for each of these four populations are difficult to collect because of the fluidity and arbitrariness in defining people as members of each community. The following rough estimates are usually given for each group: the Indian population is the largest, comprising almost 45 percent of the overall population; the mestizo population is second, with around 40 percent; and whites and blacks are a distant third and fourth with 10 percent and 5 percent, respectively.

In the late twentieth century, the Asian-Peruvian community (mainly of Chinese and Japanese descent) gained greater public recognition, especially with the election of a Peruvian president of Japanese ancestry (Alberto Fujimori). Both Asian populations have similar migration histories starting in the late 1800s and tend to be incorporated into the same racial/ethnic category.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Spanish and Quechua are both recognized as official languages in Peru. Spanish, however, is the language enforced by both the education system and the government. Introduced by the Spaniards, Spanish was forced upon the indigenous population throughout the colonial period by the Spanish Crown. This enforced linguistic practice continued throughout Peru's republic period (from the 1830s to the present). The Spanish spoken in Peru is also unique to the region, combining the Castillian tongue with many native Quechua and Aymara terms.

Although Quechua is spoken by most of Peru's Indian population, a significant amount of the Indian population speak Aymara as their native language. Aymara speakers are typically located in the southern region of the country along the shores of Lake Titicaca, which Peru shares as a border with Bolivia. Because of large migration within the country, Aymara and Quechua speakers are also found throughout the major urban centers of Peru.

Originally spoken by the Incas, Quechua was imposed upon all the populations conquered by them, allowing the Incas an easier medium of communication and domination. After the Spanish conquest, Quechua gained recognition as the indigenous lingua franca and also took on a characteristic of resistance rather than domination. There are also several other dozen languages spoken by other indigenous groups, most of which live in Peru's Amazon basin. The rich African influence also has contributed to a culturally and stylistically distinct variation of Peruvian Spanish.

***Symbolism.***The archaeological remains of the royal Inca estate of Machu Picchu is one of the most striking images emblematic of Peruvian culture. The majestic image of this ancient ruin perched high in the Andes is used to symbolize the resilience of Peruvian traditions. The fact that Machu Picchu lies on an 8,000-foot (2,440 meter) mountaintop and that it escaped destruction by the Spaniards looms large in the imaginations of Peruvians and tourists. The ruins evoke the nation's Indian past and legitimizes both Peru's historical heritage and cultural tradition.

Other emblematic figures of Peru are that of the Lake Titicaca and the island of the sun. The island of the sun is the largest of the islands in Lake Titicaca and was considered sacred by the Incas. As a result of this sacred status, the Incas maintained a temple to the sun on the island and a group of religious servants including celibate women (called *acllas*) year round. The highest navigable lake in the world at 12,500 feet (3,810 meters) above sea level and with an extension of 3,200 square miles (8,300 square kilometers), Titicaca is a natural border between Peru and Bolivia. The temperate waters of Lake Titicaca, as well as the different Indian communities that still make their livelihood off the lake's resources, are reminders of Peru's ancient traditions. Like other South American countries, Peru also imbues its flag, national anthem, and national coat of arms with sacred value. These three national symbols are held in enormous esteem and provide a common ground for Peruvians to memorialize their country's political and military struggles.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***The current configuration of Peru took form on 28 July 1821 when it declared its independence from Spanish rule. The declaration followed the occupation of Lima by the Argentinian general José de San Martín and the fleeing of the royalist forces to the interior of the country. But it really was not until 1824 and the battles of Ayacucho and Junín that the royalists were defeated and Spanish power in the whole continent was finally overthrown. These final battles were led not by San Martín, but rather by the Venezuelan generals Simón Bolívar and Antonio Joséde Sucre. San Martín had already retired to Europe after seeking Bolívar's support to secure Peru's independence. In this manner, Peruvian independence was obtained a couple of years later than most other South American states. This tardiness was due to the politically and religiously more conservative nature of the Peruvian aristocracy, the large presence of Spaniards in the territory, and the solid Spanish military stronghold of Lima.

***National Identity.***Peruvians maintain a very strong sense of national identity supported by a series of common characteristics such as language, religion, food, and music. Spanish and Catholicism have historically provided a zealous sense of national belonging and cultural identity. These national characteristics have also enabled a national ethos to withstand the regional and ethnic differences inherent in the Peruvian population. Before the advent of roads or railways, the sheer difficulty in traversing Peru's geography was one of the greatest obstacles to solidifying a national identity. Since the 1960s, and especially due to a large internal migration toward the major urban centers, regional differences have seemed to present less of a destabilizing peril. This same migration phenomenon also has provided some relief to the divisive hierarchical structure of racial and ethnic differences. Since independence, mainly Indians and blacks, and mestizos to a lesser degree, have suffered the brunt of racial discrimination. This uneven ethnic structure has made it difficult for these groups to fully participate as national citizens and to identify solely as Peruvians. Nevertheless, even with these regional and ethnic differences, a national identity is still solidly in place, most probably also due to the centralized nature of the education system and bureaucratic structures.

***Ethnic Relations.***A Peruvian identity is most firmly found among the white elite and large mestizo communities. The three other ethnic groups—Indians, blacks, and Asians—tend to have much more complex identity formations as Peruvians. Indians above all have faced five centuries of ethnically discriminatory and genocidal practices against its population. Even after independence their general treatment was not radically different. Indians are still portrayed as backwards and inferior and perform the hardest and less remunerative forms of labor. The more than sixty Amazon Indian groups still face cultural extinction as a result of oil exploration, agricultural production, and mining colonizing campaigns.

Afro-Peruvians also have suffered the brunt of racial and cultural discrimination since their emancipation in 1854. Through the lack of opportunities to improve their social situations, most Afro-Peruvians have been limited to rural work or domestic labor. The black community has traditionally occupied the coastal parts of the nation and has its major concentrations along the areas of Chincha (three hours south of Lima) and the neighborhoods of La Victoria and Matute within Lima. Meanwhile, black men in Peru have been particularly enabled to excel as national icons within both local and national soccer teams. This iconization of Afro-Peruvian athletes as national sports heroes stands in sharp contrast with the friction that the community has on the whole encountered as part of Peruvian culture.

Chinese and Japanese immigrants came to Peru in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both groups were brought in to work as rural laborers in the large hacienda/estate holdings. Japanese migrants have experience a more difficult integration because of their lesser tendency to marry outside their culture. The election of a Peruvian president of Japanese ancestry, however, has brought into question many of the traditional assumptions regarding the friction between Asian-Peruvians and their national counterparts. Some analysts have argued that Fujimori was voted into power by Indians and mestizos who saw themselves being closer to an Asian-Peruvian candidate than to one representing the traditional white elite.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

There are three major architectural traditions in Peru. The pre-Hispanic tradition represents all those indigenous architectural traits existing in the territory before the Spanish conquest. The ruins of places such as Machu Picchu in Ayacucho, the temple of the sun in Cuzco, and the ruins of Sacsahuamán, also in Cuzco, solemnly stand as testimonials to a non-Western form of architecture and space dynamics. Pre-Hispanic buildings are made out of stone masonry and are fitted expertly with each other, to such a degree that not even a needle can be pushed in between them. The main constructions of all Inca urban centers are the Inca's palace, the main temple of the sun, and the house for the Acllaconas (females virgins selected for religious service).

The Spanish conquest brought with it a completely different architectural sensibility. In most places pre-Hispanic buildings were destroyed and Catholic churches were built on top of the major Indian temples, such as the convent of Santo Domingo that was built over the temple of the sun in Cuzco. This colonial architecture brought with it many of the styles in vogue in the European courts of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, including that of the Baroque. Some of the best examples of this colonial period are the cathedrals in both Lima and Cuzco, as well as the Church of San Agustín and the residence of the Marqués de Torre Tagle in Lima. Traditionally, the colonial architectural sensibility impacted the whole urban space, creating a central plaza surrounded by the most important buildings in the administration of the city, such as the government palace, the cathedral, the archbishop's palace, and the city government building. The oldest Peruvian cities such as Arequipa, Cuzco, and Lima are the best examples of this colonial style.

Since the nineteenth century, however, a wider notion of modernist tradition has become popular in Peruvian culture. This has meant the expansion of the urban space and the construction of much more architecturally modern buildings and housing



*Lima residents wait to vote for a new mayor. Peruvian voters tend to vote for the most charismatic candidates, not those of a particular party or ideology.*

throughout Lima, but more strikingly in the adjacent city of Miraflores. Banks and other financial institutions throughout the country also are reflective of this modernist trend. These financial towers and their glass constructions are very much indicative of a dramatic shift in the architectural style of Peru.

The urban space, especially that of Lima, changed rapidly in the last three decades of the twentieth century. Lima has experienced a significant increase of its population as a result of inner migrations and the creation of shanty towns ( *pueblos jóvenes*) around its perimeter. People take over abandoned lands just outside the city limits and overnight construct flimsy homes of aluminum steel, plywood, and other malleable materials. Only after the pueblos jóvenes have survived possible forceful removal at the hands of the police will cement and sturdier materials be used for reconstructing the residences.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Peru is known for its distinct cuisine. The daily food customs are marked regionally between the coast and the highlands even though both rely heavily on soups and rice as dietary staples. In this manner seafood and plantains are typical of the coastal diet, while different kinds of meat, corn, and potatoes are much more frequently consumed in the highlands. *Ceviche,*fish marinated in *ají,*a hot sauce made mainly from spicy peppers, tomato, onions and lemon, is an example of a particular Peruvian delicacy. African dishes such as the *cau cau*(tripe casserole) and the *mazamorra*( *chicha*drink made from maize) are particular Peruvian dishes that reflect this tradition more than others. Meanwhile, roasted guinea pig is also an Andean delicacy dating most probably to pre-Hispanic days.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***All Peruvian festivities are accompanied by large levels of eating and drinking, a practice that seems to have a long tradition in both indigenous and Spanish cultures. Typical indigenous celebrations, such as the Inti Raymi (summer solstice), are accompanied by large roasting of meats (such as llama, guinea pig, pork, and lamb) and the ritual drinking of *chicha de jora*(maize beer). Another Peruvian ceremonial occasion, the observation of holy week, has strong food restrictions. During this time the consumption of meat is religiously restricted, providing for a whole array of seafood-based dishes. High on this list of alternative foods are fish and bean dishes, mainly the consumption of cod fish ( *bacalao*), as well as *fanesca,*and the infamous *humitas*(corn and cheese cakes). Humitas are highly regarded since they were originally made only for the holy week observation, but in the last couple of years have become part of the national cuisine found at restaurants and food shops.

***Basic Economy.***Peru is traditionally portrayed as a country with a developing economy dependent upon the export of raw materials and the import of manufactured goods. It is also one of the leading fishing countries in the world and ranks among the largest producers of bismuth, silver, and copper. Traditionally, Peru has also been an agricultural-based society with almost a third of its workforce involved in farm labor. Until the 1980s, Peru had been able to be more or less self-sufficient in terms of food; since then, however, the nation began the large-level importation of wheat, corn, rice, vegetable oils, dairy products, and meat to feed its population. Since the 1980s there also has been a concerted effort, with limited success, to create nontraditional export industries (such as fish meal, shrimp, minerals, and oil) and to manufacture certain consumer goods rather than importing them.

***Land Tenure and Property.***After independence, land ownership remained in the hands of the traditional family elites that had governed the colonial territory. These large landholders maintained the traditional hacienda structure in which the indigenous population and other rural workers labored almost as indentured servants. Since the 1960s large projects of agrarian reform have been implemented, and these radical land transformations have significantly altered the traditionally skewed land accumulation practices. The lack of modern agricultural techniques as well as the limited size of the land plots, however, have impacted negatively on the overall production of these new farming strategies.

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***Commercial Activities.***Hernando De Soto's book, *The Other Path*(1989), was quite influential in making explicit the large place occupied by the informal economy in Peru. According to some, over half of Peru's population is part of this informal economy as noncontractual workers making a living off the streets or in nonregulated small business ventures in addition to street vendors who sell anything from food to flowers, with some of the most typical jobs in the informal sector include car cleaning, windshield wiping, and working in family-owned stores and businesses. But even the other half of the workforce that labors under signed legal contracts must also rely on informal labor (such as selling jewelry, and driving taxis) in their spare time to make enough for themselves and their families to survive.

***Major Industries.***Most of Peru's industries are located within the greater radius of the capital, Lima, even after concerted efforts from the state to disperse their location. Traditionally Peru had provided the labor force and minor raw materials for its assembly industry. However, the recent state tendency has been to provide wider support for industries that meet the national demand for consumer goods, as well as in the laws that regulate the production of cement, steel, fertilizers, processed food, textiles, and petroleum. The support has come in the form of tax relief and trade protection policies that have allowed manufacturing to become one of the fastest growing segments of the economy. The demand for increased manufacturing has been met to some degree, although the fact that many of these incipient industries still fall within the ranks of the informal economy makes it quite difficult for the state to regulate their growth and secure the complete benefits.

***Trade.***Because of Peru's colonial past, trade has always played a major role in the economy—mainly the export of raw materials and the importing of manufactured goods. The United States is by far Peru's most important trading partner, accounting for-one third of all its imports and exports. Western Europe, Japan, Colombia, and Brazil comprise most of the rest of the country's trading relationships. The main products sold to these countries are minerals (silver, lead, copper, bismuth, and zinc) and agricultural products (cotton, sugar, and coffee). Oil has also become a major export item since the 1980s when a large reserve was found in the Amazon basin along with the reserves already being exploited along Peru's northern coast. Both shrimp and other types of fish (anchovies and tuna, for example) also figured high in Peru's exports in the late twentieth century.

***Division of Labor.***In general, the most menial forms of labor in rural and urban settings are reserved for those populations with the lowest social status: Indians, blacks, and mestizos. It is not a coincidence that these populations are the ones with the least amount of formal schooling or secondary education. Meanwhile, political office and high-level financial positions are traditionally occupied by both the white and mestizo elite. These individuals tend to have at least a secondary school education, although the majority of the time the positions are much more a result of family relationships than personal merit. Peru also suffers from a "brain exodus" ( *fuga de cerebros*) since many of its most capable and educated professionals have left the country for better paying and more secure jobs abroad.

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Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Peru does not recognize any official form of caste system but in fact its treatment of the indigenous population can be seen in many ways as an implicit caste arrangement. In this implicit caste system, race and/or ethnicity is the major variable to divide the population into strongly (and after five centuries, voluntarily) enforced groupings. In Peru's racial hierarchy, very much a remnant of its colonial past, whites occupy the highest rung of the ladder while the rest of the population clings to the lowest part depending on their skin color and implied cultural status. Class also plays a significant role in the social structure, superimposing itself upon the skewed racial hierarchy of the country. Not surprisingly, whites tend to occupy the highest positions in the country and also posses the greatest amount of schooling. The class arrangement, however, is somewhat more fluid and



*Apartments in suburban Lima. The architecture of the city is strongly influenced by the Spanish colonizers.*

has allowed for traditionally discriminated individuals to occupy high status positions either in politics or in the arts (nationally recognized writers such as César Vallejo and José María Arguedas were of Indian ancestry). But to a great degree these are individual exceptions that testify to, rather than question, the harsh caste and class arrangement present in Peru.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Language and dress are the most common symbols to designate either caste or class differences in Peru. Native American communities still maintain their indigenous languages such as Quechua, Aymara, and the lesser known Indian languages spoken by the Amazon groups. Many of these Indian communities have also maintained some form of traditional dress that identifies them as belonging to their group of origin. Both the colonial legacy and the contemporary market economy have contributed to widespread competition for Western status markers. The ownership of cars, expensive clothing, knowledge of English or other foreign languages, and modern appliances are typical markers of elite status in contemporary Peru. Meanwhile lower-class Peruvians can be seen wearing secondhand clothes and battling to survive almost on a day-to-day basis.

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Political Life

***Government.***The constitution decrees a popularly elected president serving a five-year term. The president selects the prime minister who presides over the rest of the ministers, who comprise the cabinet. The country also possesses a unicameral legislature of 120 senators, popularly elected to five-year terms. Meanwhile judges are elected to the Supreme Court by the president himself from a list of nominees submitted by the National Justice Council. The judges must be approved by the Senate before they are sworn into office and are allowed to serve until they reach seventy years of age.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Peru, not unlike most other South American nations, is very prone to populism, that is, to vote for and support the most charismatic figures of the political leaders. In the last three decades of the twentieth century alone, there were four such figures who were able to achieve the presidency: Alberto Fujimori (both reelected president and ousted of power in 2000), Alan García Pérez, Fernando Belaúnde Terry, and Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre. Haya de la Torre founded the APRA party (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana), which was also the party of the socialist García, who gained the presidency in 1985. Candidates rather than parties or ideologies, however, are the key voting elements in electing people into office. It is also typical for parties to be formed or rallied around individuals considered to have good chances of being elected.

***Social Problems and Control.***Peru has faced the serious challenge of one of the most ruthless guerrilla groups on the continent, popularly known as the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso). Since erupting in the early 1980s, the armed struggle between the Shining Path and the Peruvian state has cost over thirty thousand lives and has helped to justify the increasing police and military repression. This has meant a greater military presence in the cities and a significant increase in the incarceration of both males and females. In the 1990s jails also became a target of military crackdowns since in several prisons their educational administrations were controlled by the inmates rather than by the police. Also during this decade, because of the increasingly violent threats made on judges, secret trials (where the judges remained hooded) were carried out.

The increase of the cocaine drug trade also contributed to a greater United States presence in the country and more military activity in the eastern Andean slopes where 80 percent of the world's coca used in cocaine production is harvested. Between the guerrilla presence (including that of other groups, such as the Tupac Amaru), drug trafficking, and general conditions of poverty, the judicial system is continuously under attack for its real deficiencies and questionable practices.

***Military Activity.***The Peruvian military is composed approximately of 180,000 persons, divided as follows: the army, 75,000; the navy, 18,000; the air force, 15,000; and paramilitary personnel, 70,000. Almost 2 percent of the gross domestic product is spent on defense. Peru has had major wars with two neighboring countries: Chile and Ecuador. Its first war with Chile (called the Pacific War) in the late 1800s was a great reversal and resulted in a loss of territory for Peru. Its more recent armed struggles with Ecuador in the 1940s, 1980s, and 1990s had a much more positive territorial and diplomatic outcome for Peru. Because of the unstable social conditions, guerrilla warfare, and the drug trade, however, Peru's military in the late twentieth century concentrated more on maintaining internal order than in fighting national wars.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The Peruvian government has traditionally been involved with national health and social security benefits; however, the government has had very limited success in providing Peruvian citizens with adequate care in both areas. In terms of national health programs, the lack of sufficient doctors and nurses, adequate hospital facilities, competent rural medicine agenda, and general funding has contributed to a deficient health system. Meanwhile, shortages of affordable housing, stable labor conditions, and retirement benefits has also impacted negatively with the increase of informal economy and the construction of shanty towns (pueblos jóvenes) around Lima. Modernization, which looks to privatize many of the social services provided by the Peruvian state, has also had a negative impact on social welfare programs.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

The main nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Peru are strongly linked to human rights, ethnic identity, and women's issues. There has also been concerted efforts to encourage and support social welfare programs but they have met with limited results. Among these programs the three most successful have been the *comedores populares*(soup kitchens), *vaso de leche*(glass of milk), and *wawa wasis*(child care centers). There have also been social organizations such as the *asentamientos humanos*linked to the pueblos jóvenes (shanty towns) around Lima. Guerrilla activities (mainly from the Shining Path), however, have seriously limited these organizations' activities by threatening and killing several of its most popular leaders, including María Elena Moyano, an Afro-Peruvian grassroots activist. These scare tactics have even impacted international NGOs making them less willing to support development programs in Peru.

Gender Role and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Men and women have traditionally occupied different labor roles. Since Incan times, women customarily (but not exclusively) were in charge of weaving and minor agricultural obligations while men took care of road construction, farming, and military obligations. A division of labor by gender is even further reinforced today. There are also areas, however, where this division is being blurred. As women gain more training and formal education, traditional occupations



*A farm worker stands in a harvested field holding a threshing fork. About one-third of Peru's workforce traditionally consisted of farmers.*

such as in business, politics, and the police are becoming viable options. At the same time the large local and international migration has left women in charge of households and forced them to get involved in social movements and in the fight for progressive change.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Although some would argue otherwise, Peru could be described as a patriarchal society. Men are preferentially treated in most, if not all, aspects of society. Sons are preferred over daughters, are given more freedom, and are less burdened with household chores and family obligations. In theory men are expected to marry and provide for their families. There are, however, large numbers of female-run households where the mother has to work and provide for her children. Meanwhile, it is a common social practice for men to have other female lovers and children outside of their initial marriage.

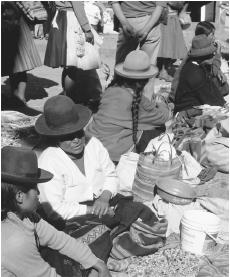
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Marriage, Family and Kinship

***Marriage.***In general, Peruvians have free choice about who they can or cannot marry, with class and money being the two most significant variables in terms of marriage decisions. Many couples decide to live together (as opposed to getting married) because of their lack of resources for carrying out both the legal and religious ceremonies. Lack of economic resources is also a key reason for couples to continue to live with one of the spouses' families until they are financially secure enough to move out on their own. Heterosexual and monogamous marriages are the only ones sanctioned by the state and the Catholic Church, although men having more than one household is tolerated and even expected. Divorce and remarriage are very much a legal possibility but the Catholic Church and the conservative society strongly frowns upon remarriage following a Catholic (or other) religious ceremony.

***Domestic Unit.***The Peruvian model for a domestic unit is the Western nuclear family. Nevertheless, because of traditional indigenous traditions and scant resources, extended kin can also be the norm. Men in general have the highest authority within the house, although women also have much of the decision-making power, especially concerning children and family matters, even though it tends not to be explicitly recognized.

***Inheritance.***Males and females have equal legal rights in regard to inheritance, although in some instances women must either work harder or get



*Market in the Sacred Valley. In Peru's informal economic sector, street vendors sell anything from food to flowers.*

legal representation because their claims might not be taken seriously.

***Kin Groups.***Unlike most urban Peruvians (over two-thirds of the country), the rural populations still maintain strong ties to their extended kin. Many rural populations, even when they have moved to urban centers, recognize their ties to large extended kin groups known as *ayllus*. Since pre-Hispanic times ayllus have defined land distributions, social obligations, and authority figures within each kin group. At present, ayllus still play a powerful part in defining people's roles and obligations in village social structures.

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Socialization

***Infant Care.***The greatest differences in child rearing practices are between the indigenous and white/mestizo populations. Indian mothers tend to carry their infants in colorful slings upon their backs even while performing trying agricultural labor. Indian mothers also openly nurse their children in public places, seeing it as a natural function, a practice that is shunned by the more Westernized mestizo and white mothers.

***Child Rearing and Education.***Boys and girls are strongly encouraged to attend grade and high school although either lack of money or the need for a child's labor at home persuades many lower-class families to keep their children from attending public schools. In general children are brought up to be respectful of their elders, obedient, and hard working.

***Higher Education.***The oldest university in South America is located in Peru. The Universidad Nacional de San Marcos in Lima was founded 12 on May 1551. Public universities have recently suffered from a credibility crisis because of their large graduation numbers and the increasing infiltration of leftist political groups. This has also contributed to the emergence of several private (including Catholic) universities, which have developed much more discriminating characteristics for admissions and graduation.

Etiquette

Possibly as a legacy of the strongly hierarchical pre-Hispanic cultures or European colonialism, self-discipline is strongly advocated among Peruvians. The control of one's emotions and feelings is highly valued among all Peruvians, but especially among men. Respect for elders, shown through such actions as giving up one's seat for elderly people on buses, also has a strong place among public values. These values of discipline and respect for others are in sharp contrast to a political scene marked with great levels of authoritarianism and widespread corruption. Youths are also responsible for providing a strong alternative counterculture to main normative values. This counterculture is mainly expressed through musical outlets, such as the national adaptation of rock and punk music, and North American tastes in fashion and popular culture. Public expressions of sexuality, including that of homosexual behavior, is strongly discouraged.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Peru prides itself on being a Catholic country since the late 1500s. At present, about 90 percent of the population are Catholics while the other 10 percent belong to Protestant faiths, the most important being Evangelists, Adventists, and Mormons. Indigenous communities have also created a symbiotic form of religion not really recognized with any other name than a popular form of Catholicism. Indian groups have mixed Catholic saints with pre-Hispanic traditions, thus allowing them to maintain ancient forms of worship under the guise of Catholic rituals. For example, the indigenous feast of the Inti Raymi (summer solstice) is celebrated in many communities as the feast days of Saints Peter and Paul.

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***Religious Practitioners.***In the Catholic tradition male priests, especially bishops and archbishops, still demand an enormous amount of respect and authority. Nuns come in second place and are well respected for their religious commitment to sexual abstinence, obedience, and poverty. Among Indian communities the shamans, or *brujos/curanderas*are deemed the local counterparts of priests in terms of religious and spiritual authority.

***Rituals and Holy Places.****Huacas*(sacred mountain places) are still deemed sacred deity dwellings that demand the respect and veneration of the indigenous populations. The Spanish Catholic missionaries were very aware of these Andean practices, which is why many Catholic churches were built on top of huacas and other pre-Hispanic temples.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Peruvians' notion of an afterlife very much follows Catholic notions of heaven, purgatory, and hell. Even indigenous groups have been heavily influenced by the Christian notions of Armageddon and rebirth. In Indian communities there are long-standing traditions of millenarians and of the second coming of the Inca ruler to punish the white colonizers. This symbiotic Christian/Andean second-coming myth initially gained strength in the resistance movement of Tupac Amaru that initially challenged Spanish colonialism in the seventeenth century.

Medicine and Health Care

Life expectancy in Peru is sixty-seven years, which is quite high considering the serious deficiencies in the country's public health systems. Only two-thirds of its population has access to public medical attention, and only 25 percent of those living in conditions of extreme poverty. In general, misinformation, poverty, and malnutrition are the greatest impediments to improving the country's health conditions. Since the mid-1980s there has been a concerted effort to combat infant mortality and to implement national infant vaccination campaigns that have proven quite successful. Along with Western medicine there is still a tradition of *curanderos*(natural healers), and *parteras*(midwives) who are still regularly consulted, especially by the rural and Indian population.



*Remaining structures of the ruined city of Machu Picchu, built by the Incas in the Andes.*

Secular Celebrations

The major secular Peruvian celebrations are National Independence Day (celebrated three consecutive days, 28, 29, and 30 July); the Battle of Arica (7 June); and Carnival (a movable holiday celebrated on the three days just before Catholic Lent). Religious festivities with the exception of Christmas used to have a greater level of public celebration than they do in modern times. All holidays tend to be celebrated with large quantities of food, alcoholic beverages, sports (mainly soccer and volleyball), and general gaiety and relaxation.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***Because of the difficult economic conditions of the country, the arts in general are one of the areas the government least supports.

***Literature.***Peru boasts a world-class literary selection of authors, starting with writers such as Ricardo Palma (1833–1919) who was the first to utilize Peruvian themes in his writing. In the twentieth century alone Peru produced such accomplished authors as Ciro Alegria, José María Arguedas, Alfredo Bryce Echenique, and probably the country's best-known literary figure, Mario Vargas Llosa. Meanwhile César Vallejo is hailed as Peru's most gifted poet, and is for many second on the continent only to the Chilean nobel laureate, Pablo Neruda.

***Graphic Arts.***Peru has a long artistic tradition, starting with the famous colonial painting and sculpture schools of Lima, one of the most accomplished schools on the continent. Contemporary artists, such as Fernando de Szyszlo (a painter) and Joaquín Roca Rey (a sculptor), have continued a more abstract tradition.

***Performance Arts.***Theater had an early start in the colonial period and the country also maintains a National Symphony Orchestra, a national ballet company, as well as folk dance companies. Meanwhile, the popular music genre has offered such singing giants as Lucho Barrios, Jesús Vasquez, Chabuca Granda, and Susana Baca, to mention a few.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The sciences in Peru had an early development closely tied to the foundation of the Universidad Nacional de San Marcos in Lima. The social sciences more than the physical have had a more prestigious development, with the work of intellectuals such as Gustavo Gutiérrez (liberation theologist and philosopher), Julio C. Tello (archaeologist), and José Carlos Mariátegui (political philosopher). The country's difficult political conditions as well as the limited resources of the universities have seriously limited the general advancement of the physical and social sciences.

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—O. H UGO B ENAVIDES

**Also read article about**[**Peru**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Peru.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_1)

**Joshua Louis**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative.  
What about more on etiquette ... meeting parents/elders, etc.  
Thanks!

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_2)

**BELITA CRYE**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS ARTICLE IS THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY AND TRUTHFUL THAT I CAN READ LATELY. THANKS AND I ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH.  
CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESS YOUR JOB.  
BELITA.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_3)

**PATTY LIBRIZZI**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I READ YOUR ARTICLE AND IS TRULY AMAZING. VERY INFORMATIVE ABOUT MY CULTURE. THANKS !  
PATTY.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_4)

**Rachelle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article was very useful for my research essay. It has great information on the govenrment and geograpgy and culture, but what about more on sexes? I'm taking social sciences and currently I'm working on roles and values of children. Maybe more information on family life would be of great use. Ohter than that. Fantastic job! =)

Family vacation packages

Rachelle

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_5)

**Amanda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks! great info before meeting the parents (:im sure i'll sound impressive with my knowledge of their amazing culture

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_6)

**Kristen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was very useful. Thank you :) it had everything I needed to know that I was looking for.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_7)

**connor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for the sight. i used it alot on my report and i got a 99%

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_8)

**caitlin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks. this had a lot of info to help me with a project

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_9)

[**Samantha**](mailto:pugly98%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for all the imformative information it was very helpfull adn i am very gratefull for it thx :)

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_10)

**ursula**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
  
I think your website is great, however I belief your article on Peru oversimplifies it's recent history. I think a key element to mention is the military dictatorships of the 20th century which had deep impact on everyday lives since they closed the country to any outside influence for years. I'm no sociologist but I think I could help out a bit since I'm Peruvian and have lived here all my life. Even if I wasn't alive during these dictatorships the impact can still be felt even today. Closing the country meant creating a closed economy which led to largely inefficient industries that were completely devastated when the economy was re-opened in the nineties. This, along with migration to large cities because of terrorism, is also a reason for the increase in food imports.  
  
Also I would like to mention that after Fujimori, the Japanese citizen who was our president for over 10 years and is now in jail for human rights violations and embezzelment, we've had two other presidents. Alejandro Toledo and Alan GarcÃ­a. The last one was reelected. His first term as president was in 1985 and left the country in macroeconomic disaster. Voting is compulsory in Peru and if no candidate reaches the 50% mark then there is a second round with the two candidates with the most votes. GarcÃ­a and Humala were the two candidates with the most votes, followed closely by Lourdes Flores (who would have been Peru's first female president if she won), at almost 30% each. Humala has rather extreme left wing ideas including closing the economy again and restricting many things. GarcÃ­a's reelection was regarded by many as the logical choice/lesser of two evils. Luckily he seems to have learnt from his past mistakes and the country is still a free, macroeconomically healthy place.

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_11)

[**Eddy Princce**](mailto:eprince1985%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very helpful with my research, very informative and enjoyable, thank you.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_12)

[**Diederik van der Wees**](mailto:mooiesneeuw%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nicw work, is there an author and year of publishing I can name, if I want to use it for an essay?  
  
Cheers

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_13)

**jasmine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is an awesome website it is helping me with my school work for peru

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_14)

**Leigh**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for this article. I am in relationship with someone who was born and raised in Peru. I have had a little trouble understanding some of his personality traits and this information has explained alot to me. I have noticed how there is a very strong sense of a dominant male existence. i was born and raised in England where its very similar. males are favored over females and receive very different treatment to the point that females are almost invisible and everything you do is wrong. I have noticed that please and thank you are not a very high priority in there mind and its never verbalized or shown, being appreciative for anything. but this article has explained alot to me and maybe now I will be able to be more understanding to his way of life.  
Thanks again for this information I looked at other sites and articles and did not feel as though anything felt any clearer in my mind but now it is alot better.  
Thanks again

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_15)

**Alan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am a foreigner that has lived in Peru for 15 years and in that time I have devoted quite a bit of time studying it. Your article is bang-on, and a great introduction for anybody who wants to learn about Peru. Kudos!  
  
The only correction that I would make is regarding the Quechua language. While Quechua was indeed imposed by the Incas on those they conquered, in fact, it was not their original language, rather, it was a coastal language that was often used by traders. The Incas, in their wisdom, ADOPTED Quechua in order to use it to unify their rapidly expanding kingdom.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_16)

[**Bob**](mailto:Bobcrob%20[at]%20random%20[dot]%20com%20[dot]%20au)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_17)

**Bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye bye peru is cool

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_18)

**tatiana**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i just really wanted to know tradations in traditional. can u get that

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_19)

[**McKinsey Gonzales**](mailto:mckinseyrenae%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much for providing this great information! It has done a great job in assisting me with my project over Peru for school.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_20)

**beth**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great website with lots of useful info! a very interesting read :)

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_21)

**k foster**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was able to find all the answers I needed to do my research about the country. It is a great resource thanks for making this information available.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_22)

**Barbara Ann Nicholls**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i was told it is a custom to live together and have a baby before getting married. Is this true? Please reply because a man from Peru told me this and friends here have questioned me.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_23)

**PeruvianQueen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi Barbara, I was born and raised in Peru and now live in the US. To answer your question: Having a child/living together before marriage is not a custom at all. Generally speaking, Peru has a very traditional, religious society and the majority of its population is Catholic, therefore living together before nuptials and/or having a child before marriage will be highly discouraged, in fact it would be seen poorly by the rest of society and that person would be referred to as a "concubine" and their love child as a "bastard", just like anywhere else in the Western world. That isn't to say that it doesn't happen frequently but it doesn't make it a tradition, just like in the states it's not a tradition to do that but people make their own choices.  
Hope it helped.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_24)

**teresa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Iam looking for more displays of traditional art designs. Unforntunatly, there were none (that I could find) on your site. I did notice however the information was broad and covered many areas. Thanks, teresa

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_25)

**joash**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I enjoy reading in this site...I've learn a lot about their customs and traditions..

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_26)

**Carlos**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What is the traditions and customs of peru.Reply when you have a chance.

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_27)

**lola**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the info was really detailed and well written, great job! the only thing that i couldn't find was the Peruvian eating habits and how or what they ate at different meals, if you can, it would be cool if you could respond! thanks, lola.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_28)

**bobby**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the info but it wasn't what i needed. have to try another website again.  
  
  
  
  
  
  
thanks,bobby

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_29)

**saletha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

can yo send me all the facts and opinions about peru becuase i need to do a report and you guys are the only site that has good facts and the only site that is a good sitr

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_30)

[**theresa**](mailto:saw_the_tree94%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i want to know their culture. could someone help me with that. i can;t find it anywhere

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_31)

**Josh**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great website I think this is the most reliable website

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_32)

**Maria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is EXTREMELY helpful. It has all the information I need. A lot of other websites don't have what's here. Thank You so much for this.  
I really appreciate it!:)

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_33)

**Jen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow great info thanks :) meeting my cousins soon in Peru and this is very informative THANKS! :) God bless! :)

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_34)

**Cat**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you. This site was very informative and helped me with a project I am doing.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_35)

**Lillian**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What is the educational system for it I am researching  
it and its nowhere on any of its information about  
It's educational system

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_36)

**Sarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very nice! I found a lot on this page that really helped me, the religion part I had a little trouble with, But other than that it was very helpful!!

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_37)

**Brandi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was looking for more on their culture now and the culture of their indigenous people. Also what happened to the indigenous peoples' culture. Is it still around or has it adapted? anyone know the answer or a good cite?  
  
Thanks, Brandi

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_38)

**jervell**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

awesome info, i want to visit Peru. I also love literature and art. i want to be some kind of writing artist. and show the world what i can do ,keep up the magnificent work.

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_39)

**Alison**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very useful article. I am writing a novel about my grandparents who were missionaries in Cuzco in the 1900's. I would love to find more information about basic daily living arrangements such as : how they cooked, how clothes and laundry was washed, how sewage was disposed of, whether homes had electricity or piped water etc. any information or resources would be much appreciated. Thanks

Best clothing retailers

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_40)

**gracie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hopefuly i get an A on my project thanks so much for this website

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_41)

**bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I liked this website it was very helpful  
hope i get an a

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_42)

**Conlan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank You, This Website Was Very Useful for my teams project. Thank You For Your Work

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_43)

**kaitie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for this and I should get an a+ on my report

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_44)

[**Chloe Matejka**](mailto:cloverness15%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like the information on this website! It is helpful!

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_45)

**Smiley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

For those of you that are natives or know a lot about Peru what are the beliefs regarding health and how the family communication/decisions regarding health. Who are the main caregivers? What are the beliefs regarding healthcare? Who are the ones successfully treating loved ones?

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_46)

**Amiah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am so thankful for your help on Peru and now I know everything about it THANKYOU

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_47)

**Jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very nice Article, I'm Peruvian and have resided in the US for the last 20 years and don't know much about my country sadly to say.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_48)

**Ntombzanele**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi: I want to know what is it that is needed to Peru culture if their daughter is getting married. What the side of the bridegroom suppose to buy for respecting the grooms side according to the culture

Family vacation packages

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_49)

**Emma**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have always wanted to go to Peru. I want to be a traveler. This article helped me a lot. Many websites have multi colored backgrounds and that is bad for my eyes. This background was white and did not hurt my eyes as I read it. Thank you.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_50)

**John**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is very eye opening to the diverse history of Peru. I have learned ALOT FROM THIS. Moreover, it was a very interesting read to say the least.

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_51)

**John**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article really sowed me a lot that i did not know previously. I believe this article will be very helpful prior to the trip to Peru.

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_52)

**Joseph manny**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good article, but a little more on art pleace other then that it's good

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html#Comments_53)

**Emma**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

More info on families would be helpful. Especially parent-child relationships.

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

E-mail:

 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

Family vacation packages

[Culture of Peru forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Paraguay](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Paraguay.html)[The Philippines](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of The Philippines

The Philippines

Culture Name

Filipino

Orientation

***Identification.***The Republic of the Philippines was named the Filipinas to honor King Philip the Second of Spain in 1543. The Philippine Islands was the name used before independence.

***Location and Geography.***The Republic of the Philippines, a nation of 7,107 islands with a total area of 111,830 square miles (307,055 square kilometers), is located on the Pacific Rim of Southeast Asia. Two thousand of its islands are inhabited. Luzon, the largest island with one-third of the land and half the population, is in the north. Mindanao, the second largest island, is in the south. The Philippines are 1,152 miles (1,854 kilometers) long from north to south. The width is 688 miles (1,107 kilometers). There are no land boundaries; the country is bordered on the west by the South China Sea, on the east by the Philippine Sea, on the south by the Celebes Sea, and on the north by the Luzon Strait, which separates the country from its nearest neighbor, Taiwan. The closest nations to the south are Malaysia and Indonesia. Vietnam and China are the nearest neighbors on the mainland of Asia.

The islands are volcanic in origin. Mount Mayon in southern Luzon erupted in 2000. Mount Pinatubo in central Luzon erupted in 1991 and 1992. Both eruptions caused destruction of villages and farms and displaced thousands of people from their tribal homelands. Because the country is volcanic, the small islands have a mountainous center with coastal plains. Luzon has a broad central valley in the northern provinces along the Cagayan River and plains in the midlands near Manila, the capital. Mindanao and Panay also have central plains. Northern Luzon has two major mountain ranges: the Sierra Madres on the eastern coast and the Cordilleras in the center. The highest peak is Mount Apo in Mindanao at 9,689 feet (2,954 meters).

The weather is hot because of the country's closeness to the equator. The temperatures are constant except during typhoons. The dry season is from January to June; the wet season with monsoon rains is from July to December. Temperatures are cooler in November through January, dropping below 30 degrees Celsius (85 degrees Fahrenheit). The summer months of April and May have temperatures in excess of 39 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit). Typhoons occur from June through November.

***Demography.***The estimated population in July 2000 was eighty-one million. The average life expectancy is sixty-seven years. Four percent of the population is over age sixty-five. The most populous area is Metropolitan Manila, where eight million to ten million people live.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The official languages are Filipino, which is based on Tagalog with words from other native languages, and English. Since only 55 percent of residents speak Filipino fluently, English is used in colleges, universities, the courts, and the government. The country's seventy to eighty dialects are derived from Malay languages. Three dialects are of national importance: Cebuano in the southern islands, Ilocano in the north, and Tagalog, the language of the National Capital Region. When Tagalog was chosen as the basis for a national language, Cebuanos refused to use Filipino. "Taglish," a mixture of Filipino and English, is becoming a standard language. Filipinos are proud that their country has the third largest number of English speakers in the world. Filipino English includes many Australian and British terms. It is a formal language that includes words no longer commonly used in American English. Spanish was taught as a compulsory language until 1968 but is seldom used today. Spanish numbers and some Spanish words are included in the dialects.



*Philippines*

The dependence on English causes concern, but since Filipino does not have words for scientific or technological terms, English is likely to remain in common use.

***Symbolism.***National symbols have been emphasized since independence to create a sense of nationhood. The Philippine eagle, the second largest eagle in the world, is the national bird. Doctor Jose Rizal is the national hero. Rizal streets and statues of Rizal are found in most towns and cities. Several municipalities are named for Rizal. The most prominent symbol is the flag, which has a blue horizontal band, a red horizontal band, and a white field. The flag is flown with the blue band at the top in times of peace and the red band at the top in times of war. Flag ceremonies take place once a week at all governmental offices. Schools have a flag ceremony each morning. All traffic stops while the flag is being honored. The national anthem is sung, a national pledge is recited in Filipino, and the provincial hymn is sung.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Early inhabitants are believed to have reached the area over land bridges connecting the islands to Malaysia and China. The first people were the Negritos, who arrived twenty-five thousand years ago. Later immigrants came from Indonesia. After the land bridges disappeared, immigrants from Indo-China brought copper and bronze and built the rice terraces at Benaue in northern Luzon. The next wave came from Malaysia and is credited with developing agriculture and introducing *carabao*(water buffalo) as draft animals. Trade with China began in the first century C.E. Filipino ores and wood were traded for finished products.

In 1380, the "Propagation of Islam" began in the Sulu Islands and Mindanao, where Islam remains the major religion. The Muslim influence had spread as far north as Luzon when Ferdinand Magellan arrived in 1521 to claim the archipelago for Spain. Magellan was killed soon afterward when a local chief, Lapu-Lapu, refused to accept Spanish rule and Christianity. Miguel Lopez de Legazpi landed in the Philippines in 1564 and consolidated Spanish power, designating Manila as the capital in 1572. Roman Catholic religious orders began Christianizing the populace, but the Sulu Islands and Mindanao remained Muslim. The Spanish governed those areas through a treaty with the sultan of Mindanao. The Spanish did not attempt to conquer the deep mountain regions of far northern Luzon.

The occupation by Spain and the unifying factor of Catholicism were the first steps in creating a national identity. Filipinos became interested in attaining independence in the middle of the nineteenth century. In the 1890's, the novels of José Rizal, his exile to a remote island, and his execution by the Spaniards created a national martyr and a rallying point for groups seeking independence. Armed attacks and propaganda increased, with an initial success that waned as Spanish reinforcements arrived. The Spanish-American War of 1898 and the defeat of the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay led the Filipino leader Emilio Aguinaldo to declare independence from Spain. The United States paid twenty million dollars to the Spanish for the Philippines under the Treaty of Paris. Aguinaldo did not accept United States occupation and fought until the Filipino forces were defeated. In 1902, the Philippines became an American territory, with the future president William Howard Taft serving as the first territorial governor. Over the next two decades, American attitudes toward the Philippines changed and the islands were given commonwealth status in 1933. Independence was promised after twelve years, with the United States retaining rights to military bases.

The Japanese invaded the Philippines early in 1942 and ruled until 1944. Filipino forces continued to wage guerrilla warfare. The return of U.S. forces ended the Japanese occupation. After the war, plans for independence were resumed. The Republic of the Philippines became an independent nation on 4 July 1946.

The new nation had to recover economically from the destruction caused by World War II. Peasant groups wanted the huge land holdings encouraged by the Spanish and Americans broken apart. In 1955, Congress passed the first law to distribute land to farmers.

Ferdinand Marcos governed from 1965 to 1986, which was the longest period for one president. From 1972 to 1981, he ruled by martial law. Marcos was reelected in 1982, but a strong opposition movement emerged. When the leader of the opposition, Benigno Aquino, was murdered after his return from exile in the United States, his wife, Corazon Aquino, entered the presidential race in 1986. Marcos claimed victory but was accused of fraud. That accusation and the withdrawal of United States support for Marcos led to "People Power," a movement in which the residents of Manila protested the Marcos regime. The Filipino military supported Aquino, who was declared president, and the Marcos family went into exile in Hawaii.

Family vacation packages

The Aquino years saw the passage of a new constitution with term limits and the withdrawal of U.S. military forces in 1991, when the government did not grant a new lease for United States use of military bases.

Fidel Ramos, the first Protestant president, served from 1991 to 1998. Major problems included a fall in the value of the peso and the demands of Muslim groups in Mindanao for self-determination and/or independence. The government offered self-governance and additional funds, and the movement quieted.

Joseph "Erap" Estrada was elected for one six-year term in 1999. The demands of the Muslim rebels escalated, culminating with the kidnaping of twenty-nine people by the Abu Sayyaf group in April 2000. Late in the year 2000, impeachment proceedings were brought against Estrada, who was charged with financial corruption.

***National Identity.***Filipinos had little sense of national identity until the revolutionary period of the nineteenth century. The word "Filipino" did not refer to native people until the mid-nineteenth century. Before that period, the treatment of the islands as a single governmental unit by Spain and the conversion of the population to Catholicism were the unifying factors. As a desire for independence grew, a national flag was created, national heroes emerged, and a national anthem was written. A national language was designated in 1936. National costumes were established. The sense of a national identity is fragile, with true allegiance given to a kin group, a province, or a municipality.

***Ethnic Relations.***Ninety-five percent of the population is of Malay ancestry. The other identifiable group is of Chinese ancestry. Sino-Filipinos are envied for their success in business. They have maintained their own schools, which stress Chinese traditions.

Seventy to eighty language groups separate people along tribal lines. Approximately two million residents are designated as cultural minority groups protected by the government. The majority of those sixty ethnic groups live in the mountains of northern Luzon. People whose skin is darker are considered less capable, intelligent, and beautiful. Descendants of the Negritos tribe are regarded as inferior.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

The architecture of the islands shows Spanish influence. Spanish brick churches built during the colonial era dominate the towns. The churches are large and different from traditional construction. It is difficult to imagine how the indigenous population in the seventeenth century was able to build them.



*Filipino families enjoy close kin bonds, and extended families living together are the norm.*

Family vacation packages

Seaports and government centers had a larger proportion of Spanish buildings with wide verandas and tiled roofs. Towns destroyed during the liberation campaign in World War II, especially in central and northern Luzon, were rebuilt using wood. Areas of Manila destroyed during World War II have been restored to their historical Spanish appearance. Newer buildings in Manila range from standard multistory offices to Western-style gated housing areas for the affluent, to tenements and shacks.

Traditional houses in rural areas are *nipa*huts constructed of bamboo and roofed with leaves from palm trees or corrugated metal. Cinder blocks are the most commonly building material used. The blocks are plastered and painted on the inside and outside when funds permit. Plasterers add decorative touches to the exterior. Older houses have a "dirty" open-air kitchen for food preparation. Newer, larger houses designate a room as a dirty kitchen in contrast to the "clean" kitchen, which has an eating area where utensils are stored. Enclosed kitchens provide a roof over the cook and keep dogs and chickens from wandering into the cooking area. The roof is pitched so that rain will run off. Middle-class houses and commercial buildings have tiled roofs.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Filipinos do not consider it a meal if rice is not served. Plain steamed rice is the basis of the diet. Three crops a year are harvested to provide enough rice for the population, and the government keeps surpluses stored for times of drought. Salt water and freshwater of fish and shellfish are eaten daily, served either fresh or salted. Fish, chicken and pork are usually fried, although people are becoming more health-conscious and often choose alternative methods of cooking. Garlic is added to food because it is considered healthful. Filipino food is not spicy. All food is cooked on gas burners or wood or charcoal fires and is allowed to get cold before it is eaten. Rice is cooked first, since it takes longer. When it is ready, rice will be placed on the table while the next items of the meal are prepared and served.

Best restaurants near me

Table knives are not used. Forks and spoons are used for dining. The food is eaten from a spoon. The traditional method of placing food on a banana leaf and eating with one's hands is also used throughout the country. It is acceptable to eat food with one's hands at restaurants as well as in the home.

Breakfast is served at 6 A.M. and consists of food left over from the night before. It is not reheated. Eggs and sausage are served on special occasions. Small buns called *pan de sol*may be purchased from vendors early in the morning.

At midmorning and in the afternoon, people eat *merienda.*Since Filipinos are fond of sweet foods, a mixture of instant coffee, evaporated milk, and sugar may be served. Coca-Cola is very popular. Sweet rolls, doughnuts, or a noodle dish may be available. Lunch is a light meal with rice and one other dish, often a fish or meat stew. Fish, pork, or chicken is served at dinner with a soup made of lentils or vegetables. Fatty pork is a favorite. Portions of small cubes of browned pork fat are considered a special dish.

Fruits are abundant all year. Several kinds of banana are eaten, including red and green varieties. Mangoes, the national fruit, are sweet and juicy. A fruit salad with condensed milk and coconut milk is very popular on special occasions.

Best restaurants near me

Vegetables are included as part of a soup or stew. Green beans and potatoes are commonly eaten foods. The leaves of *camote,*a sweet potato, are used as a salad and soup ingredient. *Ube,*a bland bright purple potato, is used as a colorful ingredient in cakes and ice cream. *Halo-halo,*which means "mixture," is a popular dessert that consists of layers of corn kernels, ice cream, small gelatin pieces, cornflakes and shaved ice. *Patis,*a very salty fish sauce, is placed on the table to be added to any of the dishes.

Fast food has become part of the culture, with national and international chains in many towns. All meals at fast-food restaurant include rice, although French fries also tend to be on the menu. Banana ketchup is preferred, although the international chains serve tomato ketchup. A national chain, Jollibee, has entered the U.S. market with a restaurant in California, where many Filipino immigrants live. The company plans to expand to other cities with Filipino populations.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.****Léchon,*a suckling pig that has been roasted until the skin forms a hard brown crust, is served at important occasions. The inside is very fatty. Strips of the skin with attached fat are considered the best pieces. The importance of the host and the occasion are measured by the amount of *léchon.*served. Blood drained from the pig is used to make *dinuguan*

Sticky rice prepared with coconut milk and sugarcane syrup is wrapped in banana leaves. Glutinous rice is grown especially for use in this traditional dessert.

Best restaurants near me

Gin and beer are available for men and are accompanied by *balut,*a duck egg with an embryo. Dog meat is a delicacy throughout the country. It is now illegal to sell dog meat at markets because cases of rabies have occurred when the brains were eaten.

***Basic Economy.***Agriculture, forestry, and fishing are the occupations of 40 percent of the thirty million people who are employed. Light manufacturing, construction, mining and the service industries provide the remainder of employment opportunities. The unemployment rate is over 9 percent. Fifty percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The Asian financial crisis resulted in a lack of jobs, and the drought period of the El Niño weather cycle has reduced the number of agricultural positions. It is not uncommon for people to "volunteer" as workers in the health care field in hopes of being chosen to work when a position becomes available. People work seven days a week and take additional jobs to maintain or improve their lifestyle or pay for a child's education. Eight hundred thousand citizens work overseas, primarily as merchant seamen, health care, household, or factory workers in Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Over Seas Workers (OSWs) have a governmental agency that looks after their interests. Laws govern hours of work, insurance coverage, and vacation time, but workers may be exploited and mistreated. Recruitment centers are found in all large municipalities. OSWs send $7 billion home each year, providing 4 percent of the gross domestic product.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Nineteen percent of the land is arable and 46 percent consists of forests and woodlands. Deforestation by legal and illegal loggers with no tree replacement has reduced the number of trees. Large amounts of arable land remain in the hand of absentee landowners who were given land grants during the Spanish colonial period. Although land reform legislation has been passed, loopholes allow owners to retain possession. Those responsible for enacting and enforcing the legislation often come from the same families that own the land. Peasant groups such as the HUKs (People's Liberation Army, or *Hukbong Magpapayang Bayan*) in the 1950s and the NPA (New People's Army) at the present time have resorted to guerrilla tactics to provide land for the poor. There is an ongoing demand to clear forests to provide farmland. The clearing technique is slash and burn. Environmentalists are concerned because timber is destroyed at random, eliminating the homes of endangered species of plants and animals.

Family vacation packages

***Commercial Activities.***The local market is a key factor in retail trade. Larger municipalities have daily markets, while smaller communities have



*Philippine children playing on Guimaras Island. Young children typically live with grandparents or aunts for extended periods.*

markets once or twice a week. Trade at the market is conducted in a barter system. *Suki*relationships are established at the marketplace so that the buyer returns to the same vendor. Markets are divided into "dry" markets where clothing and household items are sold and "wet" markets where food is sold. *Sari-sari*establishments are small neighborhood stores. They are convenient since they have packaged products and are in the neighborhood, but no fresh foods are available there. In larger towns, supermarkets with fixed prices are adjacent to the market. Electronic equipment, furniture, and clothing have fixed prices and are sold in stores or at kiosks. Shopping malls are found in most provincial capitals. Malls with Western shops are found throughout metropolitan Manila.

Best clothing retailers

***Major Industries.***Metropolitan Manila is the primary manufacturing area, with 10 percent of the population living there. Manila and the adjacent ports are the best equipped to ship manufactured goods. Manufacturing plants produce electrical and electronic components, chemicals, clothing, and machinery. The provinces produce processed foods, textiles, tobacco products, and construction materials. Manufacturing in the home continues to be common in remote areas.

***Trade.***Rice, bananas, cashews, pineapple, mangoes, and coconut products are the agricultural products exported to neighboring countries. Exported manufactured products include electronic equipment, machinery, and clothing. The United States, members of the European Union, and Japan are the major trading partners. Imports consists of consumer goods and fuel. The country has mineral and petroleum reserves that have not been developed because of the mountainous terrain and a lack of funding.

Transportation of products is difficult since the highway system beyond metropolitan Manila consists of two-lane roads that are under constant repair and sometimes are washed out by typhoons. Interisland shipping costs add to the expense of manufacturing. Congress, governmental agencies, and the financial community are attempting to find solutions to these problems. The rate of road construction is accelerating and a light rail system is planned. Filipino membership in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional trade organization, is an important factor in the development of trade policies.

Best clothing retailers

***Division of Labor.***In rural areas, lack of mechanization causes the entire family to work in the rice fields. Planting rice seedlings, separating them, replanting, and changing water levels in the fields are done by hand and are labor-intensive. Crops such as tobacco, corn, and sugarcane demand full family participation for short periods during the planting and harvest seasons.

In the cities, traditional roles common to industrialized countries are followed. Men perform heavy physical tasks, while women work as clerks and teachers and in health care.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Filipinos believe in the need for social acceptance and feel that education can provide upward mobility. Color of skin, beauty, and money are the criteria that determine a person's social position. Light coloring is correlated with intelligence and a light-skinned attractive person will receive advancement before his or her colleagues. Family position and patron-client associations are useful in achieving success. Government officials, wealthy friends, and community leaders are sponsors at hundreds of weddings and baptisms each year. Those connections are of great importance.

There is a gap between the 2 percent of the population that is wealthy and the masses who live in poverty. The middle class feels too obligated to those in power to attempt to make societal changes.

Family vacation packages

The people of the Philippines enjoy watching professional basketball played by American professional teams and teams in Filipino professional leagues. Basketball courts are the only sport-site found in every *barangay*and school. Cockfights are a popular sport among men. Cocks have metal spurs attached to the leg just above the foot. The contest continues until one of the cocks is unable to continue fighting or runs away. Cuneta Astrodome in metropolitan Manila is used for both professional basketball and cockfights. Mah-jongg, a Chinese game played with tiles, is very popular, especially with women.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Money to buy consumer goods is an indicator of power. Wealthy people lead western lifestyles. They travel abroad frequently and pride themselves on the number of Westerners they have as friends. Since few people outside Manila have a family car, owning a vehicle is a clear statement of a high social level. Houses and furnishings show a person's social position. Upholstered furniture instead of the traditional wooden couches and beds, rows of electrical appliances that are never used and area rugs are all important.

Women above the poverty level have extensive wardrobes. Sending one's children to the best schools is the most important indicator of social position. The best schools often are private schools and are quite expensive.

Family vacation packages

Political Life

***Government.***The country has a republican form of government that was developed during the commonwealth period. It contains three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The first constitution, based on the United States Constitution, was written in 1935. When President Marcos declared martial law in 1972, that constitution was replaced by another one providing for a head of state, a prime minister, and a unicameral legislature. The president had the power to dissolve the legislature, appoint the prime minister, and declare himself prime minister. A new constitution was approved in a national referendum in 1987. It was similar to the 1935 constitution but included term limitations. The 221 members of the House may serve three consecutive three-year terms, which is also the case for provincial governors. The twenty-four senators, who are elected at large, may serve two consecutive six-year terms. The president serves one six-year term, but the vice president may serve two consecutive six-year terms. The president and vice president do not run on the same ticket and may be political opponents.

The seventy provinces have governors but no legislative bodies. Over sixty cities have been created by legislation. Cityhood is desirable since cities are funded separately from the provinces so that additional federal money comes into the area. Each province is divided into municipalities. The smallest unit of government is the barangay, which contains up to two hundred dwellings and an elementary school. The barangay captain distributes funds at the local level.

Best restaurants near me

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Charges of corruption, graft, and cronyism are common among government officials at all levels. People accept cronyism and the diversion of a small percentage of funds as natural. Rewriting the constitution to eliminate term limits and establishing a strong two-party system are the reforms that are discussed most often. Politicians move from party to party as the needs of their constituencies dictate because the political parties have no ideologies.

Many of the people who are currently active in politics were politically active in the commonwealth era. Men of rank in the military also move into the



*A house belonging to a family of the Igorot tribe in Bontoc. The Philippines are home to approximately sixty ethnic groups in seventy to eighty language groups.*

Family vacation packages

political arena. Joseph Estrada, whose term as president is 1998–2004, entered the public eye as a popular film star. He then became the mayor of a large city and went on to become vice president in the Ramos administration. Previous presidents have had political or military backgrounds, with the exception of Corazon Aquino, the president from 1986 to 1992, who became politically active after her husband was assassinated.

***Social Problems and Control.***The formal system of law mirrors that of the United States. A police force, which has been part of the army since 1991, and a system of trials, appeals, and prisons are the components of the apparatus for dealing with crime. Theft is the most common crime. Because the Philippines has a cash economy, thieves and pick-pockets can easily gain access to thousands of pesos. Petty thieves are unlikely to be apprehended unless a theft is discovered immediately. Another common crime is murder, which often is committed under the influence of alcohol. Guns are readily available. Incest is punished severely if the victim is younger than fifteen years old. Capital punishment by lethal injection was restored during the Ramos administration. Six executions of men convicted of incest have taken place since 1998. Illicit drugs are found throughout the archipelago but are more common in the capital area and the tourist centers. Marijuana and hashish are exported.

An ongoing concern is the desire for autonomy among tribal groups. Mindanoao and the Cordilleras Autonomous Region, where indigenous groups are located, are allowed a greater degree of local control and receive additional funds from the government. Muslim Mindanao has a strong separatist movement. Terrorist groups have developed in support of the movement. In the year 2000, terrorists engaged in acts of kidnaping for ransom, a crime that is common in the country. The government deployed additional military forces to attack terrorist strongholds.

Family vacation packages

***Military Activity.***The armed forces consist of an army, a navy, a coast guard, and an air force. The army includes the Philippines National Police; the navy includes the marines. Military service is voluntary. Public respect for the military is high. Military expenditures account for 1.5 percent of the gross domestic product. Current military activity is focused on terrorist activity in Mindanao. The oil-rich Spratly Islands in the South China Sea are an area of concern that is monitored by the navy. The Spratlys belong to the Philippines but are claimed by several other countries, and the Chinese have unsuccessfully attempted to establish a base there. In 1998, the Philippines signed a visiting forces agreement that allows United States forces to enter the country to participate in joint training maneuvers.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Land reform has been a concern since independence. Spanish and American rule left arable land concentrated in the hands of 2 percent of the population and those owners will not give up their land without compensation. Attempts made to provide land, such as the resettlement of Christian farmers in Mindanao in the 1950s, have not provided enough land to resolve the problem. Until land reform takes place, poverty will be the nation's primary social problem. Eighty percent of the rural population and half the urban population live in poverty. Governmental organizations provide health clinics and medical services, aid in establishing micro businesses such as craft shops and small factories, and offer basic services for the disabled. The number of beggars increases in times of high unemployment. People consider it good luck to give money to a poor person, and so beggars manage to survive.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

While nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) work throughout the country to solve social problems, they are most visible in metropolitan Manila, where they work with squatters. The rural poor gravitate to urban areas, cannot find a place to live, and settle in public areas, riverbanks and garbage dumps. It is estimated that one of every four residents of metropolitan Manila is a squatter. Shanty towns are so large that in 2000, when rains from two successive typhoons made garbage dumps collapse, over two hundred people were buried alive as their homes were swept away. Nongovernmental organizations exert pressure on the government for land on which squatters can build permanent housing. Forced evictions are another target of NGOs, since an alternative place to live is not provided.

Volunteer agencies from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and Japan work with NGOs and governmental agencies. Projects to help children and meet environmental needs are the focus of volunteer efforts. Volunteer agencies are supervised by the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency.



*A farmhouse overlooks vegetables growing on a terraced field. In these volcanic islands, mountains are common.*

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Traditional roles prevail in rural areas, where men cultivate the land but the entire family is involved in planting and harvesting the crops. Women work in gardens and care for the house and children as well as barnyard animals. In urban areas, men work in construction and machine upkeep and as drivers of passenger vehicles. Women work as teachers, clerks, owners of *sari-sari*stores, marketers of produce and health care providers. Occupational gender lines are blurred since men also work as nurses and teachers. In the professions, gender lines are less important. Women attorneys, doctors and lawyers are found in the provinces as well as in urban areas.

Family vacation packages

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***While families desire male children, females are welcomed to supply help in the house and provide a home in the parents' old age. Women's rights to equality and to share the family inheritance with male siblings are firmly established and are not questioned. The oldest daughter is expected to become an OSW to provide money for the education of younger siblings and for the needs of aging family members. Women are the familial money managers. The wedding ceremony can include the gift of a coin from the groom to the bride to acknowledge this role.

Since personal relationships and wealth are considered the road to success, women have an equal opportunity to achieve. Winners of beauty pageants are likely to succeed in the business and professional world, especially if the pageant was at an international level.

Marriage, Family and Kinship

***Marriage.***Marriage is a civil ceremony that is conducted city offices. A religious ceremony also is performed. The ceremony is similar to those in the United States with the addition of sponsors. Principal sponsors are friends and relatives who have positions of influence in the community. The number of principal sponsors attests to the popularity and potential success of a couple. It also reduces a couple's expenses, since each principal sponsor is expected to contribute a substantial amount of cash. Members of the wedding party are secondary sponsors who do not have to provide funds.

Family vacation packages

Arranged marriages have not been part of Filipino life. However, men are expected to marry and if a man has not married by his late twenties, female relatives begin introducing him to potential brides. The median age for marriage is twenty-two. Young professionals wait until their late twenties to marry, and engagements of five to seven years are not uncommon. During this period, the couple becomes established in jobs, pays for the education of younger siblings, and acquires household items. A woman who reaches the age of thirty-two without marrying is considered past the age for marriage. Women believe that marriage to a wealthy man or a foreigner will guarantee happiness. Divorce is illegal, but annulment is available for the dissolution of a marriage. Reasons for annulment include physical incapacity, physical violence, or pressure to change one's religious or political beliefs. Interfaith marriages are rare.

***Domestic Unit.***The extended family is the most important societal unit, especially for women. Women's closest friendships come from within the family. Mothers and daughters who share a home make decisions concerning the home without conferring with male family members. One child remains in the family home to care for the parents and grandparents. This child, usually a daughter, is not necessarily unmarried. The home may include assorted children from the extended family, and single aunts and uncles. Several houses may be erected on the same lot to keep the family together. Childcare is shared. Fathers carry and play with children but are unlikely to change diapers. Grandparents who live in the home are the primary care givers for the children since both parents generally work. Preschool grandchildren who live in other communities may be brought home for their grandparents to raise. Indigent relatives live in the family circle and provide as household and childcare help. Young people may work their way through college by exchanging work for room and board. Family bonds are so close that nieces and nephews are referred to as one's own children and cousins are referred to as sisters and brothers. Unmarried adult women may legally adopt one of a sibling's children.

Family vacation packages

***Inheritance.***Inheritance laws are based on those in the United States. These laws provide that all children acknowledged by a father, whether born in or out of wedlock, share equally in the estate. Females share equally with males.

***Kin Groups.***Because of the closeness of the immediate family, all familial ties are recognized. Anyone who is remotely related is known as a cousin. Indigenous tribes live in clan groups. Marriage into another clan may mean that the individual is considered dead to his or her clan.

People have a strong sense of belonging to a place. A family that has lived in metropolitan Manila for two generations still regards a municipality or province as its home. New Year's Day, Easter, and All Saint's Day are the most important family holidays. Bus traffic from Manila to the provinces increases dramatically at these times, with hundreds of extra buses taking people home to their families.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Infants are raised by family members. Young children are sent to live with their grandparents or aunts for extended periods. People who live outside the country leave their children with the family for the preschool years.

Family vacation packages

Infants spend their waking time in someone's arms until they can walk. They are part of every activity and learn by observation. Someone will remain in the room with them when they sleep. Infant mortality is high, and so great care is taken of babies. Helpers and older sisters assist with the dayto-day care of babies.

***Child Rearing and Education.***Children are seldom alone in a system in which adults desire company



*Workers spread rice on palm mats to dry in the midday sun. Filipinos do not consider a meal complete without rice.*

and do not understand the need for privacy. Children have no pressure to become toilet trained or to learn to eat at the table. They are spoon fed or eat from a parent's plate until the age of six. They must learn respect for authority, obedience, and religious faith. Self-esteem is fostered. A child's first birthday is celebrated with a party.

Filipinos regard education as the path to upward mobility. Ninety percent of the population over ten years of age is literate. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) is the largest governmental department. Approximately twelve million elementary school pupils and five million secondary students attended school in 1999 and 2000. Education is compulsory until age twelve. Statistics indicate that children from the poorest 40 percent of the population do not attend school. Elementary education is a six-year program; secondary education is a four-year program. Pre-schools and kindergartens are seldom available in public schools but are in private schools. Children are grouped homogeneously by ability. First grade students begin being taught in Filipino; English is added after two months. In elementary and secondary schools, reading, science, and mathematics are taught in English while values, social studies, and health are taught in Filipino. Children learn some Filipino and English words from the media. "Linga franca" is an experimental approach in which students are taught in the native dialect and Filipino for the first two years and English in the third grade. This program came about as a response to concerns that English was being used more than were the native languages.

Elementary school, secondary school, and college students are required to wear uniforms. Girls wear pleated skirts and white blouses. Public school pupils wear dark blue skirts. Each private school has its own color. Boys wear white shirts and dark pants. Women teachers are given a government allowance to purchase four uniforms to wear Monday through Thursday. Men wear dark pants and a *barong,*a lightweight cotton shirt, or a polo shirt. Female teachers are addressed as ma'am (pronounced "mum"). Male teachers are addressed as sir. These titles are highly prized and are used by teachers in addressing one another.

Class sizes range from twenty to more than fifty in public schools. The goal is to keep class size below fifty. Pupils may have to share books and desks. Schools may lack electricity and have dirt floors or be flooded in the rainy season. The walls may not be painted. The Japanese, Chinese, and Australians have provided new classrooms, scientific supplies, and teacher training for the public schools. Private schools charge fees but have smaller class sizes. They have a reputation of providing a better education than do the public schools.

Computers are not readily available in elementary or secondary schools although DECS is stressing technology. President Estrada met with Bill Gates of Microsoft to procure computers and software for use in the schools.

Classrooms in both public and private schools have a picture of the Virgin Mary and the president at the front of the room. Grottoes to the Virgin Mary or a patron saint are found on school campuses. School days begin and end with prayer.

The school year runs from June to March to avoid the hot months of April and May. School starts at seven-thirty and ends at four-thirty with a break of one and a half hours for lunch. No meals are served at the school, although the parent-teacher association may run a stand that sells snacks for break time.

Dropping out is a serious concern. In 1999 and 2000, the high school dropout rate increased from 9 percent to 13 percent. The increase is attributed to the need to provide care for younger siblings or to get a job to enable the family to survive the high inflation and the currency devaluation that followed the Asian financial crisis. The DECS has a Non-Formal Education Division to meet the needs of out-of-school youth as well as the needs of uneducated adults. Programs include adult literacy, agriculture and farm training, occupational skills, and training in health and nutrition. Programs for at-risk youth are being added at the high school level. The Open High School System Act of 2000 is designed to provide distance learning via television for youths and uneducated adults.

***Higher Education.***A college degree is necessary to obtain positions that promise security and advancement. Approximately two million students attend colleges and universities. Each province has a state college system with several locations. The University of the Philippines, located in Manila, is a public university that is regarded as the best in the country. Private colleges are found in the major municipalities. The University of Santo Tomas in Manila is a private school that was established in 1611; it is the oldest site of higher education in the country. English is the primary language of instruction at the college level. Colleges and universities have large enrollments for advanced degrees since a four year degree may not be sufficient to work in the higher levels of government service.

Etiquette

People believe that it is one's duty to keep things operating smoothly. It is very important not to lose face. Being corrected or correcting another person in public is not considered acceptable behavior. People want to grant all requests, and so they often say yes when they mean no or maybe. Others understand when the request is not fulfilled because saying no might have caused the individual to lose face. When one is asked to join a family for a meal, the offer must be refused. If the invitation is extended a second time, it is permissible to accept. Time consciousness and time management are not important considerations. A planned meeting may take place later, much later, or never.

Filipinos walk hand in hand or arm in arm with relatives and friends of either sex as a sign of affection or friendship. Women are expected not to cross their legs or drink alcohol in public. Shorts are not common wear for women.

People pride themselves on hospitality. They readily go out of their way to help visitors or take them to their destination. It is of the highest importance to recognize the positions of others and use full titles and full names when introducing or referring to people. Non-verbal language, such as pointing to an object with one's lips, is a key element in communication. One greets friends by lifting the eyebrows. A longer lift can be used to ask a question.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia. More than 85 percent of the people are Roman Catholic. The rosary is said in the home at 9 P.M. , just before the family retires for the night. Children are introduced to the statue of "Mama Mary" at a very early age.

Protestant missionaries arrived in 1901 and followed the Catholic example of establishing hospitals, clinics, and private schools. The Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) is currently the most active missionary group.

Sunni Muslims constitute the largest non-Christian group. They live in Mindanao and the Sulu Islands but have migrated to other provinces. Muslim provinces celebrate Islamic religious holidays as legal holidays. Mosques are located in large cities throughout the country. In smaller communities, Muslims gather in small buildings for services. Animism, a belief that natural objects have souls, is the oldest religion in the country, practiced by indigenous peoples in the mountains of Luzon.



*A roundabout with a fountain sits between old buildings in Manila. Some areas of the city were destroyed during World War II, when the country was invaded by Japan and then liberated by the United States.*

Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution. The disagreement between the Muslim population of the southern provinces and the federal government is not so much about religion as it is about political goals. Non-Catholics do not object to Catholic symbols or prayer in public venues.

Each barangay has a patron saint. The saint's day is celebrated by a fiesta that includes a religious ceremony. Large amounts of food are served at each house. Friends and relatives from other barangays are invited and go from house to house to enjoy the food. A talent show, beauty contest, and dance are part of the fun. Carnival rides and bingo games add to the festivities.

***Religious Practitioners.***Religious leaders are powerful figures. Business and political leaders court Cardinal Jaime Sin because of his influence with much of the population. Local priest and ministers are so highly respected that requests from them take on the power of mandates. A family considers having a son or daughter with a religious career as a high honor. Personal friendships with priests, ministers, and nuns are prized. Clerics take an active role in the secular world. An example is Brother Andrew Gonzales, the current secretary of DECS.

Faith healers cure illness by prayer or touch. "Psychic" healers operate without using scalpels or drawing blood. The several thousand healers are Christians. They believe that if they ask for a fee, their power will disappear. Patients are generous with gifts because healers are greatly respected.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***The major rituals are customary Christian or Muslim practices. Sites where miracles have taken place draw large crowds on Sundays and feast days. Easter is the most important Christian observance. On Easter weekend, the entire Christian area of the country is shut down from noon on Maundy Thursday until the morning of Black Saturday. International flights continue and hospitals are open, but national television broadcasts, church services, and shops and restaurants are closed and public transportation is sparse. People stay at home or go to church. Special events take place on Good Friday. There are religious processions such as a parade of the statues of saints throughout the community.

***Death and the Afterlife.***A twenty-four-hour vigil is held at the deceased person's home, and the body is escorted to the cemetery after the religious ceremony. The tradition is for mourners to walk behind the coffin. A mausoleum is built during the lifetime of the user. The size of the edifice indicates the position of the builder.

Mourning is worn for six weeks after the death of a family member. It may consists of a black pin worn on the blouse or shirt of the mourner or black clothing. Mourning is put aside after one year. A meal or party is provided for family members and close friends one year after the burial to commemorate recognize the memory of the deceased.

All Saint's Day (1 November) is a national holiday to honor the dead. Grave sites are cleared of debris and repaired. Families meet at the cemetery and stay throughout the twenty-four hours. Candles and flowers are placed on the graves. Food and memories are shared, and prayers are offered for the souls of the dead. When a family member visits a grave during the year, pebbles are placed on the grave to indicate that the deceased has been remembered.

Medicine and Health Care

Life expectancy is seventy years for females and sixty-four years for males. The Health Care Law of



*Painted Jeepneys on a city street.*

1995 provides citizens with basic health care at no cost through subsidies. The working poor are given financial assistance when necessary. Children receive inoculations at no cost. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Philippines to be polio-free in 2000. It is the first nation in the world to be recognized for the elimination of polio.

Regional public hospitals provide service to everyone. People who live far away ride a bus for hours to reach the hospital. Funds for ambulances are raised by lotteries within each barangay or are provided by congressmen and are used only for the people who live in that area. Private hospitals are considered superior to public hospitals. Paying patients are not discharged from hospitals until the bill is paid in full. Patients have *kasamas*(companions) who remain with them during the hospital stay. Kasamas assist with nursing chores by giving baths, getting food trays, taking samples to the nurses' station and questioning the doctor. A bed but no food is provided for the kasama in the hospital room.

The infant mortality rate is 48.9 percent, and one-third of the children are malnourished. Over 13 percent of preschool and elementary school children are underweight. A government program provides nutritious food for impoverished pupils at the midmorning break. This is only offered to schools in the poorest areas. National test scores are examined to see if improvement has occurred. If the scores are better, the program is expanded.

The most prevalent health problem is "high blood" (hypertension). One in ten persons over the age of fifteen has high blood pressure. Tuberculosis is another health concern; The country has the fourth highest mortality rate in the world from that disease. Malaria and dengue fever are prevalent because there is no effective program for mosquito control. The number of deaths attributed to dengue increased in the late 1990s.

Herbal remedies are used alone or in conjunction with prescribed medications. A dog bite treated with antibiotics and rabies shots also may be treated with garlic applied to the puncture. The study of herbal remedies is part of the school health curriculum. Many elementary schools have herb gardens that are planted and cared for by the students.

Secular Celebrations

New Year's Day is more of a family holiday than Christmas. It is combined with Rizal Day on 30 December to provide time for people to go home to their province. Midnight on New Year's Eve brings an outburst of firecrackers and gunfire from randomly aimed firearms.

Other national secular holidays are Fall of Bataan Day, an observation of the Bataan Death March in 1942 on 9 April. Labor Day is celebrated on 1 May. Independence Day on 12 June celebrates freedom from Spanish rule. It is celebrated with fiestas, parades, and fireworks. Sino-Filipinos celebrate the Chinese New Year, which is not a national holiday, in January or February. In Manila, fireworks and parades take place throughout Chinatown. Muslims celebrate Islamic festivals.

Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***The government provides support for institutions such as the National Museum in Manila. Libraries exists in colleges and universities. The best collections are in Manila. Museums are located in provincial capitals and in Manila. The Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila is a center for the performing arts that opened in 1970. It is a multibuilding complex created under the direction of former first lady Imelda Marcos, who encouraged musicians to enter the international community and receive additional training. Nongovernmental organizations preserve the folk heritage of the indigenous groups.

***Literature.***Literature is based on the oral traditions of folklore, the influence of the church and Spanish and American literature. Filipino written literature became popular in the mid-nineteenth century as the middle class became educated. The greatest historical literature evolved from the independence movement. José Rizal electrified the country with his novels. During the early years of American control, literature was written in English. The English and American literature that was taught in the schools was a factor in the kind of writing that was produced. Writing in Filipino languages became more common in the late 1930s and during the Japanese occupation. Literature is now written in both Filipino and English. Textbooks contain national and world literature.

***Graphic Arts.***The Filipino Academy of Art, established in 1821, shows early art reflecting Spanish and religious themes. Juan Luna and Felix Hidalgo were the first Filipino artists to win recognition in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. Contemporary artists use a variety of techniques and mediums to reflect social and political life. Crafts reflect the national culture. Each area of the country has specialties that range from the batik cotton prints of the Muslim areas to the wood carvings of the mountain provinces of Luzon. Baskets and mats are created from rattan. Textiles are woven by hand in cooperatives, storefronts, and homes. Banana and pineapple fiber cloth, cotton, and wool are woven into textiles. Furniture and decorative items are carved. Silver and shell crafts also are created

Sex and violence are major themes in films, which are often adaptations of American screen productions. American films are popular and readily available, and so high-quality Filipino films have been slow to develop.

***Performance Arts.***Drama before Spanish colonization was of a religious nature and was intended to persuade the deities to provide the necessities of life. The Spanish used drama to introduce the Catholic religion. Filipino themes in drama developed in the late nineteenth century as the independence movement evolved. Current themes are nationalistic and reflect daily life.

Dance is a mixture of Filipino and Spanish cultures. Professional dance troupes perform ballet, modern dance, and folk dance. Folk dances are performed at meetings and conferences and reflect a strong Spanish influence. Indigenous dances are used in historical pageants. An example is a bamboo dance relating a story about a bird moving among the reeds. People enjoy ballroom dancing for recreation. Dance instructors are available at parties to teach the waltz and the cha-cha.

Music performance begins in the home and at school. Amateur performances featuring song and dance occur at fiestas. Popular music tends to be American. Guitars are manufactured for export; folk instruments such as the nose flute also are constructed.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The physical sciences focus on the needs of the country. Aquaculture, the development of fish and shellfish farms in coastal areas, is a rapidly growing field. Centuries of fishing and dynamiting fish have changed the balance of nature. Hormonal research to stimulate the growth of fish and shellfish is a priority. Control of red tide, an infestation that makes shellfish unsafe to eat, is another area of concentration. Agricultural research and research into volcano and earthquake control are other areas of study. The development of geothermal and other energy sources is ongoing. Other environmental research areas of importance are waste resource management, water resource management, and forest management. The social sciences are focused on the needs of the country with the primary emphasis on resolving the problems of poverty and land reform.

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—S ALLY E. B ARINGER

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_1)

**Praisa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it was good but do you have a topic about phillipine mineral problems or issues......

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_2)

**Julie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the information can really reminds me the culture n traditions of my fellow filipinos!it can help a lot to the filipino students n their History subject!Im looking forward to see more information n details about the Philippine attraction.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_3)

**mai**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

nice article. it is a good reminder for the filipinos to look back on their own history and culture, though it is short, but it has a rich content. i hope i could read more of this kind in the web... mabuhay philippines!!!

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_4)

**Erly G. Reyes**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative, it will help a lot for the filipino students about their own culture and history. hope to read more about this...wow Philippines!...

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_5)

**Joan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

how nice... it is really interesting, this article contribute a lot in my research.. this will help the Filipinos esp. the youth to remind them from our cultural heritage and history. thank you!

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_6)

**kareena**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

that's so good!!!!well,,,im just wondering why there's no topic about history of communication during the japanese, american and spanish era..

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_7)

**Arman Francis V. Avancena**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the information that can be found in this site shows what are the customs and tradition here in the Philippines.. it really help just like to us student to know and appreciate our own way of living and the unique characteristics of the Filipino people as well as the Philippines.

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_8)

**etelinia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative article about the Philippines' culture and society. How Philippines developed as a nation and made its mark as Republic through fighting for independence and wanting to established the Philippines as a nation. Eventhough most of the traditions and beliefs are hand over by the colonialization of Spainish and American, distinct characteristics of the Filipino and exotic traditions were being maintained and practiced like being hospitable with a sense of pride, sharing a candid smile to everyone and the evolution of "Bayanihan" (helping in times of crisis) in todays era. Truly, I believe is so FILIPINO....

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_9)

**yvonne**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very nice article it really helps me in my research work.. it would help also to all filipino,especially to the filipino youths to know our own history and own culture..

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_10)

**susan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

is there anything about culture i mean like cultural traditions?

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_11)

**princess**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i found your article to be very interesting. You seem to tie up basic information about the philippines and the filipinos.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_12)

**ralph sabatano**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

im here visiting cebu,met a lady,also was married prior,what is the best or faster way to take her to the states,and how much is an annulment?she is seperated for 5 years now.also has a child while workin abroad not filipino.thank you

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_13)

**maley tampipi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

do you have some brief explanation about the Period of New Society in Philippine Literature Period?

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_14)

**Lexine Cheng Uy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website is very informative i tried all the other sites but none of them were as detailed and interesting as yours

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_15)

**ash**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is something on the philippines. this is for my project. this is a pretty good site to us for my paper. i need to e-mail this to my self.i need this for my five hundred to fifty hundred word easy. this is a very important website for me to use. thanks for letting me use it.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_16)

**jeff**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the details are amazing. i'm a filipino and this article is very informative. thanks a lot :)

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_17)

**mathonee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very informative. thank you! i am reminded of the old traditions in the country - philippines!

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_18)

**roxanne-nicolai**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this helped me alot on my presentation. about the philippines.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_19)

**Carol**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great article! While reading this, I sort of looked back to all the events that I had experienced as a Filipino and at the same time discovered something new which made me think I still have a lot of things to dig in my own country .Thinking of upgrading my camera to capture new moments, new adventures in the near future...

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_20)

**jestle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative article about the Philippines' culture and society. This article help me a lot about my project an i learn about the culture of the Philippines and how the Filipinos live.thanks a lot:]

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_21)

**gherlie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey nice article we better love our nature and culture keep up

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_22)

**joyce ann**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i have learn a lot being part of a filipino since i am truly proud from where i came from...it made me strong enough and fight from my own land.............

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_23)

**SHARPIE**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHERS CULTURE TO REALLY UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER... CONTINUE TO WRITE AND TELL OTHERS OF THIS AMAZING CULTURE!  
-ME

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_24)

**melissa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hmm...tnx for the info this article really help me a lot..i have a report report today on my history I but i cant find any article detailed as yours..

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_25)

**Loren**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This information really helped me! I'm doing my project on the Philippines and I got of my information from here. It's very descriptive:)

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_26)

**Jehanne**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very interesting article. It helps a lot to us students and to all Filipinos as well. I must say, I am so proud to be one of the Filipinos in the World!

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_27)

**Peter Tamayo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Just came back to Hawaii January 26, 2010 and I wanted to see how the filipino's live there lifes. As soon as I get photo's develop I will write article about a community of 200 families that live south of Lagoa PI. Some people may want to hear a different story. This is where my second wife was born and came out of poverty and went to Hawaii a over priced state.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_28)

[**rogielyn\_palanan**](mailto:ghielyn_23%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

nice article..very interesting!tnx a lot 4 a very good information..godbless and more power.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_29)

[**Jmack**](mailto:j_mack_18%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey! cool philippeines I had visited. wow! totally great there. I love the culture especially the t'boli tribes in the philippeines. I also meet the cool group called culture eight. I want to return and have my cool adventure there. The 7,107 islands to explore and the wild place. I really canmt forget that country so much.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_30)

[**mara kimberly b. malaluan**](mailto:khimmorena%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow! :) the information that can be found in this site shows what are the customs and tradition here in the Philippines.. it really help just like to us student to know and appreciate our own way of living and the unique characteristics of the Filipino people as well as the Philippines.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_31)

[**AgNixus**](mailto:silver_nixus%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the article is very good. it's informative. i hope for more articles that feature Filipino cultural heritage, particularly of those societies which are rarely recognized. i believe this could really help Filipino students to better understand and appreciate more the uniqueness and complexity of the Filipino culture.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_32)

[**Mcardon**](mailto:marikit%20[dot]%20cardon%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this article has opened my eyes, i was born in the Philippines, but I was raised in the Hawaii at the age of 5 didn't know anything about my filipino culture till I read this article of yours. I'm very much thankful and at the same time very proud of being a filipina.

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_33)

[**alexa**](mailto:garciaanalyn75%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

...i think my knowledge about Philippines history is already complete because of this article, thank you for the writer/s ...Mabuhay kayo!!!

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_34)

[**Max**](mailto:maxdale%20[at]%20ymail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This one is a really good source of information. I'm a college student here in CA and just finished on my Persuasive speech about the Philippines. The topic i just worked on makes me proud of where i belong, i will wore half the Igorot custom in front of the class, and I felt the sense of pride while i'm wearing and discuassing to the class about the Philippine culture, traditions, foods. places, people. and many many more. I hope other Filipino like me will be proud of their ethnicity too cause i feel bad about other Filipinos who is shy in representing their nation and ethnicity...

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_35)

[**esther**](mailto:esther%20[at]%20itrixx%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A lot of the information you published are indeed correct and quite helpful but I also found a lot of information which are outdated and incorrect. i.e. not every Filipino eats cold, leftover breakfast. Sausage and eggs are not eaten only during special occasions. They are practically eaten everyday for breakfast by some/most Filipinos. Yes, some men and women are drivers and teachers and sari-sari store owners in the city but there are also Filipinos who are employed in high paying, high ranking jobs. Men and women hold executive positions even in international companies. These and some other information can be misleading especially to Filipinos who are trying to discover their roots. I would be happy to lend a hand in editing some of the parts if you'd like. Oh, and the literal translation of "halo-halo" is mix, mix. Halo-halo describes the action one makes when eating this dessert. A person has to mix all the ingredients together before taking a spoonful of the mixed sweets.

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_36)

[**brad**](mailto:mcculley%20[at]%20plsinfo%20[dot]%20org)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Love your site but in the references area the url for Country Watch is incorrect, thanks

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_37)

[**in-in mansueto**](mailto:mekaymansueto%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the article you have published, its very helpful particularly for the history students.., hope that this site can publish more about the history of the Philippines.

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_38)

**Bren**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Cool website.am planning on joining a university in the Philippines and it helps to know a thing or two about where am going.keep it up!..could u next time include something on the social life?that wud help alot.thanks.

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_39)

[**john michael agad**](mailto:jmassitaly%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it was fun reading this. many things now are somehow clear to me. there are lots of informations.

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_40)

[**anj**](mailto:Anne_teach%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the information..very informative...God bless

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_41)

[**Sally**](mailto:ttrgfehbh%20[at]%20comcast%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i saw a ugly boy in this. I hope i do not see this agen.

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_42)

[**nazish**](mailto:nazishilyas17%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

in this artical shows philippines culture but not show the infolance of diffrent relegion on philippnis culture

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_43)

[**joe-anne**](mailto:sassy_joanna17%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i got more ideas from this topic, nice article..itz essay to understand what our culture is..

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_44)

**nikki**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi,i'm fillipino and i want to know how manilla looks like and what they do and what trhey learn in the schools.so im from hawaii please tell me thank you

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_45)

[**Suzette Olson**](mailto:solson425%20[at]%20fuse%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What holiday does Filipinos celebrates on November 29th & 30th?  
Thanks!

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_46)

[**joe**](mailto:sponge_joe19%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it was good but do you have a topic about the criteria of the Philippines?

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_47)

[**Jay**](mailto:jay22%20[at]%20mail2world%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

@suzette olson- hi, im jay from Philippines. Actually, November 30 (original date of celebration) is Bonifacio Day, a legal holiday(Andres Bonifacio-highly honored hero here in Philippines) in accordance with the Republic Act no.9492.On the other hand, November 29 is non-working day (moved-date) as declared in celebration with superseding act under presidential proclamation.TC

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_48)

[**bonifacio**](mailto:boni%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com%20[dot]%20ph)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative, but we have to face the reality, if the government will do the same way as what the NGO's do for our indigent brothers. We can be much better. Mabuhay lahat ng service organization!

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_49)

[**Halle**](mailto:jennabean%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The article was awesome It really helped me with my project it got me a A++

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_50)

[**vanessa**](mailto:ljkindipan2000%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this information was great for my progect ithas lots of information. i got alevel 4 and a a+

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_51)

[**ninkz**](mailto:ninkygarcia_28%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this article helped me a lot for my assignment in sociology. thank you so much!

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_52)

[**Phoebe**](mailto:pb_kris_25%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was of great help for me. I really appreciate how you've shared so much information to the public. Thanks.! =>

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_53)

**katkat**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for this article ! im doing a thesis right now and this helps a lot !  
i just wanna know when was this article written and whats the name of the author. ! THANK YOU !

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_54)

[**Maan**](mailto:empress_knight18%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like this page.. it so intresting.. but i think not all part from history was written there... like some situations that usually needs explanation to understand... and i just want to ask and to know about this.. "on spanish era in philippine.. what are the socio-cultural values that are used and practiced for leadership??"

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_55)

**marie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like it,very much...i learn a lot from this article.tnx to the author!

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_56)

**Ralph Hunter**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very good article.  
I will be moving to the Philippines  
Although a lot of the information here I already knew, the explanation made it Clearer.  
In addtion to many things, I never knew.  
Great Article  
Thank You

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_57)

[**rufel**](mailto:rufel_18%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks! it really help us a lot like us MA student...  
PS.may you include attitudes,beliefs,values of Filipinos and of course recent explosion of social beliefs.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_58)

[**Chris Aguilar**](mailto:fortress76%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is a very informative section where i could share new learnings to my students by rediscovering my native land

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_59)

[**Elamae**](mailto:stacie_elamae26%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is so informative! So helpful i had to do a poster for our country(Philippines) for my homework coz most  
people in New Zealand know a little info about us!!! Thanks ^\_^

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_60)

[**emil**](mailto:boyong%20[dot]%20batibot%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the info..but do you know any problems about dialects in the philippines? something like places or provinces that dont understand other dialects???

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_61)

[**amanda**](mailto:roe%20[dot]%2030%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm trying to find out about the beliefs of single women being friends with married men. I was wondering if it is frowned upon in their society?

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_62)

[**Paul Bryan Becera**](mailto:becerapb%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative article about my Philippines. This help me on my presentation for a russian people.

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_63)

[**Bart Abaya**](mailto:barter%20[dot]%20trader%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

In the United States barter is a $6 billion industry. The majority of this business is done through local area barter exchanges scattered throughout the country.  
  
Barter allows businesses to buy the goods and services they need - without spending cash. In a barter exchange the business members buy what they need and pay for it with what they have. The barter exchange is the third-party record keeper. The exchange helps the transactions to happen and creates a currency system so that trades do not have to be direct or one-to-one.  
  
Bartering allows a business to make purchases it would otherwise not have been able to make if the business had to spend cash. If your company has excess inventory, extra time, space or services, barter is an excellent way to move those goods or services. Barter brings new customers and additional income that can be spent with other barter members to conserve cash.  
  
A Barter Exchange serves as third-party record keeper - (similar to a bank recording system of debit credit). Barter exchanges use a currency called barter money or trade credits (1 trade credit = 1 peso). Businesses buy and sell in the network using barter money or trade credits .  
  
For additional information: BEX Barter exchange Philippines email barter.trader@yahoo.com  
  
Note:FREE Accreditation/Membership

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_64)

[**Ann**](mailto:angela_smile99%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

uhmm ..i just want to know how geography affects the developmet of Filipino Civilization .. pls. answer a.s.a.p !!

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_65)

[**presna pearl gabaon**](mailto:pearl_biblereader%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the update...truly Philippines is very historical..

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_66)

[**R-Lyn-Mae**](mailto:srlynmae%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey i think it is very interesting.  
do you think it is interesting?

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_67)

[**janapee**](mailto:janapee%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks... very informative...  
maraming salamat. mabuhay ang mga Pilipino...

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_68)

[**angel**](mailto:angeltumakay%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

If i wish sinulog will be preserve until to the next generation..u if some one will ask u what kind of culture u want to preserve??what will be your answer.. BY the way i'm from CEBU..!!

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_69)

[**gly**](mailto:osia_07%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

keep it up...it is good but it is better if you have included more pictures from the other barrio's

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_70)

[**ino yamanaka**](mailto:lucky_bacayo%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this helped me alot on my presentation. about the philippines.

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_71)

[**jezreel tabago**](mailto:joz_good%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i ask the question" what is the non material culture in mindanao because this is my research about my subject society and family planing. .i need more knowledge obout traits in mindanao thak you. .:)

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_72)

**Natalie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Could you please tell me who and when this article was written??  
  
Thank You

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_73)

[**Greg**](mailto:2012wildcat%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Would like to have a section about there diet, housing, transportation, types of energy used, etc. Other wise more information on what makes their ecological footprint.

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_74)

[**jessie pepito**](mailto:pepetojessie48%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it is very interesting Philippine history throughout the ages.

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_75)

[**Menchie**](mailto:taglemenchie%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its very informative article. Hope to read more about it.

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_76)

[**daisy tenollar**](mailto:tenollardaisy99%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

the article is very nice. I have learn so many things about my race as a Filipino I should be responsible thank you

[**77**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_77)

[**NOEL**](mailto:leonj_llamar1357%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com%20[dot]%20ph)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice presentations of the Pgilippines. I am looking for a possible site where I can browse photos of Filipinos during the spanish, japanese and American regime. Where could I find those photos if ever there are?

[**78**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_78)

[**Evangeline Kate Summers**](mailto:princessjoan_aurora%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I Love your article about Philippine Cultures and many more...I 'm very satisfied about your article, it's fascinating and all and I'm delighted to read about your topics about the cultures and history about Philippines, because it's inspire me to love and read about my own nation...Thank you very much, you really helped us a lot about your topic...even about my assignment in Social Science, my teachers are impressed about the Philippine Culture...SO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR SHARING YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM...And may God Bless You Always!!!

[**79**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_79)

[**Evangeline Kate Summers**](mailto:princessjoan_aurora%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I Love your article about Philippine Cultures and many more...I 'm very satisfied about your article, it's fascinating and all and I'm delighted to read about your topics about the cultures and history about Philippines, because it's inspire me to love and read about my own nation...Thank you very much, you really helped us a lot about your topic...even about my assignment in Social Science, my teachers are impressed about the Philippine Culture...SO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR SHARING YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM...And may God Bless You Always!!!

[**80**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_80)

[**Tony Williams**](mailto:tony_williams%20[dot]%20portsmouth%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

As an English guy I love this site! I am a retired English teacher (I help foreign students learn English). I am etting Married to Mercy at Christmas. and for the first time in 50 yes 50 years have finally found true true love. I have a house in Cavite and I live in a Filipino community as I don't want to live with other "Foreigners" separately from Filipinos (too much back-biting). Here in Lavanya I live with REAL genuine Filipino people and I receive much more respect and love than I get here in the UK. You Filipinos are GREAT WONDERFUL people.  
If you are a "foreigner" and have an open mind and an open heart then this really is the country for you!! Send me an email to know more. Kind regards, Tony Williams

[**81**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_81)

[**joana capili**](mailto:joana_capili%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

HOW A NICE ONE. IT IS REALLY TRUE. FILIPINO IS REALLY HELPFUL ONE AND GENEROUS ONE...\  
IN EVERY CHALLENGES FILIPINO CANNOT GIVE UP. AS A FILIPINA IAM SO PROUD OF THE FILIPINOS. PROUD TO BE PINAY.

[**82**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_82)

**cha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

really nice article... i learned a lot... the things you said here are true, hope you can add more like the different festivities we have other than the ones listed here. Thanks!

[**83**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_83)

[**edgar**](mailto:urbina%20[dot]%20edgar64%20[at]%20ymail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i need more information about philippines please help me that would help alot

[**84**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_84)

**mondoi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think it would be better if you have included in your article the different societal and educational changes that had happened in the Philippines.

[**85**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_85)

[**michtalaba**](mailto:michtalaba%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

and i really proud that i am PINOY because i deliver it so much,i made my family proud because i finish the course of education because i believe that the history of the PHILIPPINES is to broad,., College education usually takes four, sometimes five and in some cases as in medical and law schools, as long as eight years. Graduate schooling is an additional two or more years. Classes in Philippine schools start in June and end in March. Colleges and universities follow the semestral calendar from June-October and November-March. There are a number of foreign schools with study programs similar to those of the mother country.Not among of us are rich and poor but i cant say that i am not rich

[**86**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_86)

**Yasmine I. Hussein**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it was nice to know the whole information about Philippines but do you know anything about the clothing of the working class during the Spanish era cause yea we have a presentation and we really need a dress please. help !!

[**87**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_87)

**angela magdayao**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow super informative, i'm sure that every people who read these will amaze, i love it

[**88**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_88)

**Kelechi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Beautiful write up, very informative. It seems Filipinos and the Ibo tribe in Nigeria are basically the same people living in different continents. this calls for more research!

[**89**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_89)

[**Rhaeven Ortiz**](mailto:rhaevenortiz%20[at]%20ymail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

How do Malays lived and survived in the Philippines?Do they already invent many and other things?  
Did they hunt wild animals?Did they invented school,Malacaniang palace,the Philippine flag,and abacus

[**90**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_90)

**Adriana**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Do you know the name of the person who wrote this article???

[**91**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_91)

**Angela Lee Manlangit**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow, I love this article so much, although Im not through reading it. It helped me a lot not only on my homework but also to know my country better it written simply but quite complete..thanks.Gog bless..I hope you could write more =)

[**92**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_92)

**Geovert John D. Labita**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

is there any agricultural side? i want an agricultural side so i can study it, it is also part of the Philippines..

[**93**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_93)

**michael bustarde**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

food consumptions,,,the traditional way of cooking,,,give me some ideas what are the preparation if they use artificial seasonings or they cooked it in natural way

[**94**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_94)

**oliver c Ngwuli**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It gives me Joy to read the wonderful people on Earth .I will really enjoy your land as a visitor .Hold your culture .People without culture are not human beings

[**95**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_95)

**chris middleton**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Fascinating analysis and well written - thank you. I'm particularly interested in the trends changing Filipino society, especially relating to women. How are their attitudes and behaviours changing concerning: family, food, social life, success and particularly health? Would the author be open to discuss these issues on the phone with me? Thanks again!

[**96**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_96)

**juwairiya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative...fascinating and wonderful...helps me in my research work about the cultures of different tribes... do you know the traditional conflict resolution strategies of muslims in mindanao? Thanks...

[**97**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_97)

**cora**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it very good culture it help some some os stuednt to search about the filipino culture

[**98**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_98)

**Donkor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great read. Learning about different cultures around the world is amazing to me. Especially when it comes to fighting for freedom and developing a unique culture. Visit donkordesigns.com to view my art of different cultures around the world

[**99**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_99)

**Deanna Murdorf**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I want to thank you for the wonderful information that has been provided. I am a Filipino born and raised in the United States and I have learned so much about the Filipino culture from this article.

[**100**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_100)

**clint s. ilarde**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

its interesting so much i love being a filipino citizens.

[**101**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_101)

**mark john t. pepito**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

being born in this beautiful country(PHILIPPINES), is enough for me.But after reading this article, i know that there's a lot of things that can make me proud as a FILIPINO. thanks a lot.

[**102**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_102)

**gagah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

so wonderful informative...love it.fascinating analysis.

[**103**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_103)

**eden idolor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WOW! IT'S NICE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE PHILIPPINES, ITS INTERESTING AND I WANNA GO THERE!!

[**104**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_104)

[**Lolita T. Dalmacio**](mailto:lolita_dalmacio%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

We like your website. It is educational. It help some students to know more and more about Filipino culture.

[**105**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_105)

**Kimpee Blahing**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow!, What a nice, informative and interesting article. it's really good reference. thank you for the information... you give deep, broad and concrete knowledge regarding our culture.

[**106**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_106)

[**Violeta C. Panes**](mailto:violypanes%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like this, it helps me in my research task and is very informative. Mabuhay Philippines!

[**107**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_107)

[**JOSEFINO A. RONQUILLO**](mailto:jojoronquillo%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com%20[dot]%20ph)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WHAT A NICE FEELING BEING A FILIPINO. AND I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST THAT SOME FILIPINO CULTURES NEED TO REVISIT, TO BE MORE CULTURALLY DIVERSED IN THE WORLD'S CULTURE MAPS

[**108**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_108)

**ramon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

just confused bout you mentioned that filipinos worked 7 days a week plus taking extra job?

[**109**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_109)

**pjb**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank You For Making This Article. GOD BLESS PHILIPPINES!

[**110**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_110)

**MARJUN LEGASPI**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

TNX FOR THIS AETICLE...VERY NICE.. IT HELP ME A LOT..:)

[**111**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_111)

**starlife L. asi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

perfect. very comprehensive. I am going to use this in my lectures about Philippine society and culture. Thank you for providing a very comprehensive information.

[**112**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_112)

**Audri**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This helped me so much with my Cultures Project for school! Who wrote this anyway?

[**113**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_113)

**mark**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WoW !! this article helps me lot thanks to the people who wrote it.

[**114**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_114)

**Hailey Frank**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANKS.This article was just what i was looking for. But could you by chance have some info by the culture? Thank you for spending you time to read this!

[**115**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_115)

**elvi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for the informations but i think the statement about the left over food for breakfast is not true. Maybe you just observed it from the other houses but, "we reheat" it and we call it "sinangag".

[**116**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_116)

**RAIN**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I HOPE THAT YOU HAVE AN EXAMPLE OF TRADITIONAL DRAMA, BECAUSE ITS WHAT I NEED, BUT STILL, THANKS.

[**117**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_117)

**Jelyn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i'm filiphino i missed alot of cultures and history and i am so thankful to read them because i have alot to learn of my country. thank you

[**118**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_118)

**love**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Filipinos are highly unique, this help me to answer the questions in our research...

[**119**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_119)

**Nandito B. Espinosa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for a wonderful and useful information. these really help me a lot in my paper works in my subject.  
how i wish it will stay longer, so it could help to other students like me and other who share the same interest.

[**120**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_120)

**Joseph Armagh Alvarez Ebio**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I THOUGHT MY TEACHERS FROM ELEMENTARY, HIGH SCHOOL, UNTIL I GRADUATED IN COLLEGE HAVE GIVEN ME ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE PHILIPPINE GEOGRAPHY BUT AFTER I FINISH READING ALL THE INFORMATION IN THIS ARTICLE, NOW I HAVE LEARNED MORE THAN THEY HAVE TAUGHT ME. I WANT TO THANK THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK FOR SHARING US A KNOWLEDGE THAT NOBODY CAN TAKE AWAY FROM US FOREVER. WE FILIPINO'S ARE THE BEST PEOPLE IN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD. MABUHAY TAYONG LAHAT!

[**121**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_121)

**Niall's bby**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative thank you vry much, this is EXACTLT what I need for our subject (Geography)

[**122**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_122)

**Lady Antoniette Ingco**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article was nice because it's a good reminder for us(Filipinos) to look back on our own history and culture. Thank you for this article I learned a lot about our culture and this helped me in my assignment.  
  
Contributor: OurHappySchool

[**123**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_123)

**John Kevin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was interested about Philippine history when I was in High school. I never thought that there's more about our history. Some of the history and ethics that I just learned here. This is very useful.  
  
  
John Kevin  
Contributor: OurHappySchool

[**124**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_124)

**michael**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is indeed a very informative article.However I would suggest if you can include also the cultural beliefs in housing in very region.

[**125**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_125)

**tara**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it was good but i was wondering "how do people interact with the landscape (past and present)?

[**126**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_126)

**Ronnie Villasi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

GOOD JoB!!!  
Can you make also a blog stating the countries and their contribution to the culture of the Philippines??? Suggestion!!

[**127**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_127)

**ysaymishoo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT WAS GREAT!! thank you for doing this article, it gave me ideas regarding to my report about Filipino culture and traditions..you did a great job! tenx again

[**128**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_128)

**jigshe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow! It's really informative! It helped me a lot! Some of my friends and I are writting Asian history in Tibetan this year. This article gave me a lot of information about Philippines! Thank you ver much!

[**129**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_129)

**Mary Rose**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

So much info thats important. Im probably going to get a good grade on this test. I thank the author!

[**130**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_130)

**jestoni**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i learn so much from this site and im very glad to read this article because i was able to share my ideas in the class. :)

[**131**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_131)

**jenny**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it was great in showcasing what really filipinos are and can be proud of:)))

[**132**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_132)

**shakira**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT WAS AMAZING I LOVED IT! good ues of information well done would wouldnt know all these facts with out you!

[**133**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_133)

**Rose Ann Ditchon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I took the reading too long but very informative..it refreshes my memory based on traditions and cultures we have as Filipinos...now I know that I maybe die after my fiance because of the life expectancy for males..thank you for our contributors and sponsors for still supporting the Philippine nation in many needs...that's why our politicians still doing the same act as past politicians did in ancient times..

[**134**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_134)

**abner**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was interested about their philippine history,when I was a High School level!!!some of history and ethics i just learned here :)

[**135**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_135)

**Zaw Lynn Aung**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is indeed the useful website as I am in a hurry to know the culture of Southeast Asia Countries' culture to teach my students. Thanks a lot.

[**136**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_136)

**FLORVIN A. BAYABORDA**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WoW !! this article helps me lot thanks to the people who wrote it.

[**137**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_137)

**Arleen C. Manalo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

beautiful and pleasant our culture it is really impormative .

[**138**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_138)

**Don Sherwyn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for your comprehensive historical, political, social, and cultural background article. I am engaged to and plan to marry a lovely Filipino lady in the next month or so. Your article's information has expanded my knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for the Philippines and its wonderful people ten-fold. I noticed that much of the data topped out at the 2000 or early 2000's time-frame. It will be most helpful to people like me if you could put some resources on updating the article with current historical, cultural, social, and other developments. Thank you and your agencies for putting together such a marvelous study of the Philippines!

[**139**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_139)

**mae irabon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i cnt believed how beautiful our country is..we've been too far yet i cnt imagined what a moment i had every time i go home in my homeland..i love Philippines my beautiful land!!

[**140**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_140)

[**dexter**](mailto:dexjames%20[at]%20GMAIL%20[dot]%20COM)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WHAT A NICE INFORMATION.IT HELPS ME DOING MY PROJECT EASILY. THANKS FOR THIS USEFUL WEBSITE.

[**141**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_141)

**Harley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks to ur article it really helps a lot on my project in english about filipinos!!!  
You did a great job! CONGRATS!  
Its more fun in the Philippines!!!

[**142**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_142)

**Trebor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great article, very usefull and very interesting information

[**143**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_143)

**Elibeth**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Could this website research more about some of the Philippine products which originally belonged to the Filipinos. Not just particularly about products but so does the practices. Like for example, the "pansit" since this is a Chinese influence.  
I'm talking about those products/practices which existed in this country long before the colonization.  
I'm kinda pertaining to the uninfluenced Filipino owned Products and Practices.

[**144**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_144)

**taylor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this was very useful on my porject thaank bunchesss

[**145**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_145)

**Alma**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its a very good article,it helps my daughter in her homework in French school,, luv it :)

[**146**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_146)

**Zorbinatora**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This awesome article is great about the wide great world of Filipinos! Flipping Philippines should be the next awesome name for Philippines and culture! I had a lecture to write and speech in front of hundreds and fifty hundreds of students, facilities, and worker. This Philippines article wrote and helped my paper more than any other website and is the best for great information about Philippines and GO Filipino!

[**147**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_147)

**Nean**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a very interesting fact about the Philippine History And Culture. I loved reading this!

[**148**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_148)

**Imelda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative... it helps me and my daughter do her report about Philippine. We're here in Canada...so it's difficult to find book about Philippine. Thanks for the great information. Good work!

[**149**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_149)

**Apple**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am proud to be a Filipino.Thank you for this.  
Pearl of the Orient Sea with 7,107 islands

[**150**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_150)

**nelbertespinas01**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you! for this website because it gave me some ideas regarding my report.  
#I love Philippines

[**151**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_151)

**jinky tiongson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i realy like this information.. words that wrritin are so easy to understand.. no idiomatic english.. thankyou for this information.. verry informative..

[**152**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_152)

**kyungsoo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i really understand the information that given. It help me to answer my assignment.. kamsa!!!

[**153**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_153)

**martin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Knowing whats important there helps one to better care

[**154**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_154)

**mianarie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks I really appreciate the comments and the story about the Philippines

[**155**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_155)

**Tella Rodah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

nice article, does phillipinos accommadate people from other country

[**156**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_156)

**raichyii**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

NICE.. i'm really glad that i have known such new info about our country

[**157**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_157)

**preyts**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Your article is a great help. Thank you very much. It helped us a lot in our project about Philippine culture.

[**158**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_158)

**Jamaica Caracas**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The article is very interestingly.Thank you so much

[**159**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_159)

**eliki waqalevu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for the article really helped me in my assissnment

[**160**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_160)

**jeanmaylene**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank u for the article about the Philippines its really help me in my assignment..

[**161**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_161)

[**Rheu Quimpan**](mailto:rheuquimpan%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It was a nice article..I appreciate the authors of this article..I learned a lot..Thank you so much..

[**162**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_162)

**Derpthecheese**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

That was really good great job so much info. I hope I can score good on my speech after reading this.

[**163**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_163)

**Van**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice article very informative. It also help me to answer my assignments

[**164**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_164)

**Hunter**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good article. I recently returned from serving a religious mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the cultural aspects of the Philippines were very true to my experience. I don't want this to come off wrong, but our Church was mentioned in this article under the wrong name, being called "The church of the Latter-day Saints (Mormons). Just wanted to clarify to the writer of this article that the correct name is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Again, great article!

[**165**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_165)

**Mary**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am concerned that you list the infant mortality rate as 48.9% - that would mean almost one in two children dies at a very young age. Recent statistics suggest that it is between two and three percent - between 20 and 30 per 1000 live births (two or three in one hundred).

[**166**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_166)

**allison duncan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good article, I found the part about about etiquette very interesting.

[**167**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_167)

**Hello**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I liked it just try to put the main topic of each paragraph.:)

[**168**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_168)

**Opal**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for this website!It helped me a lot with my social studies project!

[**169**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_169)

**WK Adventure**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Do you also have any list of the best pampanga restaurant, because we were planning to go back there and try every restaurants there.Thanks!

[**170**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_170)

**Ruzzel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

When was this article published because I need it for my project. Thank you for the person who tells me.

[**171**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_171)

**Wayne Gore**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have in my possession about a hundred pictures taken in the Philippines during the second world war They are about 8 by 10 s I don't want to throw them away shows a lot of  
Phillipines up until 1946. They were in possession of my late father in law who served there. Would like to donate to museum or historical society. any suggestions I live near Charlotte NC Wayne Gore

[**172**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html#Comments_172)

[**George Spelvin**](mailto:spelvin545%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like to learn more about takbong hubo, the naked boys' race.  
Does it take place on a religious holiday?  
Does it have to do with circumcision?  
How did the custom start?

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

E-mail:

 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

[Culture of The Philippines forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Peru](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html)[Poland](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html)

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Toggle navigation[](https://www.everyculture.com/)

1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Poland

Poland

Culture Name

Polish

Alternative Names

Polanie, Polen, Poliane, Pologne, Polonia, Polska, Republic of Poland, and Rzeczpospolita Polska

Orientation

***Identification.***Polanie was derived in the tenth century from the name of a Slavonic tribe near Poznan. It means dwellers or people of the field, meadow, or plain.

There are five Polish regional cultural traditions with associated dialects. Poles residing abroad could be considered as a sixth group. Regional cultural differences, identification, and dialects are becoming increasingly less noticeable and less important.

***Location and Geography.***Poland is located in Central Europe. It covers 120,700 square miles (312,680 square kilometers). On the north Poland is bordered by the Baltic Sea, Russia, and Lithuania; on the east by Belarus and Ukraine; on the south by Slovakia and the Czech Republic; and on the west by Germany. Originally, the capital was Cracow (Kraków), but in 1611 it was moved to Warsaw (Warszawa), the current seat of government.

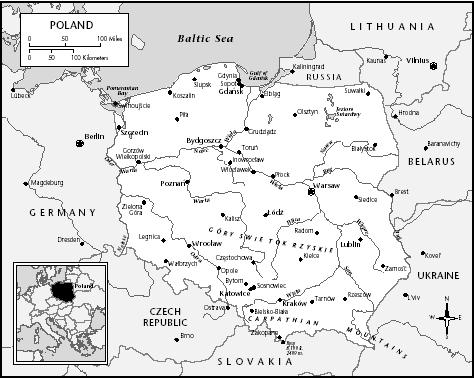
Seventy-five percent of the land lies below 650 feet (200 meters). The Baltic Sea forms a natural northern border, and the Sudetes and Carpathians form the southern border. Poland does not have any natural borders on the east or west. Polish wars and large scale changes in the borders, both ethnically and politically, have been to the east and west while the northern and southern borders have changed little over the past one thousand years.

***Demography.***In 2000, the estimated population was about 39.4 million. Of this, 38.1 to 38.5 million were ethnic Poles. Worldwide there are an additional 13 million Poles who live abroad. Due to Poland's history of shifting borders and the changes over time in the ethnic policies pursued by both foreign and Polish governments, it is difficult to establish the exact size of ethnic groups. Many individuals have the right to claim membership in several groups while others may not wish to have their ethnic affiliation recorded.

The largest ethnic minorities include approximately 400,000 Germans and perhaps an equal number of [Ukrainians](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ukrainians.html), followed by 275,000 Belarussians, then 25,000 Roma (Gypsies), and 13,500 Lithuanians. The over three million people of the Jewish population that inhabited Poland before World War II has been reduced to some six thousand to ten thousand people.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Polish belongs to the west Slavic group of languages of the Indo-European language family, which in turn is part of the Nostratic macrofamily. Poles use the Latin alphabet. Literary Polish developed during the sixteenth century and is based on the speech of educated city people, upper class usage, and the Great Polish and Little Polish Dialects. Starting in the nineteenth century, technological and cultural changes introduced a new vocabulary. During the 1920s and 1930s, there was an attempt to coin and introduce a Polish-derived vocabulary for the newly diffused technology. Otherwise, the new vocabulary is taken from German, Latin, Russian, and English. The spelling of diffused words is changed to reflect the Polish alphabet.

Geographical areas have distinct speech patterns. Most Poles can identify people's places of origin by their speech. The major dialects are: Great Polish in the northwest centered on Poznań; Kuyavian, east of "Great Poland"; and Little Polish, around Cracow. Kashubian, with about 200,000 speakers along the Baltic coast, has its own orthography and literature. The Slovincian dialect of Kashubian could be considered a separate language.



*Poland*

A similar linguistic separation can be made regarding the Górale, or "Highlanders," of Podhale. The Mazurians and Silesians, in areas that before World War II were politically separated from Poland, spoke an archaic Polish with many words and expressions borrowed from German. Starting in 1918 with the regaining of Polish independence, the leveling influences of school, the military, mass media, urbanization, and mass migration of population have reduced the differences between regional dialects so that spoken and written language is nearly standardized.

***Symbolism.***Poland's flag consists of two equal-sized horizontal bars. The upper bar is white and the lower red. The coat-of-arms is a white eagle on a red field. Legend has it that while hunting the first king of the Poles encountered a huge white eagle making a strange cry and hovering over a nest of young. Such white birds were not known in the land and the King took it as an omen. The national anthem, *Jeszcze Polska nie Zginȩła*("Poland Has Not Yet Perished"), was written in 1797 by an émigré soldier-poet, Józef Wybicki, serving in the Polish legions of Napoleon Bonaparte's army in Italy. It was adopted in 1918.

Polish identity is rooted in its past. Some see Poland as the bulwark of Christendom. If the Poles had not defeated the Muslim Crimean Tatars and Turks during King Jan III Sobieski's raising of the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683, Christianity would have been supplanted by Islam. Poland's role as guardian of western European civilization against the Russians and later the Bolsheviks is commemorated by the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the center of Warsaw.

Others view Poland as the suffering Christ among nations raising the torch of liberty and independence for themselves and others. This position is exemplified in the slogan "For your freedom and ours" and popularized by Polish romantics such as authors Zygmunt Krasiński, Adam Mickiewicz, and Juliusz Slowacki, as well as musician Frédéric Chopin and political leaders such as Józef Pilsudski.

There is an emotional bond between the Catholic Church and Poles. This bond was formed because for the last several centuries Poland's main enemies were Orthodox Russians and Protestant Germans. In this context, a Pole was a Catholic and a Catholic was a Pole. The bond was strengthened because individuals persecuted by the authorities could seek succor and solace from the Church. Further, during communist times, the Church was the one institution that presented an independent voice.

History and Ethnic Relations

Poland is an example par excellence of the imagined community and of the ability of nationalism to shape the world. Poland exists because individuals voluntarily fought for a free and united Poland. History is one of the themes used to create a commonality and a feeling of pride. Poles consider themselves to be members of a community.

***Emergence of the Nation.***No one knows when or where the ancestors of modern Poles originated. It is clear that they were living somewhere on the Eurasian continent and diverged from other Slavs. However, there is no certainty regarding their presence east of the Elbe and Oder Rivers before the eighth century.

The traditional date for the founding of the Polish state is the beginning of written Polish history in 956 C.E. , when Prince Mieszko I married a Bohemian princess and accepted Christianity. Mieszko's son, [Boleslaw Chrobry](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Boleslaw_I_Chrobry.html) (Boleslaw the Brave), was the first crowned Polish king. His armies reached Prague and Kiev and exemplified the next one thousand years of Polish history. At times, the Poles fought with the Swedes and Balts to the north, and the Czechs and Turks to the south, but there was almost constant strife with the Germans to the west and the Russian states to the east. Sometimes the wars were between only two enemies, and sometimes two would join in attacking the third. In 1226, Prince Conrad of Mazovia, Poland, invited the Teutonic Knights, a primarily German crusading order, to help fight the Prussians, a group of Balts living in what eventually became East Prussia. In 1382, the Lithuanian Grand Duke Jagiello (Jogailo) married Jadwiga of Anjou, a Polish princess who was crowned king [sic] in Cracow in 1385. This marriage joined Lithuania and Poland in a personal union, wherein one individual rules two states. The Treaty of Lublin, 1569, created the Republic of Poland-Lithuania. At its peak in 1634–1635, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonweath stretched from the Baltic to the Black Seas and encompassed Latvia, Lithuania, and much of present day Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, and Estonia, as well as scattered territories in some other countries. Political and territorial decline then set in.

The nobility held absolute power of life and death over the serfs tied to their land. The clergy, merchants in the cities (the burghers), and the Jews were protected by royal charters, but were a minuscule portion of the population. After 1572, Poland's kings were elected *viritim*; that is, they were voted upon directly by the mounted assembly of the entire nobility. The kings acted more like managers than rulers. In 1652, the *Sejm*, Poland's parliament, introduced the *liberum veto*, which mandated that all legislation had to pass unanimously. The country lost independence and unity when Austria, Prussia, and Russia divided the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth among themselves. The country was divided on three occasions, in 1772, 1793, and 1795.

For brief periods, there were two small Polish states under foreign domination. The first Polish state was the Duchy of Warsaw, 1807-1813, created by Napoleon from Prussian territory inhabited by Poles. The second, with limited territory and sovereignty, was established at the Congress of Vienna. The Congress Kingdom, 1815–1864, was ruled by the Russian czar in a personal union. After an unsuccessful insurrection, it was incorporated into Russia as a province.

Poland declared independence in 1918. World War I was ending and the partitioning powers were collapsing. Austria disintegrated and Imperial Germany was weakened. Russia had survived two revolutions and was in the midst of a civil war. The Poles defeated the Germans and the Federal Socialist Republic of the Russian Soviets, the precursor of the Soviet Union. Between 1918 and 1939, the Polish government worked to unify the country economically, politically, socially, and ethnically.

On 1 September 1939, Germany attacked Poland and, seventeen days later, so did the Soviet Union. The zones of occupation had been demarcated in the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 23 August 1939. Most of the Polish military personnel became prisoners of war. However, some escaped to neutral countries, and others were able to reach England or France where they continued fighting against the Germans. Some stayed in Poland and became guerilla fighters, forming the nucleus of the Home Army (AK) with allegiance to the government in exile in London.

Both occupying powers ruled harshly. The Germans attempted to kill all Roma, Jews, and educated Poles. The Nazi intent was to reduce Poles to unskilled laborers. The Soviet killed twenty-two thousand Polish officers and deported 1.5 million civilians, primarily the educated and business people, to Siberia.

After Germany attacked the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, the Soviets raised a Polish army. Two divisions totaling seventy-five thousand men transferred to the Middle East in 1942 and eventually fought in Italy. Others founded the army of Communist Poland.

In 1944, the Polish Home Army staged an uprising in Warsaw. Receiving no Soviet assistance, the uprising was crushed. The Germans then razed much of Warsaw, singling out structures of historical importance.

In 1945, Poland regained political unity, albeit as a Soviet satellite. The country had to cede some of its eastern territory to the Soviet Union and, as compensation, acquired territory that had been German in 1939. Poland, for the first time in its history, did not have significant ethnic and religious minority populations. In 1989, the Soviets no longer supported the Polish Communist government, and the Poles began a shift to democracy and a market economy.

***National Identity.***Polish nationalism fed on the country's history of deprivation and want. It has a militant and even truculent attitude. There is a feeling that Poles have been suffering unduly.

The first manifestation of Polish nationalism was during the Confederation of Bar in 1768 when there was an attempt to reform the political system. In the Constitution of 3 May 1791, the burghers were enfranchised to expand the definition of the nation. General Tadeusz Koéciuszko's Manifesto of Polaniec in 1794 took the first steps to include the largest group of the population, the peasants.

Until 1795, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had to integrate and unify a state made up of many ethnic and religious groups. The term nation was used to refer only to the politically powerful multi-ethnic nobility. Since the nobles constituted some 8 to 12 percent of the population, this meant that the vast majority was excluded.

In 1795, the issue became how to leave multiethnic empires, on what basis to form and determine the boundaries of the reconstituted state, and how to govern it. Because of repression and unsuccessful revolts, many Poles, in order to escape imprisonment or to obtain a university education, went abroad and were exposed to French and German ideas. Many adopted the position that a nation is like a kin group with common descent, language, and culture, and that it has a right by primordial occupancy to its native soil. They adopted the ideology that ethnic groups have a right to an independent state, that a state's population should be composed of members of a single nation, and that a state should encompass all members of the ethnic group.

The Nationalists, led by Roman Dmowski, conceived the nation as a distinct ethnic community which had an inalienable right to its ancestral territory. They saw the German empire as the principal enemy and were prepared to accept national autonomy under Russian suzerainty. Domestically they were strident, harsh, and intolerant, especially to other ethnic groups.

The independence camp, led by Pilsudski, conceived the nation as a spiritual community united by culture and history. They were prepared to fight all who stood in the way of Polish independence. They saw Russia as the principal enemy and were prepared to cooperate with Austria and Germany. Domestically they were relatively mild and tolerant.

Today the popular feeling is that a Pole is anyone who has Polish ancestry and exhibits Polish cultural traits, speaks Polish, and acts according to Polish norms.

***Ethnic Relations.***After 1939, due to the Soviet and German genocides, changes in the country's boundaries, migration, and the expulsion of ethnic peoples by the Communist government of Poland, the country became an almost monoethnic society. Current estimates of the combined non-Polish ethnic populations range between less than one million to more than two million, or between 2 and 5.5 percent of the country's inhabitants.

Some fifteen ethnic groups are numerous enough to be recognized and to appear in statistics. The Germans, Belarussians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Jews have states where members of their nationality are the majority and can be appealed to for political help.

The Belarussians and Lithuanians are the indigenous people in Poland's northeast. Both groups have adjacent states where their ethnic group constitutes the majority. Both groups have schools that teach in their respective languages. Because of a



*In the center of Krakow's main market square is the mid-sixteenth century Cloth Hall, built in the middle of the Renaissance.*

history of emigration, many Lithuanians have relatives in the United States.

For the past one thousand years, Germans and Poles have at times fought wars and ruled one another. In 1945, the Poles expelled five million Germans living in areas which were formerly part of Germany. The Germans remaining in Poland are the largest physical presence and most important political minority in the country.

For centuries, the Poles have ruled territories inhabited by the Ukrainians. In 1947, as a way of crushing the Ukrainian resistance movement, the majority of the population was transferred from their homeland in southeastern Poland to scattered locations in the western territories taken over from Germany. As a result, many Ukrainians assimilated into Polish society.

The Roma came to Poland in the sixteenth century. They were one of the groups the Nazis attempted to exterminate. In 1994, the Association of the Roma in Poland organized an observance of the Nazi actions at the [Auschwitz](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Auschwitz_concentration_camp.html) concentration camp. A growing number of Roma have entered Poland since 1990.

The earliest record of a Jew in Poland is in a letter written in 977 C.E. from the Pope instructing the king not to be overly friendly to a Jew. The first ghetto in Poland was created in the fourteenth century when Jews from Spain and Western Europe immigrated and asked for a sector of the city where they could live according to their religion and laws. The request was granted by King Kazimierz III. Until the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was tolerant toward the Jews and even invited them to come and settle. The relationship deteriorated as the fortunes of the Commonwealth declined, and there was a massive immigration of Jews from Germany, and later, from Lithuania and Russia. Relations were exacerbated by the Russian czarist policy of discrimination against Jews and stirring up ethnic antagonisms. The first organized [anti-semitic](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Antisemitism.html) pogrom was in 1881. The last one was on 4 July 1946 in Kielce when forty-two Jews were killed. During World War II, the Soviet Union deported people to central Asia and the Nazis operated death camps. Of the more than three million Jews in Poland in 1939, ninety thousand were left by the end of the war. The government-sponsored anti-semitic campaign of 1968–1969 drove out most of those who remained.

Prior to 1989, the Communist government at times denied the very existence of national minorities in Poland. When minorities were recognized, each acknowledged minority could be represented by only one organization and with one publication. As a result, between 1956 and 1981, there were only six organizations. After 1989, the right to free association resulted in the establishment of approximately two hundred ethnic organizations. There is legislation establishing the right to study and be taught in one's native language. Likewise, minorities have the right to access mass media, including local public radio and television, and to use their native language in broadcasting.

Since 1993, minority parties are exempt from the requirement that political parties must get a specified percentage of votes to obtain membership in the Sejm. On the local level, minorities have the right to participate in self-government. Little is known about how the laws and regulations are actually implemented.

As of 1995, there are a half million illegal aliens in Poland. Most of them came from eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

The vast majority of the urban population lives in apartments and relies on mass transportation. The increasing ownership and use of private automobiles has produced associated traffic and parking problems.

In most Polish cities, there are three types of areas or "cities." The "socialist city" was constructed after World War II to accommodate the influx of people caused by industrialization. The general appearance of this city was heavily influenced by what was in practice in the Soviet Union. The city has broad streets and large public spaces. Housing consists of four- or five-story apartment buildings. Typically, construction was shoddy. Apartments commonly consist of two or three rooms plus a kitchen and a bathroom. All apartments have access to gas, electricity, and municipal water and most have central heating. There is minimal space for parking and children's play. The center of the city is devoted to government buildings, not to commercial outlets and the service sector. Places of employment, especially industry, are located some distance from dwellings.

The "[capitalist](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Capitalism.html)/industrial city" was constructed during the nineteenth century and up to 1939. Architecturally, western European influences are noted. One difference from the "socialist city" is that the buildings represent a great variety of architectural characteristics. The interior space is much less standardized. Much space is devoted to commercial activities and, in the older parts of the city, industrial plants abut residential areas.

The "medieval city" was built during the feudal period. Building styles and town plans reflect practices and theories current in western Europe at that time. Most of the surviving structures are palaces or public buildings. Only a very few houses of merchants or people of modest means still exist.

Polish cities suffered heavy damage during World War II. Some, such as Gdańsk, Szczeczin, and Wroclaw, were heavily damaged by fighting, and the Germans deliberately razed most of Warsaw. Consequently, buildings and areas that appear ancient are often products of post-World War II construction. This was done by the Communist government to emphasize the nation's will to survive despite attempts to destroy it.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***The mainstays of the Polish diet are meat, bread, and potatoes. For many Poles, dinner is not dinner without meat, primarily pork. Bread is consumed and treated with reverence. In the past, if a piece of bread fell on the ground, it was picked up with reverence, kissed, and used to make the sign of a cross. Peasants trace a cross on the bottom of a loaf of bread with a knife before slicing it. Poles consume three-hundred pounds of potatoes per capita per year. Vegetables consumed are local cool weather crops such as beets, carrots, cabbage and legumes (beans, peas, lentils). Another important source of nutrition is milk in various forms such as fresh or sour milk, sour cream, buttermilk, whey, cheese, and butter.

The Polish daily meal sequence is dependent upon the family and the season; however, typically it starts with a substantial breakfast eaten between five and eight A.M. . Eggs, meat, bread, cheese, and cold cuts may be served. Between nine and eleven in the morning, people may have a second breakfast similar to an American bag lunch. Dinner, the main meal of the day, is served between one and five in the afternoon and contributes 40 to 45 percent of the calories for the day. It consists of a large bowl of soup, a main course, and dessert. Salads, when served, are eaten with the main course. On Sundays, appetizers may start the meal. The last meal of the day is a light supper eaten between six and eight in the evening. It may be a repeat of the breakfast menu or include cold fresh water fish, aspic dishes, and cooked vegetable salads. Additionally,



*A wooden house in Czerwinsk.*

there may be a sweet dish such as pancakes or rice baked with apples or other fruit.

Tea and coffee are served after meals. People differentiate between tea made from tea leaves and that made from herbs or fruits. In many dialects, the two types of teas have different names. Tea is consumed more frequently and coffee is viewed as slightly special. Vodka was first distilled in Poland in the sixteenth century and is consumed with food, commonly sausage, dill pickles, or herring, as a chaser.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Namedays and weddings center on individuals. Because common first names are noted in published calendars along with holidays, people know when to acknowledge an individual's nameday. Such celebrations typically feature poultry, cakes, and other party foods. At weddings, the bride and groom are greeted with bread and salt (the essentials of life) upon their return from church.

The Christmas season is the traditional time for baking cookies, honey-spice cakes, and cheese-dough apple cakes. Among the oldest and most traditional Christmas treats are honey-rye wafers and poppy seed or nut crunch. *Babka*, a cake, is another traditional dish that must be taller than it is wide and it must be narrower at the top than at the bottom.

The most solemn family gathering of the year is the Christmas Eve supper. Family gather to share the *oplatek*, a thin white wafer sometimes called angel bread, followed by an odd number of meatless dishes. However, fish is permitted. Traditional dishes include noodles with poppy seeds and wheat pudding.

For Christmas Day dinner, many feel that game adds a special touch of the outdoors and make a special effort to obtain half a hare for the pâté.

*Pączki*(Polish style donuts) are the traditional pastry eaten on Shrove Tuesday and on Fat Thursday (the beginning of the pre-Lenten [Mardi Gras](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Mardi_Gras.html) season). At Easter the tradition is to consume food blessed on Holy Saturday. One standard item is hard-boiled eggs. Easter breakfast features fresh meat, game, and smoked meats. There is a tradition of roasted suckling pig with a red egg in its snout.

During fall harvest festivals, the fruits of the fields are blessed, and cereals and bread made from freshly threshed wheat are eaten as well as placed on graves on All Saint's Day. On Saint Martin's Day, the traditional food is a goose.

***Basic Economy.***Poland is changing from an economy where the state sector, dominated to one where the economy is controlled privately. In 1989, 95 percent



*Produce and shoe merchants at a market in Plock.*

of those employed were in the state sector, which generated 90 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and received 85 percent of individuals' investment funds. By 1997, 67 percent of those employed were in the private sector, which was producing 63 percent of the GDP. In 1999, the private sector, generated about 70 percent of economic activity.

In 1996, 44 percent of those employed were in service occupations, 30 percent in industry and construction, and 26 percent in agriculture. The latter produces only 5 percent of the GDP. Polish farms are small, inefficient, lack capital, and have surplus labor. The main products are potatoes, fruits, vegetables, wheat, poultry, eggs, pork, beef, milk, and cheese. The average farm sells most of its products and buys about a fourth of the food consumed by the family.

***Land Tenure and Property.***While a few state farms remain, the vast majority of farm land is privately owned. City apartments are being privatized. Most of the industrial enterprises in the politically "sensitive sectors" such as coal, steel, telecommunications, aviation, and banks are still owned by the government.

***Commercial Activities.***Poland produces agricultural products, minerals, coal, salt, sulfur, copper, manufactured, goods, glass, textiles, beverages, machinery, and ships.

***Major Industries.***Between 1945 and 1989, the government's centralized planning system mobilized resources but could not ensure their efficient use. It made huge strides in helping to develop heavy industry but neglected farming, consumer goods, and housing. Their efforts also hurt the environment. After 1989, there was a reduction of the state-owned sector balanced by the development of the private. Poland has privatized medium and small state-owned enterprises and passed a liberal law for the establishment of new companies. The major industries are machine building, iron and steel, coal mining, chemicals, shipbuilding, food processing, glass, beverages, and textiles.

***Trade.***Since 1989, the main effort has been to shift Poland's international trade from countries that were part of the Soviet Union and its erstwhile satellites to other countries, especially member states of the EU.

By 1997, Poland exported mainly to Germany, Russia, Italy, Ukraine, the Netherlands, and France. Its main exports are manufactured goods, chemicals, machinery and equipment, food, and live animals, and mineral fuels. It imports primarily from Germany, Italy, Russia, France, United Kingdom, and the United States. Poland's main imports are manufactured goods, chemicals, machinery and equipment, mineral fuels, food, and live animals.

***Division of Labor.***In the cities, both men and women are employed outside the home. However, there is a male bias in employment. Proportionately, more women are unemployed than men. In rural areas, women participate fully in farm work, both in the fields and in the house. Additionally, women operate a large number of farms.

Polish women perform "the second shift"; the phenomenon of simultaneously managing an external job and a household. Shopping, especially for groceries, and housework are considered women's jobs. A man will do almost anything not to cook, wash dishes, or clean house.

Social Stratification

The strong and rigid social stratification that marked Poland prior to 1939 has all but disappeared. This has happened because during World War II, both the Nazis and the Communists deliberately killed educated Poles. At the end of the war, the intelligentsia was greatly reduced in numbers. For forty-five years, the Communist government pursued policies intended to reduce social classes. They fostered education and the economic and educational advancement of peasants and workers. With the government's success in creating industrial jobs, there has been a great movement of rural people to cities.

***Classes and Castes.***Currently there are six strata or groupings: peasants, workers, intelligentsia, *szlachta*(nobles or gentry), the *nomenclatura*(the ruling group during the existence of the communist government), and a nascent middle class. The workers and intelligentsia have increased both numerically and proportionately. The ruling class that held power during Communist rule is fighting to regain political power and maintain economic power. The szlachta may still constitute some 10 to 15 percent of the population, but their significance has been practically eliminated. People starting businesses are just beginning to differentiate themselves.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***During Communist rule, the general population assumed many of the customs of the szlachta. Thus, the common way of addressing someone is as *pan*(male) or *pani*(female), terms that formerly were used among and toward members of the szlachta. For people who are above the peasant and worker classes, men kiss women's hands and follow current fashions in dress. Since social status does not necessarily correlate with high income, there is a discrepancy between status and consumption. The educated and the szlachta stress politeness and social graces to differentiate themselves from the uneducated and the newly rich.

Political Life

***Government.***The highest law is the Constitution of 16 October 1997. The Polish government is divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The executive branch includes a president, a prime minister, two deputy prime ministers, and a cabinet or council of ministers. The president, who is the chief of state, is elected by a popular vote for a five-year term. The prime minister and the deputy prime ministers are appointed by the president and confirmed by the *Sejm*. The prime minister nominates and the president appoints the members of the council of ministers who are then approved by the Sejm.

The legislative branch consists of two houses: the one hundred seat Senate whose members are elected for four-year terms by a majority vote from the provinces, and the four hundred sixty-seat Sejm whose members serve four years and are elected to ensure proportional representation. Four seats are constitutionally reserved for ethnic German parties.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***There are a great many political parties. Most of them are still in the process of being formed, developing ideologies, and establishing a solid basis among the voters. Ideologically some are successor parties of the Communist party and others are post-Solidarity parties. In addition, there are a great many minor parties; some have an ideological basis and some reflect the ambitions of a popular individual.

***Social Problems and Control.***The Polish legal system is a combination of the continental system of law (Napoleonic Code) and holdovers from Communist legal theory. Under the continental civil law, interpretation of the law by judges is not a major factor and the rule of precedent is not an important element.

Since 1989, the Polish legal system has undergone significant transformation as part of a larger democratization process. There is some judicial review of legislative acts and court decisions can be appealed to the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg, France. Poland has a commercial code that



*Polish farms tend to be small and inefficient; they produce only 5 percent of the nation's gross domestic product.*

meets the European Union (EU) standards and, on 26 May 1981, Poland ratified The United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (CISG).

A still controversial issue is the treatment of former Communist government officials, especially the members the secret police. Debate centers around barring them from holding public office or positions of trust and whether Communist government officials who committed crimes should be held accountable now.

An issue gaining in importance is the treatment of people with different sexual orientation. The legal system, the society, and especially the Catholic Church are intolerant toward them. Yet there is a world-wide trend to legitimize these types of minorities and incorporate them into society with full civil and legal rights.

***Military Activity.***Poland is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It has an army, a navy, and an air defense force. In 1998, Poland spent 2.2 percent of its GDP (3.3 billion dollars) on the military. At the end of the twentieth century Poland had no serious military threats or international disputes.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The government's social welfare system is insufficiently funded and needs a comprehensive overhaul to adjust to changing political and economic conditions.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are involved in aiding children, family and general social welfare. In 1984, Poland was the first central/eastern European country to pass a law making NGOs possible. They have about two million members. By 1998, about twenty-six thousand NGOs were operating. NGOs may register as either associations or foundations. Both types of organizations may provide services.

There is a NGO support industry. In 1993, an informal coalition of Polish NGOs, the Forum of Nongovernmental Initiatives (FIP), was created, and the Network of Information and Support Center for the Nongovernmental Organizations (SPLOT) was established in 1994.

In general, NGOs try to satisfy local needs. More than 90 percent of Poland's NGOs are active in education (including social as well as general education); social welfare; and family, children and young people. Most of their funding comes from donations by corporations and individuals, the central government, international NGOs, and their own business activities.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Traditionally, the woman's place was in the home, and her rule in household matters was absolute. By 1979, women were 43.4 percent of the work force, in 1988, 45 percent, and in 1996, 46 percent. According to a study, women employed outside the home averaged 6.5 hours on the job and 4.3 hours on housework, while women without jobs spent 8.1 hours on housework.

The socialist government offered women opportunities for higher education and employment. In 1990, for every 100 males who completed higher education there were 89 women. On average, women and men have accumulated the same 11.1 years of education. However, women's earnings are lower. Between 1982 and 1993, women earned only 66 to 67 percent of men's wages. This was due in part to women choosing careers in badly paid sectors of the economy. Seventy percent of the women worked in health, social security, finance, education, and retail sales, but only 15 percent of graduates in technical subjects were women. Even in the better paid sectors of the economy, women were primarily in administration or worked as semiskilled workers.

Women operate a significant percentage of farms; in 1992 they operated 20 percent of farms. Almost 70 percent of female farmers were single and more than 40 percent were age 60 or older. Usually the children have moved away and the husband has died or is unable to farm.

The reorientation of Poland's economy from a socialist command model to a capitalistic market driven one has had a disproportionate impact on women. Despite the fact that women make up less than 50 percent of the workforce, 55 percent of the unemployed are women.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Women live in a male-oriented society with few groups working to change the national attitudes. They are subject to family violence at home and sexual harassment in the work place. They also have less access to credit and jobs. Very few women have achieved top leadership positions in politics, business, and the professions. They are excluded from leadership in the Catholic Church.

Among the peasants and workers, there is a strong patriarchal ideology and the husband is apt to regard himself as superior and the master. The wife is expected to make it clear that her husband is the head of the family. However, a man will not make important decisions without consulting his wife. In upper class and intelligentsia families the relationship is more equal, and a man places great value on his wife's opinions and counsel.

One area where there is significant disagreement and change is regarding women's reproductive rights. Under socialist governments, sex education in schools was minimal and, while contraceptive devices and medication and abortions were available, their [accessability](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Accessibility.html) varied over time and from place to place. During socialist times abortions were common and, at times, their numbers approached those of live births. After 1989, severe restrictions were imposed, especially on abortions. The law of 20 November 1996 allows abortions in the first trimester and beyond the twelfth week in cases of rape or incest, provides for free abortions to women meeting specified conditions, and enjoins the Ministry of Education to enforce sexual education programs in schools.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***People typically married before age twenty. Unmarried women over twenty were considered spinsters, and bachelors in their late twenties were subjected to public censure and mockery. Both men and women expect to marry, have children, and have only one spouse for a lifetime. Marriage has always been viewed as a holy responsibility, and it is commonly believed that the unmarried or the never married cannot be really happy and will have difficulty obtaining salvation.

Traditionally, most marriages were arranged to improve family fortunes. Love was not important. Formal divorce was difficult. However, one way to escape was for one member of the couple to move, ostensibly to earn money in a distant locale, and to not return.

***Domestic Unit.***Ideally, the domestic unit is a three-generation extended family consisting of the married couple, their children and the husband's parents. However, in 1991, over 6 percent of families consisted of a single mother with one or more



*Musicians in traditional Polish costume perform folk music during Swieto Ludowe. The festival commemorates the founding of the town of Narweka.*

children. Ten percent of all mothers are single, and many of them have never been married.

***Inheritance.***Traditionally, a father could divide the inheritance any way he saw fit. Now there are legal restrictions, especially on the division of real estate. The rural inheritance system does not work well. Often properties are inherited by several heirs. One heir takes possession and is expected to make cash payments to the others. Because of frequent changes in governments and in legal and monetary systems, this generates ill will and interminable arguments regarding equitable division of inheritances.

***Kin Groups.***Poles recognize kinship through both genders and use the same kin terms for both father's and mother's relatives, but differentiate between genders and generations. When individuals attempt to manipulate the formal economic and political systems, they try to utilize kin ties to do so. Groups of relatives assemble for formal occasions, especially for funerals and weddings.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***According to Polish tradition, a pregnant woman should not look at the disabled, mice, or fire in order not to damage the infant. Pregnancies are hidden as long as possible, and people avoid talking about them to guard against jealousy, witchcraft, and the evil eye. There are no professional midwives. An older respected woman— *babka*or *baba*—aids in the delivery. [Breast-feeding](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Breastfeeding.html) is seen as beneficial and healthy. In the Lublin area, boys are fed for three years, and in Kujawy, all infants for two. Newborns sleep with the mother until they are christened, usually three or four weeks, with six weeks being the usual maximum. Afterwards infants sleep in a cradle. Selection of godparents is important, because the child is assumed to acquire the characteristics of the same sex godparent. The godfather provides the swaddling cloth. The infant is clothed in a shirt, cap, and diapers and then wrapped in the cloth. For boys, an important event is the first haircut, usually at about three years.

***Child Rearing and Education.***Poles emphasize good manners and etiquette. Children who misbehave are called "impolite." Boys, in particular, are raised to be brave, independent, self-reliant, and tough. Patriotism is also stressed. Farming people and workers use physical punishment while upper classes tend to rely on psychological sanctions. The father is the stern disciplinarian, an authoritarian



*Traditionally, the women's place was in the home, but a significant number of women run their own farms, particularly after children move out or if the husband dies or becomes disabled.*

who should be respected and obeyed. In the middle and upper class, the mother is in charge of the children's education, and the development of their patriotism. Ideally, the mother is kind and nurturing, and mediates between the father and the children. In many urban families both parents are employed outside the home and the grandparents play an important role in raising the children.

Having established the National Education Commission in 1770, Poland has a long tradition of formal schooling. Education suffered after the country was partitioned. The partitioning powers tried to impose their culture and language on the Poles. The Germans devoted the most attention to education and, by 1911, illiteracy had been eliminated in their territory. In the Russian-controlled areas, schools were relatively few, children were taught in Russian, and Polish was treated as a foreign language.

With the reestablishment of independence in 1918, there was a concerted effort to educate the population. By 1939, illiteracy had been reduced to 12 percent and was less than 1 percent in 2000. There are nursery schools, eight-year primary schools, secondary schools, and universities. Secondary schools offer basic vocational training, vocational and technical training, and general college preparatory education. State schools at all levels are free and attendance to age eighteen is obligatory.

***Higher Education.***The Cracow Academy was founded in 1364 (called the Jagiellonian University after 1400) and is one of the oldest universities in Europe. By 1939, Poland had six universities, including the Catholic University in Lublin, which later became the only private university in the Communist block. By 1989, the country had ten universities and a number of specialized schools geared to the needs of agriculture, industry, medicine, and teaching.

Etiquette

There is great stress on being polite and courteous. Men are expected to kiss ladies' hands and to behave with decorum. An acceptable gift for women is an odd number of flowers, regardless of whether a woman is the recipient or presenter. Most men consider themselves judges of a fine drink, and for men the standard gift is alcohol. One must always drink from a glass, never directly from a bottle.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Approximately 95 percent of Poland's inhabitants are Roman Catholics, with about 75 percent attending church services regularly. The other 5 percent are Eastern Orthodox, Protestants and other Christian religions. Judaism and Muslim are the largest non-Christian religions.

***Religious Practitioners.***There is a hierarchy of priests, monks, and nuns as appropriate in the Roman Catholic Church along with ministers of other Christian denominations. On rare occasions, one may still encounter witches and fortune tellers.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***The Catholic church has formal religious services and practices, and it encourages preservation of folk culture, such as the common roadside shrines built and maintained by the people and the large annual pilgrimages to shrines such as Czȩstochova, Kalwaria, Lanckorona, and Piekarnie Śląskie. Traditionally on the Feast of the Purification, 2 February, the priests bless the *gromnica,*the candle used to ward off lightning, sickness, and general misfortune.

In rural areas, there are religious practices based on the annual cycle of the growing seasons and associated farming practices and to ensure good luck. When cleaning house in preparation for Christmas, a corner is left unswept lest some happiness is thrown out. There are many local variations of Christmas activities, but one common thread is bringing samples of crops into the house and sharing food with animals. The ubiquitous custom is the evergreen, or fir tree, found even in Orthodox Jewish homes during the feast of Hanukkah.

Easter was the time of Resurrection both of Christ and of nature. A common rural custom is to sprinkle water on the ground to ensure a bountiful harvest. A popular extension of this practice is the dousing of people with water. In many areas, there are follow-up festivities on Easter Monday, *dyngus*day.

In celebration of the shortest night of the year on Saint John's Eve, 23 June, people build bonfires and jump over them to gain purification and protection from evil. In many areas, people float flower garlands in rivers. Traditionally, haying also starts about this time and 29 June was a time for fairs.

In the fall, 28 October is devoted to Saint Jude, the patron of things most difficult to achieve and solutions to problems that seem hopeless. During World War II, Saint Jude was the patron of Underground Poland and is still considered the protector of Polish exiles and homeless wanderers worldwide. On All Saints' Day, 1 November, and All Souls' Day, 2 November, people place candles in cemeteries and at places of torment and execution.

***Death and Afterlife.***Death is visualized as a tall, slender woman dressed in a white sheet and carrying a scythe. Nothing could stop her, but animals could warn of her approach. People preferred that death be speedy and painless and that it come as a result of illness rather than without warning. The dying individual was placed on the ground, and doors and windows were opened so that the soul could go to heaven. The dead may be buried in their Sunday best.

Traditionally, a house where someone died was considered unclean and was marked with a cloth nailed to the door, black if the deceased was an older married man or woman, green if a young man, and white if a young girl. White cloth and flowers were considered symbols of mourning. Survivors did not wear red. The casket was made from boards with no knots from an evergreen tree. The deceased was placed on a plank or in the coffin between two chairs in the main room of the house. Coins were placed in the hand, mouth, or left armpit so that the deceased has been paid and has no reason to return. Candles were lit and left burning, especially the first night. It was believed that the soul stays around the body so food and drink were left in the open. The wake *pusta noc*involved singing and wailing to keep away any bad spirits. It was the beggars' job to do the majority of lamenting. If an enemy came to the wake, it was considered to be a pardon.

At the funeral, people said goodbye, women by putting their hand on the coffin and men by placing their cap on it. The coffin was closed with wooden pegs. The coffin was taken out of the house feet first, and the cattle and bees had to be notified of their master's demise. Once the coffin was in the grave those present (except family members) threw dirt in the grave. The soul went to the Creator then returned to the body until the priest threw dirt on the coffin. At that point, the soul went to Saint Peter to find out its fate—heaven or hell.

Tombstones were for important people. The common marker was a birch cross giving the name, date, and prayer requests as well as a shrub or a plant. *Kasza*(porridge) was featured at the funeral feast along with vodka with honey. Beggars were fed as well. Masses were said for the dead on the third, seventh, ninth, and fortieth day after death. On the first anniversary of death, there was a large meal for relatives, friends, and beggars.



*Horse-drawn carriages await passengers in a square in Old Town Warsaw. Warsaw has been Poland's capital since 1611, when it succeeded Cracow.*

Medicine and Health Care

In cases of illness, people use both modern and folk medicine and seek help from practitioners of both. Reliance on folk medicine has been lessening, and modern medicine with physicians, nurses, clinics, pharmacies, and sanatoria is the norm. A recent development is the addition of the speciality of family physician.

Formally, there are two types of modern health care. One is provided by dentists and physicians in private practice on a fee basis to those able to pay. The other is by the national and regional governments. This system is in trouble due to insufficient and shrinking resources and is considered unsatisfactory by the patients, the health care workers, and the state. Patients complain of no continuity of treatment and care, difficult access to specialists, and problems meeting various legal requirements. All health care workers, from the physicians to the lowest employee, complain of low salaries and prestige.

Secular Celebration

The national holidays are Constitution Day, 1 May (1791) and Independence Day, 11 November (1918).

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***In the last ten years, there has been a fundamental shift in the constraints faced by artists. Before 1989, art was heavily subsidized by the state, but demands were made on artists to produce propaganda materials. In addition, art was subject to political censorship. Certain topics and ways of presenting works of art were forbidden and, if violated, could expose the artist to legal sanctions, including prison sentences. Some artists never displayed their art publicly. With the fall of socialism, both state support and censorship, except in certain areas such as pornography, have disappeared. Consequently, artists are more free politically but have fewer resources.

***Literature.***Oral literature was the earliest genre. In the preliterate days and among the peasants much later, folk songs, legends, poetry, jokes, and riddles were important artistic expressions. Folk songs dealt with universal themes such as love, sorrow, and lack of freedom. Tales and legends dealt with the doings of kings, contests between knights and dragons, and the exploits of ancient robbers and bandits as well as with the lives of saints. Political jokes and stories and urban legends deal with current events and circulate nationwide.

Initially, Polish literature was written in Latin and can be said to have begun with the annals of the tenth century. Literature in Polish began and enjoyed a "golden age" in the sixteenth century with the writing of Mikolay Rej, who wrote exclusively in Polish and has been called the father of Polish literature, and Jan Kochanowski, the first genuine and great Polish poet. In the seventeenth century, Wespazjan Kochowski wrote the first messianic interpretation of Poland's destiny, a theme developed during the romantic period by Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Slowacki, and Zygmunt Krasiński. In the twentieth century, three Polish writers were awarded Nobel prizes: Henryk Sienkiewicz, 1905; Wladyslaw Reymont, 1924; and Czeslaw Milosz, 1980. Between 1940 and 1989, there were severe political restrictions on what could be published. At the end of the twentieth century the main constraint is economical, based on what the public will buy.

***Graphic Arts.***The Poles have participated in all the great art movements of Western culture. One of Poland's early notable sculptors, Wit Stwosz (Veit Stoss), lived during the fifteenth century. The wooden altar tryptich in the Church of the Virgin Mary in Cracow is his most famous work. The first noted painter was the Italian, Bernardo Bellotto, who in the late eighteenth century painted Polish life. Painting developed in the second half of the nineteenth century with Jan Matejko and Henryk Siemiradzki being the best known. The portraitist Stanislaw Wyspiański was also active in drama and design.

***Performance Arts.***Theater and movies have a special potency in Polish society. People tend to see their own life and history as filled with drama and romance, and they love theater. Attending a performance, whether a play, a movie, a concert or ballet, is an important social activity, and people tend to see it as a serious and edifying experience rather than mere entertainment.

The first public theater in Poland was established in 1763. This spurred great popularity of drama and especially comedy in the second half of the eighteenth century. There were some very influential and important playwrights. Franciszek Zablocki produced very high level comedies. His best known is the "Flirting Dandy." Mickiewicz's *Dziady*("Forefathers' Eve") combined folklore and mystic atmosphere to create a new kind of romantic drama and offered a new formula for national destiny. Its visionary third part was published in 1832. Franciszek Bohomolec satirized the aristocracy and Wojciech Boguslawski wrote a popular national comic opera. During the nineteenth century almost all poets wrote poetry in dramatic form. Some of the most important dramatists were Aleksander Fredro, Slowacki, and Stanislaw Wyspianski. During the twenty years between the world wars, there were no major dramatic developments. The best plays were written by novelists. After World War II, the Communist government attempted to use the theater for propaganda purposes, with indifferent success. There has been a revival since 1989.

Polish ballet was built on folk dances but is primarily an urban enjoyment. Between the world wars, it generally had low standards. After World War II, it received considerable state support and much was done to improve it. It emphasizes classical and folk dancing, but some modern ballet themes are present.

Music has had few official constraints. It is founded on the rhythms and melodies of folk music adapted for performance in gentry homes and reaches back to the middle ages. A distinctive Polish church music was flourishing during the Renaissance. The first major Polish opera was staged in 1794. The famous composer Frederic Chopin is considered the musical embodiment of Polishness. After World War II, there was a lively revival of music in Poland. All branches of music are well represented. Popular music is strongly influenced by western styles. Polish jazz is excellent and has a reputation for experiment.

Polish cinema goes back to 1909, but it began to attract international attention only after World War II. The directors best known abroad are Andrzej Wajda and Roman Polanski. After 1989, people tended to curtail consumer spending and movie audiences shrank. In the 1970s, there were two-thousand five hundred movie theaters but by 1992, there were fewer than one thousand. Foreign films have great appeal. In 1992, of 122 new titles shown, fifteen were Polish and eighty-nine were recent American films. The remainder were of Australian, English, Finnish, French, German, and Japanese productions. Since 1989, about one half of the films have been co-productions with foreign partners.

Radio and television are attractive sources of entertainment and information. Television provides quality cinema and a wide variety of programs in several languages through cable, local channels, and satellite hookups. Most families own a VCR. In 1990, over 6,000 companies sold and rented video cassettes. There is legislation to curb video piracy and an association has been formed to protect copyrights.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Over the centuries, Poles have made notable contributions to the sciences, including the astronomer [Nicolaus Copernicus](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Nicolaus_Copernicus.html) (Mikolaj Kopernik); Alfred Korzybski, the founder of general semantics; economists Oscar Lange and Michael Kalecki; Nobel Prize winner Maria Curie-Skodowski; and the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski.

Between 1945 and 1989, the social sciences were subjected to severe restrictions and neglect. There was censorship of publications and restrictions were placed on travel and research topics. Topics of research were circumscribed and certain areas could not be investigated. Since 1989, the political constraints have been lifted and the main problem is to obtain funding for research and publication.

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—A NDRIS S KREIJA

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_1)

**Kayla**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I absolutely loved it!!!! I absolutely loved it!!!!!

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_2)

**Monkey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It's very informative.It gives me a lot of information.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_3)

**visitor**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it's untrue :-)  
there's no such [primitive agriculture](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/History_of_agriculture.html) as shown here.  
there are lots of modern cities in Poland,  
the difference between Western Europe and Poland isn't big.  
  
http://wroclaw.fotolog.pl - a photo blog from a Polish city, worth seeing

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_4)

**Megan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its informative:]  
helped with the school project  
:D  
hehe

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_5)

**Lola Montoya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

verryyy long  
imformative  
i know may not be true as "visitor" said  
but bits and parts helped me win my geography b!!  
;-)

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_6)

**Jenny**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Project helper is awsome!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! it really helped me yeah!! Yeah now i learend about the culture of poland and it helped my school project

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_7)

**Agnieszka**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

part of this text is very accurate (e.g. history, language) but those parts about gender roles, family, socialization....I couldn't believe my eyes, completely untrue. I had a good laugh when I read about infant care, death and afterlife, and "the husband [being] superior and the master". Actually it is partially truth... that's life in Poland a century ago.  
Poland is a modern country now! Students doing school projects I suggest you look for more accurate sources.

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_8)

**Marius**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I really enjoined it. Clear writing and valuable, concise information about Poland. It would be great to add somemore information about the new developments in the first decade of the XXI century.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_9)

**J. Grokowski**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The really sad part in the whole article was trying to imagine five million German civilians being expelled from their homes and giving all of their property and homes to Poland. Five Million People???? can you imagine that??? It's like evacuating the entire state of Wisconsin. That's more inhabitance that the entire population of Ireland. The sad thing about War is how the everyday average civilian who is probably just trying to survive and make a living to support their families has to suffer so terribly. Why don't they make a movie about this??

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_10)

**Robert**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Text contains many obiective info and a good bibliography, however illustrations are taken without any sense. If the article about NY you will illustate with only one photo with beggar this will suggest that US citizens are mainly beggars ... it's stupid; the carriages on Old Market Square are tourist attraction; the "national dress" in one of the photos looks rather like Lithuania or Balkan countries ... The Constitution Day is 3 May not 1 May which was the "workers day" celebrated by late communist governement. Change it. Cheers.

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_11)

**Courtney**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love your website it helps me alot with with my essays and school prjects on different countries

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_12)

[**helen**](mailto:namcecawiqara%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very nice website it heps me very mach. thanksss :\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*:\*

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_13)

**Thea**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

There is a lot of useful information. It's a good source if you're doing a project on this :)

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_14)

[**Luisa**](mailto:luisasouza_souza%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is very very good.It helped a lot in my school work about Poland. Thank you!!!

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_15)

[**Ada z Polski**](mailto:a_chmurka%20[at]%20o2%20[dot]%20pl)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi! I'm from Poland :-) I've noticed a small mistake in the text under the heading "SECULAR CELEBRATION". Information about Constitution Day on 1st of May is incorrect. It is celebrated on 3rd of May (on that day, 1791, great Poles undertook important reforms to save the country in the period of partitions. It was the first constitution in Europe and second, after the one of US). Nevertheless, the 1st of May is also a celebration - Labour Day(since 1890).

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_16)

**shelby**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

loved it it was so good i printed it for my report in my own words and got a hundred on it

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_17)

[**Rajeen**](mailto:blackchick_133%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It has lot info. That Help me but its Does tell me about the Entertainment of the polish people but other then that this was a good article by Poland.

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_18)

[**Jerry Halkoski**](mailto:djhal2%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Jestem polakiem na pol i Amerykaninem. I am half Polish, proud of my Polish Heritage, and have been to Poland eleven times. I love the country, the culture, the traditional music from folk to biesiada to classical. I can hear hip hop and rap here in the USA anytime.  
  
In fact, I have aired Polish American radio shows since 1974 and recently received an award from the Polish American Congress of Wisconsin for promoting Polish-American music and culture and Polish music and culture via my radio shows.  
  
Currently, teraz, I can be heard each Saturday at 10 am at JOY1340.com. That is 10 am, Central time in the Midwest or 5 pm in Poland.  
  
Bylem w Polsce jedanastej raz. Lubie Polska-wyszytko.  
  
I found this to be a very comprehensive summary of Poland's history, culture, political system, ad infinitum.  
  
Thank you to those who compiled the information and composed it in a succinct and understandable manner.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_19)

[**Vytis**](mailto:nono%20[at]%20wp%20[dot]%20pl)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

these "Polish folk clothes" are in fact Lithuanian. They don't even look close to Polish ones. :/

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_20)

[**piment**](mailto:pimentqensteins%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very informative...  
please equipped with a video about the economy and the history of polish  
thank you...

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_21)

[**Tatiana**](mailto:tatianabrown2006%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi there,  
  
I am a student Midwife...just wondering if anyone can provide me with any information about maternity care in Poland; and perhaps how it differs to in the UK.  
  
Thanks,  
  
Tatiana

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_22)

[**Z**](mailto:zuziek3%20[at]%20buziaczek%20[dot]%20pl)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Well, I must say, that stereotypes about Poland are untrue! We aren't so primitive and behind the times as you think!!! Photographies are from early 60. maybe 70. Warsaw and Cracow are cities like Berlin or London.  
  
I'm proud to be Polish!!!

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_23)

**Wpolska**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i believe Mieszko I married the princess and accepted christianity in 966, not 956 A.D.  
  
It was informative, and on the whole the historical parts were nicely done.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_24)

**k swenson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Usefulinfo to help HOST families in USA understand the culture from which a Polish student comes. thanks! ks

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_25)

[**Bogusia**](mailto:blozowska%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Please, men!  
Why don't you put something new about Poland? Some new pictures,because those photos are very old. About 50 years,I think. Poland doesn't look like this.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_26)

**Autumn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website is very good and informational. I think one thing that would help is if they explained beliefs and values of polish people more.

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_27)

[**Le Roy R.Miller Jr.**](mailto:Russell3673%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a wonderfully informing site. I enjoyed learning about polish culture and her people here. I would recommend this website to others for it's indepth and honest view of the polish.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_28)

**rawr**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

tyvm for this :D. school project is gonna be easy with this.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_29)

**dare bear**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i dont think it helped me at all it should have more about agriculture and different types of it on this page otherwise it's a very informative page.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_30)

**Berni**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have a dear online friend in Poland and I have found this very interesting. Nice to learn about different cultures. Very informative.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_31)

**Libby**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article was very useful for school projects!!

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_32)

**Anna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would rather read something what is up to date!  
Review it before you embark the others with you.  
In Poland is only the older generation that kiss woman's hand. You can offer an odd numbers of flowers to the hostess, but you cannot offer chrysantemums i.e. And for the sign of the cross making on the loaf of bread - it was practiced by every Catholic.  
Check over the "daily meal sequance".  
Maybe you can add some informations about the changes since the end of Communist regime? You should know that the Communist regime was overthrown in 1989, so the entire generation of Poles grown up in a free and independent society!  
Courage! You can do it!

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_33)

**Garrett**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great i love this site im going to get an A+ thank u :)

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_34)

**Jimothy Shaw**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this website! I just found it today, and i love it so much.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_35)

**patrice**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very informative, but can someone help with the funeral customs of polish here in the United States? thank you

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_36)

**Stephania Avramova-Crowe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative, love the website. Would like to be able to have a copy of it

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_37)

**jojo1**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WOW talk about informationable  
i thought i would only get a few things out of it  
HEHE the funny thing is that i got it for my school proget  
didnt take long at all 8D  
  
  
this is AWSOME i had alot of time to play games thats good trust me it will help 8D

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_38)

**shaylan elizabeth**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

that was sooo boring and long im done with projects

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_39)

**Ashtyn Edwards**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Definitely appreciate this informative article! Thank you so much!

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_40)

**mahsheed**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am Persian, My friend or Beau for the last 2 years who is Polish, funny how they have a jumping fire festival, but he has never heart of the 8000 year old tradition in Iran of fire wednesday(or Chaharshanbeh sorui) , where we jump over fire and say things for purifucation and they think the longest nite is in june, we had it for so long as Yalda which is in Dec. I just assume it was the communist way of keeping the population numb and uneducated.  
  
Overall , very nice page, thanks for the interesting topic.

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_41)

**hooshang**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am also a Persian, and amazing by the similar tradition(jumping fire festival & longest night which we believe it on December, totally it is very interesting article which will make the people of the world closer together disregard of the nationalities and religion. Many thanks  
Hooshang

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_42)

**Jerry H**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

While I have stated I love Polish history, culture, its people, et cetera, I do wonder why most of the photos are so antiquated. Yes, one will find old farming methods, homes from the past, et cetera,and one is able to see some evidence of this today, but , for the most part, Poland is far more complex, modern, and changed, especially since Poland spearheaded the successful revolt against the former USSR and its dominance of Poland since the partitions of the 1790's. There are better sources by far about Poland, especially since the events of 1989.

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_43)

**Hafsa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am preparing a PowerPoint presentation and I want to demonstrate that how polish people present their business cards in meetings but I couldn't find any information about that can anyone help me with that please. My topic is business etiquettes in Poland .

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_44)

**Aniv**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I've had some polish friends and partners for long time and I think the polish are one of the kindest people around. They are simple. The thing is, you also hear about them being motivated and good at work, so i think that the polish are relatively healthy in the sense that they are good in heart and their population is rather not as much culturally, mentally disrupted by modern industrialization.. ;)

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_45)

**levi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what about polis foods? but other than that this was a good site.

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_46)

**Kerry**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great information about Poland and it's people. Enjoyed it very much.

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_47)

**wicenigga**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Persian names, such as Farhad Pezeshki is typical of Polish names ~ski. Polish gene R1a1a1a is typical of the Hindu Aryans. It also occurs in prominent Scots and Welsh :) It's true! Of course, I also recommend wiki/Poland.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_48)

**Elijah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very long but i liked it very much because i am part polish like my mom.

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_49)

**Avelene Gniewek-Rager**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Is it a Polish custom to have angels around the coffin when someone dies

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_50)

**FreddyFadbear55**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I need to get my poland homework done by tomarrow!

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_51)

**luvdalipgloss**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article helped me complete a whole slide and a half on a project! Brava! I hope that there are more articles similar to this.

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_52)

[**James**](mailto:james%20[dot]%20bambo%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm doing an incredibly long project on Poland for honors and there no better website than this one. This amazing website pretty much has every websites information combined into one. Whoever made this website is amazing and than you so much for this.

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_53)

**Joanna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Could anyone tell me what date this was written ? I need it for referencing purposes. Also, anyone know of any traditional polish cultural infant care practices other than that is written here? Also, any common Lithuanian traditional infant care practices still used today? I am a student health visitor and it would be very beneficial in the area where I am working. Kind regards...

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_54)

**Natalia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Old stuff! Lots of changed :) especially equal, marriage.. etc :)

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_55)

**Kristin Eileen Rybinski**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was hoping someone could help me with some questions I have. I was wondering about the culture and history of Poland from about 1920-1940. What would have been a very prosperous job for that time period? If someone was educated, where would they have gotten their education - a university or somewhere else? Would women have had secondary educations and professional positions, as well? Would a politician have been a well paying, prestigious positions? Were women allowed to hold office? What yearly salary would have made a family of 3 well to do? Thank you in advance for your help. I am trying to gather research for a book I would like to write. My ancestors were from Poland, so it is only fitting that my characters be based from there, too.I appreciate your help and I look forward to hearing from you.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_56)

**meghann**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

help with a project VERY helpful was going to fail if it wasnt for this website

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_57)

**Nina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

In recent years Poland has changed in many ways and in my opinion certainly in favor. This can be seen for eg. in places such as Amercian Clinic in Warsaw a part od Medicover Hospital, where the medical care can benefit both the Polish but and foreigners. In the Clinic they are carried out even very complex treatments, and what's more there is avalilable the option like a one day surgery. The staff is well trained, says many languages, and the facility has modern equipment.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_58)

**Lizzie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think this was really helpful for my world history final project. And it was pretty interesting.

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_59)

**Ruth**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

History is always history, history never change. Poles are real people they are realistic they worked with each other in a united way. Every countries should emulate them. The whole world would be unified.they worked very hard to build and sustain everything in their country. I'm yearning for mine to be like theirs

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_60)

**Cindy Rainkie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I need assistance identifying a religious painting of possible polish origin left to a museum, who can I contact with a picture of the art work to start a search for origin, artist and people being depicted in art

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_61)

**TORI**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

omg this is so inspiring (btw im a german) and I love it

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_62)

**Chance**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Really helpful for my research project. Thanks for all of the information.

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_63)

**Leigha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is so informational it helped with school i just love when i can get the info i need on just one website  
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[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_64)

**Marchin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

When was this last updated... I fell like Poland has changed a lot since 2005

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_65)

**T4pott**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow, this is amazing, I am working with a polish family at present, and wanted to grasp an awareness of their cultures and the present socio-economical settings of Poland. You have ticked all the boxes, thank you so very much.

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_66)

**Alexus**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very interseting article, and very informative. Wish is was more recent to show how much Poland has evolved.

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_67)

**Zoe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I learned a lot about Poland that I never knew before.

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html#Comments_68)

**bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this information was very helpful thank you to all the editors

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

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Name:

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 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

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" [The Philippines](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/The-Philippines.html)[Portugal](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Portugal

Portugal

Culture Name

Portuguese

Orientation

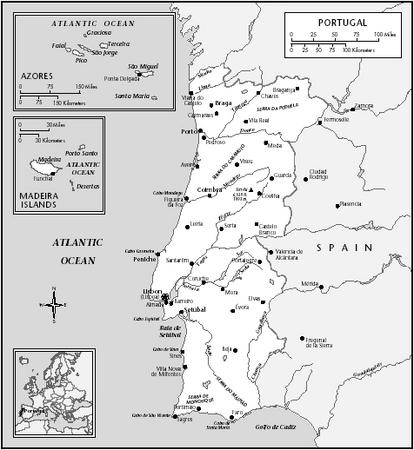
***Identification.***The name "Portugal" derives from a Roman or pre-Roman settlement called Portus Cale (the modern city of Porto) near the mouth of the Douro River. The Romans referred to this region as the province of Lusitania, and the prefix *Luso*(meaning "Portuguese") is still used in some contexts. In the ninth century, during the reconquest (714–1140 C.E. ), Christian forces dominated the area between the Minho River, which forms the border of modern Portugal in the north, and the Douro River, and the region became known as *Territorium Portucalense*. In 1095, the king of Castile and Leon granted Portucale (northern Portugal) to a Burgundian count. Despite the diversity of invading populations and distinct regional economies and ways of living, Portugal is a homogeneous nation with a single national cultural identity and no ethnolinguistic groups.

***Location and Geography.***Continental Portugal at 35,516 square miles (91,986 square kilometers) occupies approximately a sixth of the Iberian peninsula. Since the majority of the population was rural until the 1960s, geography has been an important factor in cultural adaptations and worldview. The northwest (the province of Minho) is lush, green, densely populated, and the major source of emigrants. The northeast (the province of Trás-os-Montes) is more mountainous and is divided into a northern region ( *terra fria*) with long cold winters and a warmer region ( *terra quente*) to the south. The central part (including the provinces of Beira Alta, Beira Baixa, and Beira Litoral) varies from high and desolate mountain plateaus (the [Serra da Estrela](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Serra_da_Estrela.html)) to low coastal areas. The provinces of Ribatejo and Estemadura are low-lying regions near Lisbon and the Tagus River. Much industry is concentrated in this area. Southern Portugal, drier and more Mediterranean in climate, includes the provinces of the Alentejo and the Algarve. The Alentejo, an undulating plain with cork trees and wheat fields, was traditionally an important cash-crop area. The Algarve is semitropical with almond, fig, and citrus trees. It is also a region of tourism and fishing.

Portuguese inhabit the Azores and Madeira in the Atlantic. As a result of [colonial expansion](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Colonialism.html) and massive emigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there are Portuguese-speaking people in Asia, Africa, South America, the United States, Canada, Australia, and northwestern Europe. The capital is Lisbon, located on a number of hills on the northern shore of the Tagus River estuary. The original name for Lisbon, an important Roman city, was *Olisipo*. Lisbon, which became the capital in 1298, is also the political, cultural, economic, educational, and social center.

***Demography.***In 1999, the population of continental and island Portugal was estimated at 9.9 million. The population increased until the 1960s, when it declined by more than 200,000 as a result of emigration to northern Europe. In the 1970s, the population rose by more than a quarter million as *retornados*returned from Africa after decolonization. Portugal has been receiving immigrants, primarily from former overseas territories such as the Cape Verde Islands. This immigrant population, which has settled primarily in the greater Lisbon area, is estimated to be approximately 200,000.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Portuguese is a Romance language with Latin roots, although some words are Arabic in origin. Emerging as a language distinct from Latin and Castilian in the ninth century, Portuguese was made the official language under King Dinis (1279–1325). Dialects are found only in regions near the border with Spain and are disappearing. French was widely used by the aristocracy in the nineteenth century. Spoken in Brazil, Angola,



*Portugal*

Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé, Príncipe, and Macão, Portuguese is the world's fifth largest language in terms of number of speakers.

***Symbolism.***Many cultural symbols of national identity focus on the Age of Discovery and an imagined community that extends beyond the political frontiers of the nation. The national flag, adopted on 19 June 1911 during the First Portuguese Republic (1910–1926), includes an ancient astronomical device (the armillary sphere) used for maritime navigation and represents Portugal's role in global exploration. " *A Portuguesa*," the national anthem, officially adopted in 1911, has as its central symbol a female figure modeled after "La Marseillaise" (the Woman of Marseilles), the French symbol of republicanism. It expresses the nationalism that emerged in late nineteenth-century Anglo-Portuguese conflicts over African territory.

Nostalgia for the past and for the homeland is represented in the sentiments of *Sebastianismo*and *saudade*and in the lyrics of the *fado*. Sebastianismo is a messianic belief in the return of King Sebastian, who died in Morocco in 1578 or 1579. Sebastian was expected to drive out the Spaniards (who ruled from 1580 to 1640) and restore the nation to glory. Until recently, 1 December was a national holiday commemorating the overthrow of the Spaniards in 1640. Sebastianism is present in a worldview that expresses a hope that what one wants will happen and a feeling that it will never happen. Saudade refers to a [melancholic](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Melancholia.html) and hopeful nostalgia for a homeland that is far away. The fado, derived from the Latin word for "fate," is a popular urban song form that generally expresses sadness, longing, and regret. The fado is thought to date back to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century and to combine Moorish, African, and indigenous elements.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Portugal has been inhabited since Paleolithic times. Various peoples settled in the region, though the modern Portuguese trace their descent to the Lusitanians, who spread over the peninsula in the third millennium B.C.E. Lusitanians made contact with Celtic peoples who moved into the region after 900 B.C.E. Roman armies invaded the peninsula in 212 B.C.E. and established towns at the present-day sites of Braga, Porto, Beja, and Lisbon. Successive invasions of Germanic tribes in the fifth and sixth centuries C.E. and Moors in the eighth century C.E. added new elements to the population, particularly in the south. Portugal emerged as an independent kingdom in 1140 with its capital in the northern city of Guimarães. Early statehood, the expulsion of the Moors, and the expulsion or conversion of the Jews laid the foundation for a unified national culture.

In the fifteenth century, the Portuguese inaugurated the Age of Discovery and for three centuries built and expanded a seaborne empire. This imperial enterprise gave the nation a reputation for racial tolerance that is still invoked as the foundation of Portugal's comfort with cross-cultural diversity despite homogeneity at home. The loss of Brazil in 1822 and a series of economic and political crises led to a decline in the world position of the nation in the nineteenth century. The monarchy was eliminated in 1910 with the establishment of the First Portuguese Republic, which was replaced by the authoritarian dictatorship of António Salazar in 1926. Salazar formed his New State ( *Estado Novo*) in 1932 on a corporatist political model and emphasized God, family, and work as the central values of the national culture. He limited access to higher education and, in emphasizing the Catholic faith, promoted humility, routine, and respect for authority as guiding principles of social life. He also celebrated the rural way of life by sponsoring a national competition in 1938 for the most Portuguese village.

Family vacation packages

The Salazarist regime survived until 1974, when it was overthrown by military men frustrated by the hopelessness of the colonial wars in Africa. The African colonial system was dismantled after 1974. In the late 1980s, Portugal became a member of the European Community, and in 1994, Lisbon served as the European cultural capital.

***National Identity.***The population of Portugal, the first unified national-state in Western Europe, has been extremely homogeneous for most of its history. A single religion and a single language have contributed to this ethnic and national unity. Portugal was the last western European nation to give up its colonies and overseas territories, turning over the administration of Macau to China as recently as 1999. Its colonial history has been fundamental to national identity, as has its geographic position at the margin of Europe looking out to the Atlantic.

***Ethnic Relations.***Portugal has retained linguistic and other cultural ties with former colonies, including Brazil. In 1996 the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries was created. A recently-arrived population of immigrants, most from former colonies in Africa and Asia, has introduced some ethnic diversity, particularly in the Lisbon metropolitan area. These populations are residentially segregated in neighborhoods with poor housing and a general absence of public amenities. They are subjected to a form of subtle racism within a society that views itself as anti-racist.

Portugal's gypsy population, estimated at about 100,000, offers another element of ethnic diversity. The gypsies live apart, and primarily in the south. They can often be found at rural markets selling clothing and handicrafts. Portugal also has small Protestant and Jewish communities, largely composed of foreigners.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

In 1930, 80 percent of the population lived in rural villages, and thirty years later, 77 percent of the population was still rural. Since 1960, urbanization has been fueled by extensive internal migration from the countryside to the cities, but only 35.8 of the population was defined as urban in 1996. The two large cities of Lisbon and Porto are both on the coast.

The hallmark of Portuguese architecture are *azulejos*, glazed ceramic tiles that cover the facades and interiors of churches, government buildings, and private homes. Azulejos were introduced by the Moors. Both geometric and representational patterns are used, the latter often depicting historical events or religious scenes. The azulejos style was taken to colonial Brazil and to India, and has been adopted by returned emigrants who have built new houses across the landscape of northern and central Portugal as social statements of their success abroad. Akin to azulejos are the mosaics used on the sidewalks of major walking avenues in Lisbon and Porto as well as in provincial towns. These avenues, lined with cafés and teahouses, are important public spaces where people stroll and converse. Stucco in various pastels is used on buildings, including the main government buildings in Lisbon. The other distinctive style of architecture is known as Manueline, after King Manuel I. It is a form of ornamentation that mixes elements of Christianity with ropes, shells, and other aquatic imagery, reflecting the nation's seafaring past.

Best clothing retailers

Vernacular buildings in rural areas use local materials. In the north, traditional peasant houses, often with two stories and a red tubular clay tile roof, were built with thick granite walls. Animals were kept on the ground floor, which also was used for storage. Many of these houses had verandas. All had a big hearth in the kitchen with an overhanging chimney used to smoke hams and sausage as well as to cook and heat. The kitchen is the center of private family space; these houses often also contain a parlor ( *sala*) for receiving guests. In the south one-story, whitewashed, flat-roofed houses with blue trim around the windows and doorways are common. This form of architecture evokes the Moorish past. These houses, which are built to keep out the summer heat, have huge chimneys and hearths. Since the 1970s, new housing and large apartment complexes have been built to accommodate the growing urban population.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***The cuisine varies by region. The north is known for *caldo verde*, a kale and potato soup generally flavored with a slice of *chouriço*(spicy sausage). Also important are grilled sardines. The traditional bread, especially in the northwest, is *broa*, a grainy corn bread with a thick crust. In Minho, the traditional wine is *vinho verde*, a young wine made from grapes that grow on arbors that often serve as property markers. In the northeastern region of Trás-os-Montes, fresh and cured pork, is used in a number of dishes. A stew of mixed meats and vegetables called *cozida a` portuguesa*originated in this region and has become a national dish. In central Portugal, cheeses are more common because of pasturing in the Serra da Estrela and fish (including octupus, squid, and eel) is abundant. In the south, the most popular soup is a form of *gazpacho*with bread and smoked pork. A pork and clam stew cooked in a *cataplana*(a tightly sealed steamer) is the regional dish of the Alentejo. Olive oil ( *azeite*) is used throughout the country.

*Bacalhau*(salt cod) has been a national dish since the fifteenth century, when the Portuguese began fishing off the coast of Newfoundland. *Pastéis de bacalhau*(codfish croquettes) are a popular appetizer. An important seasoning is cumin; equally important is *piri-piri*, a hot red chili often used to season barbecued chicken. Cinnamon is a common flavoring for desserts, such as the traditional rice pudding ( *arroz doce*).

Port, a fortified wine produced in the region of the upper Douro River, is a major export. In rural households on ceremonial occasions, port is offered to celebrated guests, including the parish priest.

Family vacation packages

The noon meal ( *o almoço*) is served at about twelve thirty, and dinner ( *o jantar*)at 8 P.M. Breakfast ( *o pequeno almoço*) is Continental style. In rural regions, it was traditional for men to stop at the local café before heading to the fields to have their *pinga*(a shot of stiff brandy) to *matar o bicho*(kill the beast).

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***One of the most important ceremonies in rural households is the annual killing and preserving of the pig. This event occurs in late December or January and usually takes two days, since it involves making sausage, smoking ham ( *presunto,*), and salting several other parts of the pigs, including the belly ( *toucinho*). The noon meal on the first day is called *sarrabulho*and consists of rice, innards, and the blood of the pig.



*Azulejos, blue glazed tiles, are made into pictorial panels throughout Portugal. Ceramics and architecture are the country's greatest art forms.*

The traditional family meal on Christmas Eve is *bacalhau*with *molho verde*(a green sauce made with virgin olive oil), cabbage ( *couve*), and boiled potatoes. On Twelfth Night, a *bolo rei*(kings' bread) is served, often with a lucky coin in it. On the occasion of the village *festa*, some families roast a goat ( *cabrito*).

Coffehouses are places to meet friends, talk business, and study. Various styles of coffee are served, each with a special label.

***Basic Economy.***According to 1998 estimates agriculture constitutes 4 percent of the gross domestic product, industry 36 percent, and services 60 percent. Twelve percent of the population works in agriculture (compared with 40 percent in 1960), 32 percent in industry (32 percent in 1960), and 56 percent in services, commerce, and government (28 percent in 1960). Tourism is an important component of the service sector. Few families are wholly subsistence farmers, having relied traditionally on cash from the sale of surplus produce or from emigration of family members. Remittances from workers abroad are important to the economy, as are European Union transfers. Competition in the context of the European Union is changing the face of subsistence agriculture. Oil and gas are imported, and hydroelectric power is underdeveloped.

Best restaurants near me

***Land Tenure and Property.***Patterns of land tenure vary by region. In the Algarve, landholdings are small and are cultivated by owners, tenants, or sharecroppers. The Alentejo has traditionally been a region of low population density, latifundia that originated in the Roman estate system, and landless day laborers. Before 1974, approximately five hundred absentee landlords owned the bulk of the land. After 1974, the agrarian reform movement altered the system of land tenure in this region, although some of the early "revolutionary" expropriations have been restored to their original owners. The north has a much higher population density, land fragmentation, *minifúndia*that originated with the system brought by the Germanic invaders of the fifth and sixth centuries, and subsistence farming. These peasants ( *lavradores*) own, rent, and/or sharecrop several fields scattered throughout a village as well as neighboring villages. Although not as numerous as in the south, there is a population of landless day laborers ( *jornaleiros*) in northern Portugal, many of whom are women. Jornaleiros provide supplemental labor to the peasant household. In the much less densely populated northeastern region, a form of communal property ownership and [communal farming](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Collective_farming.html) survived into the [twentieth century](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/20th_century.html).

***Commercial Activities.***Commercial activities vary regionally. The peasants in the north cultivate corn (rye in the northeast), potatoes, wine grapes, and vegetables to sell at regional markets. Many also raise milk cattle, and the milk is sold to local cooperatives. Along the coastline, populations engage in fishing. Fish canning is an important export industry. The local economies in the north have been supplemented by centuries of emigration, and as a result, men have developed artisanal skills as masons and carpenters. Around Braga, Porto, and Guimarães there is a population of worker-peasants employed in the textile industry. The people of the Algarve engage in agriculture, fishing, and tourism. Cash-crop agriculture (wheat, olives, cork) predominates in the Alentejo. In central continental Portugal, a variety of irrigated grains (wheat, corn, and rice) are cultivated on medium-sized family farms for commercial sale. The Azores are largely agricultural, with some islands depending primarily on dairy and meat production and others on a combination of cattle raising, whaling, fishing, and small-scale agriculture (sugar beets, tea, tobacco, and vegetables). Madeira relies on agriculture (wine, bananas, sugarcane), fishing, and whaling in addition to small-scale cottage industry and tourism. The embroidery industry is a major employer of female workers.

***Major Industries.***Furniture, food processing, wineries, and pulp and paper are among the major industrial activities in the north. Heavier industry (steel working, shipbuilding, iron production, transport equipment, electrical machinery) and the bulk of the industrial working class are concentrated in the Lisbon-Setubal region in the south. In recent years, the construction industry has become important, and tourism is growing. Other important manufacturing industries are leather products, textiles, porcelain, and glassware.

Family vacation packages

***Trade.***Portugal's major exports are textiles, clothing and footwear, cork and paper products, machinery, transport equipment, and chemicals, and agricultural products. More than 80 percent of this trade is with other member states of the European Community. The most important trading partners are Germany and Spain.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***At the end of World War II, Portugal had a small upper class, a small middle class, a small urban working class, and a mass of rural peasants. The upper class included leaders of industry, financiers, top military personnel, the Catholic episcopate, the large landholders of the Alentejo, some professionals, and some government officials. The middle class included smaller rural landowners, secondary-level military officers, small business operators and shopkeepers, civil servants, and schoolteachers. The lower class ( *o povo*) consisted of the urban and rural working poor. There was little social mobility, and a distinction was made between those who worked with their hands and those who did not. Social status was ascribed and sustained by class endogamy. Before 1974, the State was based on corporative bodies representing different interest groups (the military, the Church, landholders, workers' syndicates, etc.). In theory, the Corporate State channeled class interests but in practice these were often circumvented by personal contacts.

The rural south with its massive population of landless day laborers was more hierarchical than the rural north, explaining the strength of the Communist Party and class consciousness in the south after the 1974 "revolution." Social stratification in the villages of the north was more fluid. Exposure to the very wealthy elites was also more limited. The 1976 constitution defined Portugal as a republic engaged in the formation of a classless society. While the Marxist tones of the constitution have largely been eradicated, Portugal is less socially rigid than in the past and education, which is more widely accessible as the country moves toward a service-oriented economy, is an avenue to social mobility. The middle class has grown and the peasant population has declined, but the distance separating the social, economic, and political elites from the bulk of the population remains.

Political Life

***Government.***Portugal has moved from an authoritarian regime, to a provisional military government, to a parliamentary democracy. The president, representing the executive branch, is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term and appoints the prime minister. In 1982, a constitutional revision put the military under civilian control, with the president as the commander in chief. A unicameral Assembly of the Republic, with two hundred thirty members elected by universal suffrage for four-year terms, constitutes the legislative branch. Center-right leadership predominated between 1985 and 1995 and the Socialist Party assumed leadership in 1995. Portugal has had regional voting patterns

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*A commercial building in the Amoreiras district of Lisbon. Services and industry account for 96 percent of the GDP.*

since the nineteenth century, with urban voting trends opposed to rural trends and the north voting more conservatively than the south.

At the local level, villages are run by a parish council ( *junta da frequesia*) whose members are elected by village households. Throughout the Salazar period, the juntas had little real power and few economic resources, though the members had local prominence. They depended on the *câmara*, the administrative body in the county seat, and the câmara is still an important unit of political organization and administration. After 1974, political parties and agricultural cooperatives assumed importance, though participation varies by region.

Regionalization has become increasingly important, in part mandated by constitutional provisions for administrative decentralization.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Although there was only one legal political party under Salazar (the União Nacional), today there are a wide variety of political parties with varying political viewpoints that stretch from the far right to the far left. The four major parties are the [Portuguese Communist Party](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Portuguese_Communist_Party.html) (PCP), The Portuguese Socialist Party (PS), the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and the Popular Party (PP; formerly the Center Democratic Party or CDS).

Before 1974 local people were not engaged with the political process but since then public debate and voting have both increased dramatically. In some rural communities, particularly in the south, a system of patronage prevailed, but this also changed after the 1974 revolution. Cultural elites have been replaced by officeholders and *politicos,*ambitious men who are part of the village bourgeoisie. Today office and positions of leadership are an achieved rather than an ascribed status, based on personal achievement rather than on whom one knows or the family of one's birth.

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***Social Problems and Control.***There is a national Supreme Court and several administrative, military, and fiscal courts. Under the Estado Novo, the PIDE (political police) was a powerful mechanism for repression. Known to have scores of informants, the PIDE had the authority to arrest and detain without charge or trial and served not only as an internal investigative arm but also as an institution of border and customs control. The PIDE was abolished in 1974, but there is a police force ( *Polícia de Segurança Pública*) in the main cities and towns. In rural areas, order is maintained by the *Guarda Nacional Republicana*(GNR). Violent crime is rare. Drugs and theft have become a problem, primarily in large metropolitan areas. In small communities, shame is still a powerful mechanism of social control,



*Vineyards above the upper Douro River. This region produces port, a major export.*

and throughout the country, parents use shame to discipline children.

***Military Activity.***The three military branches are the Army, Navy, and the Air Force. In 1997 military expenditures were 2.6 percent of the GDP. The military age is 20. The Portuguese military was heavily involved in the Colonial Wars in Africa and by 1974, 80 percent of Portugal's military forces were committed to that region. Military service was extended to as long as four years during the 1960s, a phenomenon that resulted in a sharp increase in clandestine emigration to France during that decade. The military, under the title of the Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas/MFA), instigated the bloodless coup of 25 April 1974 that overthrew the *Estado Novo*dictatorship. Portugal was a founding member of NATO. The United States maintains use of the Lajes Air Base on the island of Terceira in the Azores.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Family vacation packages

Prior to the twentieth century, the Roman Catholic Church and other charitable institutions such as the Santa Casa de Misericórdia were the primary mechanisms of social welfare in Portugal. During the Salazar regime, a system of Casas do Povo were established in local places, primarily to regulate the Corporate State, but also to take care of individual needs. Their impact was limited. State-operated systems of welfare did not emerge until the 1960s and they have improved with the growth of parliamentary democracy and greater economic stability and prosperity. Even so, in the early 1990s welfare benefits, financed through employee and employer contributions, were low by comparison with other European nations. Welfare programs include benefits for the ill and disabled, old-age pensions, maternity leaves, and small family allowances. After 1975 Portugal introduced a national health care system that paid all medical and pharmaceutical expenses.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

The Church is the major nongovernmental association that organizes social relationships. At the local level, people belong to a range of confraternities ( *confrarias*) that are under the auspices of their parish church. In the past confraternities were important mutual aid societies, sources of loans and the organizations responsible for proper burials. At the local level there has also been an important increase in folkloric dance groups ( *ranchos*) that involve adolescents and young adults in the reinvention of traditions. These ranchos are under the auspices of the national Federation for Portuguese Folklore. Portuguese people participate in a variety of other urban and national associations, many of them professionally based. Recently new associations for particular social groups, for example the gay and lesbian community and various immigrant communities, have also been formed.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Labor force statistics frequently underestimate the participation of women, particularly in the rural economy of the north. Some anthropologists view these activities as the basis of the significant economic and political power of peasant women. Middle- and upper-class women were at one time restricted to the domestic sphere, but this has changed as women have received advanced education and professional training, and full legal equality. Factors such as an interventionist state, low wages, flexibility in the allocation of labor resources of family members, a rigid social structure, and incipient economic and technological development explain the low rate of labor market segregation by gender.

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Since the 1960s, women have outpaced men in higher education, although class factors are ultimately more important in shaping these trends. Portugal has had one woman serve as president. Local attitudes are more conservative, and women have been slower to win political positions in municipal elections.

Women still perform the major domestic chores, although men are involved in child care. Among the elites, women rely on inexpensive domestic help. Important religious positions are still primarily in the hands of men.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Under the Salazar regime, women were subordinate to men and had few personal, political or economic rights. After 1974, the status and roles of women changed. The 1976 constitution outlawed discrimination by sex, and divorce and abortion became legal under certain circumstances. Women were given control over their economic lives and gained the right to carry their own passports and vote.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***The marriage rate rose in the twentieth century. People generally marry later in the north than in the south, though the differences are disappearing. In the south, consensual unions have been common, and the north has had high rates of permanent spinsterhood. Although it has declined since 1930, illegitimacy was high in rural northern Portugal and remains high. Marriage has generally been class endogamous, and there is a tendency for villages to be endogamous.

***Domestic Unit.***Households in the north tend to be complex, many of them composed of a three-generation stem family. Some villagers in the northeast follow a custom of natalocal residence for many years after marriage. In the south, households are simpler, generally composed of a nuclear family. Obligations between friends are sometimes felt to be more important than those between kin. Headship of the household is held jointly by a married couple, who in the rural north are referred to as *o patrão*and *a patroa*. Among urban middle-class groups and in the south, the concept of a dominant male head of household is more prevalent.

***Inheritance.***The Civil Code of 1867 called for partible inheritance, but parents can dispose freely of a third share ( *terço*) of their property, and women have the right to receive and bestow property. Among the peasants of the north, where inheritance is generally postmortem, parents use the promise of the terço as a form of old age security by marrying a child into the household. At their death, that child becomes the owner of the house ( *casa*); the rest of the property is divided equally among all heirs. *Partilhas*can cause friction between siblings since land is variable in quality. Some peasants hold land under long-term lease agreements that traditionally was passed on in one piece to one heir. The 1867 Civil Code eliminated the system of entailed estates ( *vínculos*) that made it possible for wealthier classes to pass on property to a single heir, usually by male primogeniture. Wealthier landowners have been able to keep property intact by having one heir buy out the siblings.

Family vacation packages

***Kin Groups.***Kinship is reckoned bilaterally, but the structure of domestic groups and the kinship links that are emphasized vary by region and social class. In northern Portugal, nicknames ( *apelidos*) are extremely important as terms of reference that connote moral equivalence in otherwise socially stratified rural communities. In the northwest, nicknames identify localized kin groups linked through females. In this region, there is a preference for uxorilocality and uxorivicinality, both of which can be linked to male emigration. Spiritual kinship ties are established at baptism and marriage. Kin frequently are chosen to serve as godparents ( *padrinhos*). In the absence of government-based institutions



*Portraits of the deceased ornament their grave markers in an Azorean cemetery.*

of childcare, eldercare, etc. the support networks based on kinship are extremely important in both rural and urban areas.

Socialization

***Child Rearing and Education.***Socialization is an important aspect of education. A child who is " *bem educado*" has good manners and is respectful toward adults. The Portuguese are indulgent toward their children, who are welcome everywhere. Life cycle ceremonies for children are in accordance with Catholic ritual. Baptisms are important events for the extended family. First communion can be an occasion for a family celebration.

Etiquette

Although Portugal has become more informal in its rules of etiquette, polite terms of address are still used. People with education are still addressed with phrases such as *Senhor Doutor*(Mr. Dr.) and an upper class and/or educated women still garners the title *Dona,*often coupled with a first name as in "Dona Maria." Like Spanish, Portuguese makes a distinction between the more formal and courteous "o senhor/a senhora" and the more informal and intimate *tu*. Strangers generally greet each other with a handshake. In more informal environments men who know one another will embrace and women greet one another with a kiss on both cheeks. Urban Portuguese of the middle and upper classes dress quite formally and there is a powerful sense of propriety about appropriate public dress.

Family vacation packages

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The majority of the citizens are Catholic, nominally if not in practice. Portugal has experienced waves of political anticlericalism throughout its history. Under Salazar, Portugal experienced a religious revival and the position of the local priest in the villages was greatly enhanced. Only after 1974 was this position challenged, and in recent years there has been a decline in the number of clergy. Religiosity is generally weaker in Lisbon and the south and stronger in the center, the north, and the islands. People develop personal relationships with particular saints. Magical practices, sorcery ( *feitiço*), witchcraft ( *bruxaria*) associated with notions of illness and healing, and notions of envy ( *inveja*) that invoke the evil eye are still part of the belief system of many people.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***Local village life is marked by celebrations honoring the saints and the Virgin Mary. *Romarias*(pilgrimages) to regional



*A group of people wait for a bus in Angro Do Heroismo. Urban Portuguese have a powerful sense of propriety about appropriate public dress.*

shrines are a central feature of religious practice, especially in the north. Villagers also celebrate an annual festa (generally to honor the patron saint) that includes a procession and combines sacred and secular elements.

The famous religious shrine Fátima is in the province of Ribatejos northeast of Lisbon, where the Virgin of the Rosary appeared to three small shepherd children in 1917. In 1932, devotion to Our Lady of Fátima was approved by the Catholic Church and a large basilica was built. Fátima is now a place of international pilgrimage. Pilgrims often walk there from the remotest corners of northern Portugal for the May and October observances. Among the other important pilgrimage sites are Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga and Nossa Senhora dos Remedios in Lamego.

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***Death and Afterlife.***Death is a fundamental part of village life. Church bells toll to send the message that a neighbor ( *vizinho*) has passed away. In some areas, the gates and doors of the dead person's house are opened to allow anyone to enter and relatives begin to wail around a body prepared for viewing. Burial is in local cemeteries, and family graves are well tended. Each village has several burial societies (confrarias). All Saints Day is an occasion for reverence for those who have departed. Mourning is signified by the wearing of black; a widow generally will wear black for the rest of her life, while other kin remain in mourning for varying lengths of time. Portugal has various cults of death. Such beliefs are not confined to rural areas; in the cities there is a network of spirit mediums who claim to contact the dead.

Medicine and Health Care

The death rate and infant mortality have declined, and life expectancy has increased. Since 1974, medical education has been improved and there are more medical personnel and hospitals. Health care is better in the cities than in the countryside, although women in rural areas no longer give birth at home. Good health often is associated with what is natural, and changes in diet are frequently cited as the cause of disease. The leading causes of death are malignant neoplasms, diseases of the circulatory and respiratory systems, and death from injuries and poisons. Portugal has a low suicide rate but high motor accident fatalities. Folk medical practices are still prevalent in some parts. Curers use a combination of prayer, religious paraphernalia, and traditional and modern medicines.

Secular Celebrations

25 April has been an official holiday since 1974, commemorating the overthrow of the *Estado Novo*by the Armed Forces Movement. On 1 May, the Portuguese celebrate Labor Day. Portugal Day (10 June) commemorates the death of Luis de Camões, the national epic poet. 15 August, celebrating the Assumption of the Virgin, is observed. 5 October is Republic Day, commemorating the collapse of the monarchy in 1910. Since 1974 it has assumed more significance as a national holiday, while 28 May, a commemorative day complete with military parades that in the Salazar regime honored the 1926 military coup, is no longer a day of national celebration.

The Arts and Humanities

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***Literature.***The most famous work of national literature is *Os Lusíadas*, an epic poem about the voyage of [Vasco da Gama](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Vasco_da_Gama.html) by Luís de Camões (1525?–1579?). Of importance during the seventeenth century, when Portugal regained autonomy, were the *Lettres Portugaises*( *Portuguese Letters*) written by Sister Mariana Alcoforada. In the early 1970s, Alcoforada's work stimulated the *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*( *New Portuguese Letters*), a statement of [feminism](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Feminism.html) written by the so-called three Marias. The greatest period for literature was the nineteenth century, when Júlio Dinis, Camilo Castelo Branco, and José Maria Eça de Queirós used a social realist and sometimes satirical style to write about class relations, family, inheritance, and religion. Realism was revived during the twentieth century with the short stories of rural life by Manuel Torga, the novels of Aquilino Ribeiro, and epic tales such as Ferreira de Castro's *Emigrantes*. Perhaps the greatest Portuguese modernist is Fernando Pessoa. [Modernism](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Modernism.html) attacked the values of the middle classes of the liberal period. Contemporary realists include Lobo Antunes and José Saramago, who won the Nobel Prize in 1998.

***Graphic Arts.***The greatest art forms are architecture and ceramics. Painting has not been particularly important. Folk arts are well developed, and craftspeople are found throughout the country. Rugs made in Arraiolas are well-known internationally. Women in the north and the island of Madeira produce embroidered goods that are sold to tourists. Pottery varies in style according to geographic region. Artistic expression is also evident in the items produced for decorating the floats carried in religious processions and in the filigree jewelry made in the Porto region, which also is worn at festivals.

***Performance Arts.***The fado is one of the most important performing traditions. *Ranchos folklóricos*(folkloric dance groups) are being revived, supported by the tourist industry. Dancers dress in traditional regional costumes and perform dances that have historical and regional origins. Bull-fighting is also an important performance art.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Since 1974, the social sciences have emerged strongly, with programs in most universities. Of importance are the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon and the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais in Lisbon. Portugal publishes two major journals of social science.

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—C AROLINE B. B RETTELL

P RÍNCIPE S EE S ÃO T OMÉ AND P RÍNCIPE

**Also read article about**[**Portugal**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Portugal.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_1)

**Tameka Wilson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

you should get some information on the people and how they get along in the community.  
Tameka

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_2)

**Brianna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I really liked the information in this article! It really helped me with my geography assignment. I had to find 20 facts about the cultural aspects and traditional things on this country. Thanks for helping me understand the country more and helping me get an A on this assignment!!!  
Peace.  
  
Brianna L.  
Centaurus High School

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_3)

**Joe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

could use more stuff on child rearing. thx tho. the artical could also use more things on birth traditions.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_4)

**marlon jay t. gadiaza**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm a political science student at present and currently conducting a research about the political culture of these two countries Portugal and Spain so with your help im asking your website to please if ever add the said article with regards to the two countries mentioned above.Thank you and i'm looking forward to your favorable response.Thank you and please do not hesitate to e-mail me regarding this matter.Thank you.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_5)

**brad**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

good very good im doing reaserch and it healped alot

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_6)

**Tasha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i think that this was a very helpful site. when i have a world cultures assignment this is the first site that i go to. and usually its the only one that i need. it has helped me with the kurds, palestinians, turks, arabs, and two more that i really cant remember right now. and now its even helping me with portugal. i reccomend this site if u really wanna get a good grade. this is the best!  
-Tasha Klingensmith  
Killingly High School

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_7)

**Luisa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very goood information!! but it could include the clothing... i really need it for my s.s project..

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[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_8)

[**Josh**](mailto:ramfred97%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm doing a report on Portugal and half of my information came from here. I'm only a sixth grader but i thought your sight was extremely helpful! Thank You!

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_9)

[**Old Bone**](mailto:jbdefreitas%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey John,  
  
read this, especially the demographic section, which clearly says, that the gypsy population of Portugal is 100.000, and we're not talking about the 'others' yet.  
8-10 percent of population of Hungary means the same quantity, but we're working on it mate!!!

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_10)

[**siti**](mailto:cutiegurlz_ctfc%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank God i found this entry! and bunch of thanks for all the information. it helps me a lot to complete my assignment. :)  
  
siti  
-malaysia-

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_11)

[**Korkut Ozarcan**](mailto:kozarcan%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi There,  
  
I am a Proto-Turkish researchist and i would like to inform you that the name of Portugal-ia comes from completely different root: In Proto-Turkish, Port means harbour.UG means water. AL/EL means people and IA means Land. So basically it means "The Land of People of Water. 13000 years ago Proto-Turks went to today's Portugal and settled down there bringing their own language and alphabet  
Regards, Korkut Ozarcan

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_12)

[**Mike**](mailto:www_mikeb%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20ca)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi, I really liked your site :) I was just wondering if you know where I could find something about sexual rituels in Portuguese ?? I am doing a project on sexuality in other cultures. Thank you.

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_13)

**TUGBOAt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the information,one of the things it could have is their native clothes and why they wear it. Other than that it was very thorough. thanks again!!

Best clothing retailers

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_14)

[**Alexandre Skromov**](mailto:anskromov%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com%20[dot]%20br)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

They don't wear much tradional clothing nowadays but in rural are and traditional festivities they do sometimes. It's more a matter of national pride and cultural identity, it also varies a bit from region to region but is overall similar. And indeed it would be good to add.  
  
  
As for the proto-turk theory...I am sorry but that's just a coincidence. The most proto-turkish people that Portugal got was the Alans, and they were absorbed into the local population abandoning their language in favor of Vulgar Latin of the region, intermarrying and converting to Arian Chritianity, the modern day name came from the Latin as in above and the language came from a dialect of galician plus latin and other influences.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_15)

**Thomas**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the info on Portugal. It really helped with my geography project. Although, you could add some info on how people dress and some stuff about historical traditions. But still, good work.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_16)

**Shontelle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much this has helped me on my geography assignment a bunch!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_17)

**Lori**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It was awesome...But I need more info on their agriculture, can't seem to find it anywhere!! Please help!!

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_18)

[**anaticha**](mailto:anaticha777%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello everyboby!  
Thanks to a lovely articled about my sweet country .I will throuth on the air one sugestion for all of the writters and readers ,take some books on ours free time go to the libery and have some more informations about all the colonies from Portugal awoesome.You guys will see how much mixed cultured the protuguese guys been making all this years.One for all ,all for one.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_19)

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[**rusty**](mailto:rustylohr13%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

well you need more information on the role of the women

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_20)

[**rusty**](mailto:rustylohr13%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

well you need more information on the role of the women

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_21)

[**John Belo**](mailto:helobelo%20[at]%20comcast%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

excellent. A very comprehensive look at we lusitanians. Should of mentioned that we are fanatic about work.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_22)

[**teej**](mailto:tj%20[dot]%206589%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

good job on this. really helpful none the less. where did you get all of this info?

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_23)

[**Hunter**](mailto:Hunter_Stafford12%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi, My name is Hunter. I am a student from bondurant, Iowa in the Bondurant middle school. I am currently doing a project for my geography class on the country of Portugal! I was hoping you might be able to give me some information about this country.  
  
I was curious to know more about what it is like there and about more human interactions. I have been having trouble finding information about human interactions: occupations, Architecture, games, clothing adaptions to habitat, government, and religons. If there is anything else that you feel I should know about your country please feel free to tell as much as possible. Thank you for your help with my project! (:  
  
Sincerely,  
  
Hunter Stafford

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_24)

**amina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WHAT ARE THE MAIN TRADITIONS OF PORTUGAL?  
WHAT IS THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN PORTUGAL?

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_25)

**RUDY**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

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THS INFORMATION IN THIS ARTICLE WAAS REALLY HELPFUL.IM DOING A RESEARCH PAPER ON PORTUGAL AND THIS IS LIKE THE ONLY WEBSITE I HAD TO GO ON TO DO THE WHOLE PAPER.(:

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_26)

[**Marianne**](mailto:algarve123%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20nl)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for this useful, clearly written and above all not too boring and too long, information on Portugal.  
However I was hoping to find some more info on hunting traditions. Maybe you could write something about this?

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_27)

[**boobies**](mailto:boobies%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

portugal is the best. Dosent everyone love portugal? who dosent like portugal its the best.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_28)

[**hhrtjh**](mailto:coco34725%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

when did the Portuguese get married in like the 1700s?

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_29)

[**katy perry**](mailto:bob%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i don't find the typical clothes can you guide me?

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_30)

**Carly Clemmons**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

really cool this helped me alot on a school project

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_31)

[**Preso**](mailto:preso11%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Just wanted to say thanks too; to whoever is responsible for this site. I'm doing a project on the country for my cultural diversity class, and it has been a big help.  
  
One Love, from Jamaica  
Peace

Best clothing retailers

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_32)

[**Preso**](mailto:preso11%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Just wanted to say thanks too; to whoever is responsible for this site. I'm doing a project on the country for my cultural diversity class, and it has been a big help.  
  
One Love, from Jamaica  
Peace

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_33)

**Lakeisha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think portugal people are pretty cool :)and i think they have alot of diffrent traditions how they live from other peoples countrys i would like to go to portugal but not live there

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_34)

**Rod Stuart**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Trying to find pics of Portuguese mariners costumes - particularly of the pilot of the "PINTA" with the large floppy hat. Circa 1400 - 1600. Any ideas?  
Thanks. Rod.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_35)

**Mafalda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Portugal never had a woman president. Portugal had a woman who was Prime Minister, not president. And that was due to the fact that the prime minister died or something like that, and she was vice prime-minister...

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_36)

**Alyssa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Portugal's National Main Dish is the Bacalhau or "Salted Codfish."And their religion is mainly Christianity Catholism.

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_37)

**Marc**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I find this article very interesting. I was born in Lisboa in 1960 and raised in America. I haven't returned to my country since but I carry the virtues of Portugal with me even now. Looking forward to learning more about my birth place and eventually return some day

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_38)

**mary rose**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I want to ask here if what is the common ideal woman of the portuguese man people specially if they have some people do conversation to other country like a relationship?i need to know some option about that..that you and God bless!!

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_39)

**Robert Anthony**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the information in this article. Really helped with my culture assignment : )

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_40)

**vijay tipnis**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

my great grandfather was portuguese subject when he was resident of panaji of portuguese GOA. he was civil servant of portuguese regime.he died in the year 1943. he was fond of portuguese culture & music. i am also interested in portuguese culture. i want portuguese pen/email friends. you can contact me on my email:- vijay\_tipnis@rediffmail.com .thanks.

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_41)

**Mary**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am of Portuguese heritage and found this article to be extremely interesting and informative. Thank you.

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_42)

**jennifer holt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

James Guill wrot a wonderful "History of thr Azores"..unfortunately after his passing the book is noe out of print. Copies msy be found on Amazon or E-Bay but are now pricey.

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_43)

**peyman Gholikhani**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks alot,It was helpful, specially vilage of Fatima

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_44)

**Beatriz**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Jerom you can try one thing that we called filigrana is a very traditional [jewellery](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Jewellery.html) in portugal but is not origined from here, it came from the roman ocupation but the shape of a heart that is the more commum is traditional only in portugal

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_45)

**Name**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Portuguese is part of my nationality but I do not speak it I think that this was a beautiful way to express our culture to help others learn about the culture

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_46)

[**Livian**](mailto:sivaranikasiraja23%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

HI , im doing assingment regarding the portuguese culture during funeral .. can anyone tell me in detailed about the conducting funeral .. attire .. food served .. bells ?? please :)

Best clothing retailers

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_47)

**madyson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this gives so much information it really helped me with my project

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_48)

**Aiden Neal**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

how is the clothing adapt to the climate. if u can email me the answer it would be greatly appreciated

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_49)

**Pedro**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Portugal is the Biggest Racist country that i have ever lived in. I feared for my life there and i consider myself lucky that my family got out alive! I have never lived in such poverty (Sopas dos Pobres everyday) 40% unemployment rate and 60% of the population earn less than $932 USD per month, and that's considered Middle Class here! Within the European Union it is the worst of the worst place to live.  
  
The bottom line is the bulk of the People in our poor country exist in a brainless comma that is fed by Ignorance, anti-Spanish hate, and severe Racism of pretty much everybody that isn't Portuguese! And, Portugal started the Global Slave Trade in 1441 so it is definitely NOT a safe place for Blacks!!  
  
Get educated on the Truths about Racist Portugal now.  
  
  
Be SAFE friends. Hugs.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_50)

**Antonio Teixeira**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi Pedro  
Can you please specify Portugal as being a racist country , as far as I know racism start within ourselves.  
And you eating sopa dos pobres was your option or possible your familie unfortunately not having conditions to give you more than that , Portugal is one of the safest country's in the world to live it is beatifull also ,and is not a retarded like you who comes here and start this hate race , have you left the country yet ? If so ill be very happy as you don't even deserve be associated with my country.  
Good riddance

Best restaurants near me

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_51)

**Sushi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Just wondering do they have any big festivals or celebrations? (For a school project)  
Sushi

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html#Comments_52)

**Irma West**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am interested in the occult practices in Portugal in the ancient times - what was know to be practiced an by whom? doing an essay on occult practices in Europe.

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

E-mail:

 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

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[Culture of Portugal forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Poland](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Poland.html)[Puerto Rico](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico

Culture Name

Puerto Rican

Alternative Names

Borinquen, Borincano, Borinqueño

Orientation

***Identification.***Christopher Columbus landed in Puerto Rico in 1493, during his second voyage, naming it San Juan Bautista. The Taínos, the indigenous people, called the island *Boriquén Tierra del alto señor*("Land of the Noble Lord"). In 1508, the Spanish granted settlement rights to Juan Ponce de León, who established a settlement at Caparra and became the first governor. In 1519 Caparra had to be relocated to a nearby coastal islet with a healthier environment; it was renamed Puerto Rico ("Rich Port") for its harbor, among the world's best natural bays. The two names were switched over the centuries: the island became Puerto Rico and its capital San Juan. The United States anglicized the name to "Porto Rico" when it occupied the island in 1898 after the Spanish-American War. This spelling was discontinued in 1932.

Puerto Ricans are a Caribbean people who regard themselves as citizens of a distinctive island nation in spite of their colonial condition and U.S. citizenship. This sense of uniqueness also shapes their migrant experience and relationship with other ethnoracial groups in the United States. However, this cultural nationalism coexists with a desire for association with the United States as a state or in the current semiautonomous commonwealth status.

***Location and Geography.***Puerto Rico is the easternmost and smallest of the Greater Antilles, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and the Caribbean Basin to the south. Puerto Rico is a crucial hemispheric access point. It was thus a valuable acquisition for European powers and the United States. Puerto Rico retains its strategic importance, housing the U.S. Army Southern Command and other military facilities. Since the 1940s, the [U.S. Navy](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/United_States_Navy.html) has used its offshore islands for military maneuvers that have damaged their ecology, economy, and quality of life.

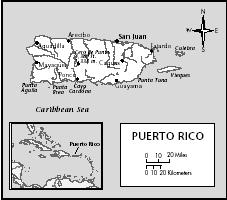
Puerto Rico includes the surrounding small islands, including Culebra and Vieques to the east and Mona to the west. Mona is a nature reserve and wildlife refuge under government jurisdiction. The total land area, including the smaller islands, is 3,427 square miles (8,875 square kilometers).

The tropical island ecosystem is unique and diversified in spite of industrialization and urban sprawl. Beside Mona, the government has established several other nature reserves. There are twenty forest reserves, such as El Yunque Rain Forest and the Caribbean National Forest, which are under federal jurisdiction.

A rugged central mountain range constitutes two-thirds of the island and separates a northern coastal plain noted for karst formations from a drier southern plain. The Taínos recognized the power of the seasonal hurricanes that affect the island. The Spanish word *huracán*originated from the Taíno *juracán,*the sacred name for this phenomenon.

Spain turned Puerto Rico into a military stronghold. San Juan was walled and fortified to house military forces, but the other settlements were neglected until the eighteenth century; isolated by the scarcity of roads, they subsisted on contraband, with little official management. The impenetrable highlands became a refuge in which settlers, runaway slaves, Taínos, and deserters produced a racially mixed population.

***Demography.***Puerto Rico is densely populated and urbanized. Census projections for 2000 place the population at 3,916,000, not including the estimated 2.7 million Puerto Ricans in the mainland United States. Almost 70 percent of the island is



*Puerto Rico*

urban, in contrast to its rural character up to the 1940s. Sprawl has integrated formerly distinct *barrios*(rural and suburban neighborhoods), cities, and towns. The San Juan metropolitan area extends almost to Fajardo in the east and west to Arecibo. Ponce in the south and Mayagüez in the west also have become sprawling metropolitan areas.

Puerto Ricans self-define as a homogenized Taíno, African, and Spanish mixture. Taínos were [Amerindians](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Indigenous_peoples_of_the_Americas.html) who occupied the island before European domination. Then estimated at thirty thousand, they were reduced to two thousand by the seventeenth century through exploitative labor, disease, native uprisings, and emigration to the other islands. But many fled into the highlands or intermarried: Spanish immigration to the island was mostly male and interracial relations less stigmatizing than among Anglo settlers. The contemporary revival of Taíno identity is partially based on the survival of Taíno highland communities.

Although the Spanish introduced slavery to replace a dwindling Taíno labor force, slavery never reached large proportions until the plantation system was fully implemented in the nineteenth century. However, there was a significant African influx of slave, indentured, and free labor.

Chinese labor was introduced in the nineteenth century, and immigrants came from Andalusia, Catalonia, the Basque provinces, Galicia, and the Canary Islands. Threatened by Latin America's nineteenth century revolutions, Spain facilitated immigration through economic incentives, attracting other nationalities as loyalists fled republican uprisings. The nineteenth century also brought Corsican, French, German, Lebanese, Scottish, Italian, Irish, English, and American immigration.

The U.S. occupation increased the American presence, and the 1959 revolution in Cuba brought an estimated 23,000 Cubans. Many Dominicans immigrated in search of economic opportunities; some use Puerto Rico as a port of entry into the United States. Tension and prejudice against these two groups have emerged. Americans, Cubans, and Dominicans tend to consider their presence in Puerto Rico temporary.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Spanish and English are the official languages, but Puerto Rico is overwhelmingly Spanish speaking, despite government efforts to eradicate Spanish or foster bilingualism. [Puerto Rican Spanish](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Puerto_Rican_Spanish.html) is a dialect of standard Spanish that has its own particularities. The influence of Taíno is evident in descriptions of material objects ("hammock" and "tobacco"), natural phenomena ("hurricane"), place names and colloquialisms. However, Africans gave Puerto Rican Spanish defining nuances. African speech contributed words and also influenced phonology, syntax, and prosody.

Language is a significant cultural marker of national identity for a people whose culture has always been under siege because of colonialism. U.S. officials disdained Puerto Rican Spanish as an unintelligible "patois" that had to be eradicated; they also believed that by learning English, Puerto Ricans would be socialized into "American values." The U.S. government imposed educational policies prescribing schooling in English through the first half of the twentieth century; language became part of the long-standing struggles over Puerto Rico's culture and colonial condition.

Although "English-only" policies were abrogated after the establishment of the commonwealth in 1952, debates about language have intensified. Purists decry the loss of the "mother tongue," advocating vigilance and "correctness," yet the "deterioration" of Puerto Rican Spanish through English "interference" has been exaggerated. Puerto Ricans in the United States have developed a linguistic repertoire that involves mixing English and Spanish in everyday talk. This code switching has been stigmatized as "Spanglish" and condemned by language purists, but is actually culturally significant as an identity marker.

***Symbolism.***The most powerful cultural symbol is the island itself. Idealized in a variety of media, its image resonates even among members of U.S. migrant communities. Natural and human-made features associated with the island are imbued with great value. The *coquí*(a tiny indigenous tree frog), royal palms, Taíno petroglyphs, Luquillo Beach and El Yunque, *bomba*and *plena*(music and dance forms of African origin), literature, and native food are some of these features. Puerto Ricans in New York City have built *casitas,*copies of the traditional rural wooden houses painted in vibrant colors and decorated with Puerto Rican objects.

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The *jíbaro,*the highland rural folk, has become a controversial symbol because jíbaros are depicted as descendants of white Spanish settlers in a way that casts Puerto Rico as a backward rural society and negates Puerto Rico's African roots.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***The Taínos received the Spanish with civility but were quickly farmed out in *encomiendas*, a system of indentured labor, to work at mining and cultivation. By mid-century, African slaves were imported for labor, and both slaves and Taínos soon rose in armed rebellion.

Spain realized that the island's wealth did not lie in gold and silver, yet it was attacked repeatedly by European powers that recognized its strategic location. Puerto Rico survived on contraband and piracy, trading cattle, hides, sugar, tobacco, and foodstuffs directly with other nations.

In the eighteenth century, the Spanish initiated a series of improvements, reforming the system of land tenure and in effect initiating private ownership. Overhauled policies allowed trade with other nations. These measures fostered development and increased settlement, urbanization, and population growth; they also facilitated the emergence of a sense of culture. By the eighteenth century, Puerto Ricans had developed a definite creole identity, distinguishing themselves from the *hombres de la otra banda*("men from the other side"), who were transient colonial administrators, military personnel, or exploiters.

The nineteenth century fostered increased political consciousness and claims for autonomy or incorporation as an overseas province. In liberal times, Puerto Rico was granted civil liberties, which were abrogated upon the return to conservatism and repression.

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The independence movement culminated in the [Grito de Lares](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Grito_de_Lares.html) of 1868, an armed rebellion that was reported to the Spanish by an infiltrator and suppressed. Some of its leaders were executed, and those who were exiled continued their struggle from Europe, Latin America, and New York City, where they worked alongside Cuban patriots.

***National Identity.***Cultural nationalism generated political activism, literary and artistic production, and economic development. In 1897, Spain granted Puerto Rico an Autonomic Charter that recognized its right to internal self-government. The first autonomous government was constituted in April 1898, but its accession was postponed when the United States declared war on Spain.

The national consciousness that emerged under Spanish rule survived into the twentieth century under U.S. control. The United States saw itself as exercising a benign modernizing function, but Puerto Ricans saw it as eroding their culture and curtailing their autonomy. This tension was aggravated by U.S. capitalistic practices. The government facilitated the economic exploitation of the island's resources by absentee corporations and fostered the exportation of local workers as cheap migrant labor. Claiming that the island lacked resources and was overpopulated, the U.S. government encouraged migration, with the consequent formation of diasporic communities across the United States.

Americanization efforts included English-only education and the implementation of an American educational system, the appointment of pro-U.S. officials, the incorporation of Anglo-Saxon common law principles and practices into the island's legal system, the grant of U.S. citizenship on the eve of World War I, and the introduction of U.S. currency and the devaluation of the local peso.

The advent of the commonwealth in 1952 did not end debates over Puerto Rico's culture and colonial status. Many people view the changes over the last century as modernization and the introduction of a corporate [capitalist](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Capitalism.html) culture that has spread around the world without erasing cultural differences.

***Ethnic Relations.***Cultural identity is commonly defined in terms of nationality rather than ethnicity. [Puerto Ricans in the United States](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Puerto_Ricans_in_the_United_States.html) have been defined as an ethnoracial group in spite of their nationalism.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Old San Juan is a world-class example of Spanish urban architecture adapted to a tropical environment. After the commonwealth government initiated its renovation, it became a tourist attraction and a handsome residential and commercial area. Its



*A man hand-rolls cigars for the Bayamón Tobacco Corporation, the last family-owned cigar producer in Puerto Rico. They produce five thousand cigars per day.*

landmarks and fortifications, such as the Castle of San Felipe del Morro, are regarded as international treasures. The greater San Juan metropolitan area is a congested mix of undistinguished building styles that contains functionally distinct areas: Condado and Isla Verde are tourist enclaves, Santurce is a mix of commercial and residential spaces, Hato Rey has become the financial and banking center, and Río Piedras is the site of the University of Puerto Rico. Sprawl has eroded the sense of community and precluded pedestrian use, and an excellent network of modern highways has fostered car dependency to the detriment of the environment.

The Spanish plan of cities organized in a grid pattern of intersecting streets with central plazas bordered by public buildings recurs throughout the older sectors of the island's towns and cities. Residential architecture is eclectic. The U.S. occupation brought about a revival of the Spanish colonial style. Grillwork is ubiquitous because it offers security against criminality. Elite families built Art Nouveau and Art Deco houses, some luxurious and deserving of their designation as private "castles." The 1950s brought good examples of contemporary architecture.

Family vacation packages

Puerto Ricans have a strong cultural preference for owning their own houses. Housing developments ( *urbanizaciones*) are the norm; shopping centers and strip malls have partially replaced the old marketplaces. Public housing projects ( *caseríos*) have supplanted the old urban slums; people initially resisted them because they violated cultural expectations of individual housing and community. High-rise condominiums were constructed in the 1950s and have become desirable housing choices. In the few remaining rural areas, wooden and straw huts have been replaced by cement block houses.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Food preferences were shaped by the island's cultural diversity and predominantly rural lifestyle. Taíno and African influences are seen in the use of tropical fruits and vegetables, seafood, condiments, and legumes and cereals (the ubiquitous rice and beans). The Spanish contributed culinary techniques and wheat products and introduced pork and cattle. The tropical climate required the importation of preserved food; dried codfish was long a dietary mainstay. Candied fruits and fruits preserved in syrup are also traditional. Rum and coffee are the preferred beverages.

Traditionally, meals were patterned after Spanish custom: a continental breakfast, a large midday meal, and a modest supper. Many people now eat a large breakfast, a fast-food lunch, and a large dinner. Puerto Ricans tolerate fast-food, but prefer native food and home cooking. There are fast-food establishments that serve rice and beans, and other local dishes. The island boasts restaurants and eating places across the economic and gastronomic spectrums; San Juan, in particular, offers international choices.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Although American holidays are legally celebrated, the foods associated with them are prepared according to local tastes and culinary techniques. Thus, the Thanksgiving turkey is done with *adobo,*a local seasoning mix. The traditional holiday menu includes *pernil*or *lechón asado*(spit-roasted pork), *pasteles*(plantain or yucca tamales), and *arroz con gandules*(rice with pigeon peas); typical desserts are *arroz con dulce*(coconut rice pudding), *bienmesabe*(coconut pudding), and *tembleque*(coconut milk pudding). *Coquito*is a popular coconut and rum beverage.

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***Basic Economy.***Industrialization has eroded the viability of agriculture as an important economic activity and the island is dependent on food imports. Local products are considered of higher quality.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Most Puerto Rican land is in private hands. Owning a home holds important cultural value. The emphasis placed on owning one's own home led to agrarian reform in the 1940s and the *parcela*program, a local homesteading effort by which the government appropriated land held by corporations for exploitative agribusiness and sold it for minimum prices. The only period within the twentieth century when private property was affected was precisely between 1898 and the 1940s when the whole island was literally carved up among a handful of absentee U.S. sugar-producing corporations and their local subsidiaries.

The government holds portions and there are protected nature reserves.

***Commercial Activities.***Beginning in the 1950s, Operation Bootstrap, the commonwealth's developmental program, fostered rapid industrialization. Tax incentives and cheap skilled labor brought many U.S. industries to the island, but by the late 1960s, the social costs and the ending of tax incentives eroded the economy. The flight of industry to cheaper labor markets in Asia and Latin America and the rise of transnational business have reduced the process of industrialization.

***Major Industries.***Restrictive U.S. laws and policies and U.S.-dominated banking and finance have limited Puerto Rico's ability to develop its own markets and conduct international business. The island is now dependent on manufacturing and services. The government remains a major employer. It has fostered petrochemical and high-technology industries that capitalize on an educated labor force. Pharmaceuticals, chemicals, electronics, medical equipment, and machinery are the leading products. Tourism is the most important service industry.

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***Trade.***Major imports include chemicals, machinery, food, transport equipment, petroleum and petroleum products, professional and scientific instruments, and clothing and textiles.

Major exports include chemicals and chemical products, food, and machinery.

***Division of Labor.***There is a professional class in Puerto Rico. It is a full-fledged Westernized society, with the government being a major employer. Unemployment rates average at 12.5 percent. Agriculture is a waning labor source.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***A capitalist class structure is organized by access to wage labor and means of production. During the colonial period, small farms and subsistence agriculture prevailed. This prevented the emergence of a privileged *hacendado*class as in other latin societies. In the nineteenth century, with the implementation of an economy dependent on sugar, tobacco, and coffee, landowning and merchant classes emerged, along with a small class of urban professionals. Most political leaders came from those classes, but the bulk of the population remained artisans, sharecroppers, and laborers. Families that retained their assets under U.S. control made the transition to the professional, business, banking, and industrialist class. The economic changes of the 1950s produced an expanded middle class of government employees, administrators, and white-collar workers and an industrial working class replaced the rural one.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***A "good" family and education are considered more important than wealth, but class distinctions increasingly are based on the ability to purchase and consume certain goods and commodities such as cars, electronic media, clothes, and travel.

Family vacation packages

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*A doorway painted to represent the flag used in the 1868 Lares Insurrection.*

Political Life

***Government.***The official head of state is the president of the United States even though Puerto Ricans can not vote in presidential elections. A local governor is elected every four years through universal suffrage. An elected resident commissioner represents the island in the U.S. Congress but has no vote. Puerto Rico has its own constitution. A bicameral legislature is elected every four years. The Senate is composed of two senators from each of eight senatorial districts and eleven senators at large; the House of Representatives consists of eleven representatives at large and one each from forty representative districts. Minority party representation is guaranteed in both chambers regardless of election returns.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Political parties are based on the three traditional positions on status: autonomy in an enhanced commonwealth status, statehood, and independence. Currently, these positions are represented by the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), the New Progressive Party (PNP), and the Independence Party of Puerto Rico (PIP). The PPD was founded in the late 1930s by the architect of commonwealth status, Luis Muñoz Marín, who became the first elected governor in 1948. The PNP emerged in 1965, succeeding an old pro-statehood party. The PIP was established in 1948 when a PPD faction split off because of Muñoz's failure to support independence. Its popularity peaked in 1952 but has decreased. However, the PIP plays an important opposition role.

Over the last forty years, government control has alternated between the PPD and the PNP. Puerto Ricans vote politicians in and out for their governing abilities rather than their position on status. Concerns about the economy and the quality of life predominate.

Several plebiscites have been held to allow residents to exercise their right to self-determination by expressing their status preference. However, the United States has not honored any plebiscite results.

***Social Problems and Control.***The unified court system is administered by the island's Supreme Court, which is appointed by the governor. But Puerto Rico is also subject to federal law and constitutes a district within the U.S. federal court system, with a local district court that has jurisdiction over federal law cases. Legal practice incorporates elements from Anglo-American common law and the continental civil code law inherited from Spain. There is no "customary" law.

The island has its own police force, though the FBI also exercises jurisdiction. The correctional system has been plagued by overpopulation, lack of rehabilitation programs, poor physical facilities, undertrained correctional officers, and violent inmate gangs. Criminality is a major problem. Some attribute it to the flight of Cuba's organized crime, which shifted operations to Puerto Rico after 1959. Others blame modernization and the alleged deterioration of traditional values. Many crimes are committed by drug addicts. Drug addiction has also brought the spread of AIDS.

***Military Activity.***The island is fully integrated into the U.S. military system. Puerto Ricans serve in the U.S. forces. There is also a local national guard. Many residents object to U.S. military control and the military use of Culebra and Vieques. The U.S. ceased maneuvers in Culebra in the mid-1970s, but intensified them in Vieques. It has faced resistance and civil disobedience from many Puerto Ricans.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Ongoing economic difficulties have produced high rates of unemployment. Puerto Rico receives federal aid but does not get equal coverage or qualify for most welfare programs. The local government is the main welfare provider. Although it has managed to sustain a relatively high standard of living, the cost of living is steep and Puerto Ricans accumulate high levels of debt. However, Puerto Rico's achievements in reducing mortality, increasing literacy, improving medical services, and raising life expectancy have placed it on a par with many U.S. states.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

The list of organizations and associations in Puerto Rico is vast, since the number and kind of them there parallel those found in any state of the U.S. They include international (the Red Cross), national (YMCA, Boy and Girl Scouts), and local groups (Puerto Rico Bar Association).

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Gender relations have become increasingly egalitarian. When the island had a subsistence lifestyle, women were important economic producers in rural households and outside the home. The ideal of the home-tending housewife has been honored among the middle and upper classes but has become impractical. In an ideal male world, women are expected to do the double duty of workplace and household labor, but this is changing because of the need to maintain double-salary households.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***There is a long-standing tradition of women being active in public life as intellectuals, writers, activists, politicians, and professionals. When women's suffrage was approved in 1932, Puerto Rico elected the first woman legislator in the Western Hemisphere.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Family vacation packages

***Marriage.***Puerto Ricans consider family life a core cultural value; family and kin are viewed as the most enduring and reliable support network. Despite a high divorce rate and an increase in serial monogamy, most people prefer marriage to living together, although female virginity is not as important as it was in the past. Today courting is based on group or individual dating rather than chaperoned outings. Wedding ceremonies may be religious or secular but preferably include receptions for relatives and friends. Although remaining single is increasingly acceptable, marriage is an important marker of adulthood.

***Domestic Unit.***The nuclear family is prevalent, but relatives socialize often. Having children is preferable to childlessness, but it is increasingly the couple's choice. Working spouses who share household chores are becoming common, but socializing children is still predominantly a female role even among family-oriented men. Male authority is invoked and appealed to, but women's authority over many domains and activities is recognized.

***Kin Groups.***Relatives are expected to support each other materially and emotionally. Support is legally prescribed and required along descent, ascent, and collateral lines. Elders are respected. Kinship is bilateral, and people commonly use both the father's and the mother's family name as surnames.

***Inheritance.***Civil law requires that a third of an estate must be bequeathed equally among all the legal heirs. Another third may be used to improve an heir's lot, and the last third may be disposed of freely by the testator. The estate of a person who dies without a will is divided equally among all the legal heirs.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***People try to rear children within the family. When the mother is unavailable, relatives are preferred to outsiders, and professional infant care providers are regarded with ambivalence. Puerto Ricans have adopted most modern child raising practices, such as separate beds and bedrooms, medical care, toys, and equipment. From infancy, children are socialized toward family and communal participation. Traditionally, they are expected to learn through observation rather than instruction. Children must learn *respeto*, the most valued trait in the culture. Respeto refers to the belief that every person has an intrinsic dignity that must never be transgressed. One must learn to respect others by learning to respect oneself. All other valued qualities, such as obedience, industriousness, and self-assurance, follow when a child internalizes *respeto*.

Family vacation packages

***Child Rearing and Education.***Elementary education is legally mandated, but the youth of the population has strained the public education system. Those who can afford it prefer private schooling, which better prepares children for college.

Puerto Ricans distinguish between *instrucción*(schooling) and *(educación)*(education). Education transcends schooling. Education is within the province of the family, since an educated person is not someone who has achieved "book learning" but a person who is respectful, cordial, courteous, polite, and "cultured."

***Higher Education.***Credentialism is on the rise, and a college degree is required for most positions and for upward mobility. The rates of high school and college graduation have increased in recent decades. The newly acquired importance of higher education sustains the university system, which includes the public University of Puerto Rico and the private Interamerican University, Sacred Heart College, and Catholic University. All these institutions have multiple campuses. People have access to professional training in law, medicine, engineering, and other fields.

Etiquette

Respeto and educación are indispensable components of social interaction. Indirection is also an important strategy. People believe that directness is rude and use a variety of euphemisms and hedges to avoid it. Close friends are allowed directness but maintain the boundaries of respect. Puerto Ricans prefer people who are publicly expressive but not excessively so. Friends customarily greet by kissing each other, and engaging in animated conversation is viewed as a social asset. Although social drinking is approved, drunkenness is not. Relajo is a joking



*A young woman holds a banner during a pro-statehood demonstration. A U.S. commonwealth since 1952, Puerto Rico has maintained a strong sense of nationalism.*

form of indirection that is similar to teasing. It is used to criticize others indirectly, convey problematic aspects of their behavior, stress absurdities, and impart potentially negative information.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The U.S. occupation brought Protestant missions to a predominantly Catholic society. An estimated 30 percent of the population is now Protestant. All major denominations are represented, and there is a synagogue in San Juan but no mosque. Revivalism is quite popular.

The Catholic Church had much power under Spain, but Catholics are prone to a populistic kind of religion that is wary of the established church and its hierarchy. Many people are nonobservant, yet consider themselves devout because they pray, are faithful, treat others with compassion, and communicate directly with God.

African slaves introduced *brujería*(witchcraft practices). In the nineteenth century, European spiritualism became popular. It is the most important alternative practice and coexists with established religions. Many people consider both forms equally legitimate and practice both. Spiritualist mediums are predominantly women who hold divinations and seances in their homes; many have become successful and even wealthy. Cuban immigrants brought *santería*, a blend of Yoruba and Catholic religions. Spiritualism and santería have merged into *santerismo*. Both posit a spirit world, worship a hierarchy of guiding saints and deities from the sacred and secular worlds, and practice divination.

***Religious Practitioners.***Most religious life in Puerto Rico is enacted in terms of a populist style, in the case of established religions, and engages espiritismo and santería as culturally-specific systems of belief that co-exist with mainstream religious practices.

Medicine and Health Care

Until the second half of the twentieth century, Puerto Rico suffered from the dire health conditions that are typical of poor, underdeveloped countries. Tropical diseases and parasites contributed to high mortality rates and low life expectancy. Progress in health care has been dramatic, and the island now has modern medical facilities. Mortality rates and life expectancy have improved, and many diseases have been eradicated.

Secular Celebrations

People celebrate both United States and Puerto Rican holidays and feast days. Major local holidays include New Year's Eve ([1 January](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/January_1.html)), Three Kings Day (6 January), Hostos Day (11 January), Constitution Day (25 July), Discovery Day (19 November), and Christmas Day ([25 December](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/December_25.html)). Easter Thursday and Friday are observed. Cities and town celebrate the patron saint's feast day, usually with carnivals, processions, masses, dances, and concerts. These celebrations are local, except for the eve of the island's patron saint, Saint John (23 June).

The government sponsors civic and military parades for political holidays such as the Fourth of July and Constitution Day. Christmas, New Year's Eve, and Three Kings are the high points of a holiday party season that extends from mid-December to mid-January. Easter brings religious processions.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***The arts are important as expressions of cultural nationalism. The government has contributed to their institutionalization through the establishment of the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, which sponsors and funds artistic activities and programs. Although the institute has been criticized for fostering an essentialistic notion of national identity and favoring "high" culture, it has been instrumental in recovering the artistic past and fostering new arts production. Local artists have access to support from U.S. institutions. Universities and colleges are also sources of work, support, and facilities. There are museums in Ponce and San Juan and art galleries all over the island. A performing arts center in Santurce has facilities for theater, concerts, opera, and dance.

***Literature.***[Puerto Rican literature](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Puerto_Rican_literature.html) is usually dated to the nineteenth century publication of *El Gíbaro*, a collection of pieces on the island's traditions, because the book represents the first self conscious expression of a native culture. Literary production is diverse, locally valued, and internationally acknowledged. Puerto Rican authors work in all genres and styles.

***Graphic Arts.***Graphic arts production is diverse and prolific. The pictorial tradition dates back to the eighteenth century with José Campeche, who specialized in religious painting and portraiture and is acknowledged as the island's first artist. Francisco Oller's impressionist work hangs in Paris museums. Twentieth century artists have been particularly successful in print media.

***Performing Arts.***Music ranges from popular and folk genres to classical works. Salsa, the island's most recent contribution to world music, is rooted in African rhythms. Puerto Rico has classical composers and performers and has been the site of the international Casals Festival since the 1950s. There are established ballet companies and groups that perform modern, folk, and jazz dance. Efforts to establish film production companies have floundered.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Most social and physical science research is conducted in institutions of higher learning. The social sciences have been instrumental in documenting and analyzing Puerto Rican society and culture. Because of its uniqueness, Puerto Rico is among the most intensely researched places in the world.

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—V ILMA S ANTIAGO -I RIZARRY

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_1)

**Victoria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS WEB PAGE IS GENIUS. THIS IS ABSOLUTELTY GOOD WORK WITH ACCURATE SITATIONS. THANKS FOR THE ASSISTING INFORMATION FOR MY SPANIDH "PROYECT",LOL.  
VICTORIA;)

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_2)

**prolific**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

dang!!!...thank u 4 the insight!!!...peace!!!...im gonna send it to afriend of mines she will be very interested 4 real!!!

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_3)

**philizle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

dang thi was a rly good webysite this was good and helped me with my home work and the guy above cant spll spanish rite or project 4 rizlle

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_4)

**sharita**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good job what a great informal website you got here buddy thanks.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_5)

**mike**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

is it wrong 4 a puerto rican to marry outside their own race?  
this was a good article but didnt answer what i wanted to know...

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_6)

**Raymond**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great article. Can I please know when this was published so I can cite it as a reference?

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_7)

**Todd**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this web page was cool...i got my work done......maybe ill get an A!!!!!!!!

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_8)

**sylvia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website helped me to learn about my culture and it helped me to do my project!!  
i loved it and anytime that i have to do a project on puerto rico, i will come to this website.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_9)

**Sabrina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much. This Site was so helpful. I can use this info for 2 projects. If Any of my friends need info on Puerto Rico I'll totally send them here.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_10)

**anna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WHAT A GREAT WEBSITE IT REALLY HELPED ME WITH MY PROJECT U GUYS ROCK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_11)

**Steven**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was very informative about the Puerto Rican Culture and helped me out very much with my project that I am doing right now. Thanks to all the staff that made this great website. Also, can anyone direct me to a website that has the history of all sorts of foods, for future uses. Thanks again.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_12)

**Madeline**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is great! It has a lot of facts about our lovely Island Puerto Rico and it's history!

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_13)

**Mataya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for your help....This site was very helpful!

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_14)

**Marty T**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website was so correct on how I was raised and just adds to my beleif in my people and how prided we are and what we can become as a people. I pray that all of us can raise our children to raise there children with the upmost pride and respect that was demanded by our people.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_15)

**Helen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank-you so much for this informative website. I have been sitting here for half an hour looking for a good source for my paper and I FINALLY found one! YOURS! Thank-you again!!!!!!!!

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_16)

**kendrick**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i liked it it got me an a+ on my report.I will tell my friends about this website

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_17)

**Renee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I found this sight extremely helpful with my research paper. I thank you very much. Could I get the information to cite it as a reference?

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_18)

**conkerdude**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this info is very helpful. now ill be able to do my essay on puerto rican culture for my sociology class

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_19)

**Shuni**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for this site, it was very informative and helpful with a project for school!

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_20)

**Staphy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WOW...this really helped me on my essayabout the Puerto Rican culture even im Puerto Rican nd i didnt kno a this stuff...  
thankz =)

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_21)

**sasha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks a heap for your information it helps me heaps with my homework!

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_22)

**Sofia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

AWESOME WEBSITE HELPED ME WRIGHT ALMOST MY WHOLE ESSAY!

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_23)

**dylan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice site, very informative, totally helped with my homework!!!!!!!

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_24)

**lucyluu!**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WOW!  
That gave me all the information I need for my project in Spanish!  
Thank you, it was really helpful.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_25)

**william krause**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a very informative overview of a complex and intriguing culture. Even though you by necessity had to broad brush aspects of all the islands many facets you still were able to project a 'personality' of Puerto Ricans.  
With admiration and respeto. William Krause

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_26)

**Kaci Hamilton**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello,  
  
I am an editor with Ian Randle Publishers in Jamaica and I am requesting permission to use the photo of the young woman demonstrating, under the section "Etiquette". The photo would be used on the cover of one of our forthcoming titles, "Governance in the Non-independent Caribbean: Challenges and Opportunities in the Twenty-First Century".  
  
Please let me know at your earliest convenience.  
  
Kindest regards,  
Kaci Hamilton

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_27)

**Veronica Figueroa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this article...It's nice to learn more about my culture of where I come from and who I am. I hope to read more articles about my culture. :)

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_28)

**Veronica Figueroa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article was very good...It made me have pride and love my culture more...#1 PUERTO RICO BABY!!!!! LOL :)

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_29)

**codee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thx this website worked well for me.It helped for my research project at school.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_30)

**Jose Archilla**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article does some justice to the Nation of Puerto Rico (P.R.) its people and its culture. I just need you to revise the Dialect Statement as I find it not correct, as a matter of fact I find it offensive to all Boricuas who have completed education beyond high school. We learn Castilian Spanish at all levels within the education system, of course we use vulgar regionalist terms as transmitted from the Taino Language and other external influences for day to day [verbal communication](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Linguistics.html) but written we may call it business Castilian, as we do not use many absolute terms as spoken or written in Spain.  
This accent is not unique to P.R. as its common to all languages in the world. If you state a dialect is spoken in Puerto Rico, then what do Black Americans in the USA speak? Lets talk about the slangs and accents within the USA.  
  
Another comment you need to clarify is that we were conquered through war, many died protecting the Island as well as invading it. P.R. was a colony of Spain and as a result of the accidental sinking of the USS Main in Cuba, the USA used this to declare war on the weaker Empire (Spain), so P.R. went to war as a result of the invasion of North American Forces in 1898

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_31)

**aracelis dreher**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

will somebody please do an article on what i say and do you agree with me ? puerto ricans, cubans, and dominicans are not latinos. we are caribenos and for governmental reasons, hispanos. the people of these 3 islands are brothers and sisters. we all should learn a little of the yoruban language to honor our nigerian ancestors. thank you, celie boricua blanca

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_32)

**Reyna !!!!**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was great i was on here for hours it helped me so much with my Spanish culture assighnment. I am also Puerto Rican myself so I was really interested and it made me feel proud of who i am :D

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_33)

**Tina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for this well written information. It's a loving culture.  
God Bless.

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_34)

[**Maddie**](mailto:xoskittlezz35xo%20[at]%20aim%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good info ! Helped me with my project ! [; Also liked the way you stated stuff, made it easy to understand.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_35)

[**jose R.**](mailto:kiddkiller97%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for all of the info about my culture it really helped me on my homework, and you have made me understand more about puerto rico

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_36)

[**A.Posten**](mailto:apixie1997%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this site...It was very helpful..Thank you so much.

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_37)

[**Bryce**](mailto:ghost_bgm%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the info. I got an 'A+' on my report thanks to this site. I appreciate it very much and I give my regards to the makers of the website.

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_38)

[**ORANGE GUY**](mailto:mrblue909%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website didn't help me that much but was very informative.

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_39)

**tarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was just wondering who the author or organiztion I could give credit to for my paper I need to do for school.  
Thank you,

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_40)

[**Crissy**](mailto:cutie_yo_so%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this site...I'm spanish an american an mi fiance is Puerto Rican an I'm planning our Wedding an I've been looking evry whr for info so that our wedding can have both Puerto Rican traditions as well as American...I really enjoy that this site has sooo much ta read an learn...Keep the gud sites comen :)

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_41)

[**Francesca**](mailto:destininorton%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love it!! i learned a whole lot from this article.`

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_42)

[**Destini Figueroa**](mailto:destininorton%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm a 14 yr old girl and i wanted to know more on my culture. I love this site and i was excited to find more out on being a Puerto Rican.

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_43)

[**tayna rivera**](mailto:taynarivera1%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love my country is thebest but i dont live there i live in stamford but like in the summer im going to my country is the best i get to see my friends that i allready had but what im happy is because im going back

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_44)

[**Mark**](mailto:macmail_321%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is grate stuff. it helped me alot on my research im doing for skewl. thanks alot.

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_45)

[**alex**](mailto:kidslight5%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is some very helpful information thanks. u helped me with a huge project.

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_46)

[**Kristena**](mailto:kristena%20[dot]%20santiago%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was great information but the thing about spanglish was too much, all you had to say was that its a mix of english and spanish dont need to get all fancy with the wording, some people wont be able to understand

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_47)

[**YoMama**](mailto:racie_1997%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This webpage is AWESOME! :D  
Thanks to this page.. I'm got an A++ in my geography class.! (:  
THANK YOU!!

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_48)

**Aaliyah Garcia-Guasch**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am so glad i found this website it helped me so much because in doing a project for my school on Puerto Rico's history and how that ties into the history of my last name Guasch and this actually did help me a lot so thank you to the creators of this website.

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_49)

[**hope**](mailto:hopekibby%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this was very help ful. i will always use it thank you

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_50)

[**natalia**](mailto:natiinbisham%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

awesome website i am puerto rican and i am happy about what u wrote  
  
  
:) thx for making me happy

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_51)

**bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it is cool i think...i leared alot:) =] i think other people will like this site im pretty sure all of its right :D

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_52)

[**jack**](mailto:jackstoddard97%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great information i will come to this website all the time

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_53)

**stetson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for your help, this site is very use full.

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_54)

**Daniel Morales**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is very good information useful for the research report I am doing!!!

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_55)

**Ayla**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for making this site it really helped me with my Country project. And i am really proud to be Puerto Rica (Boricua)

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_56)

**nydia stuart**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great information. all about Puerto Rico history with honesty and respect. Well done

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_57)

[**Eliezer Hernandez**](mailto:eliehernandez%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Excellent article. However, I recommend to update it. There have been dramatic changes in last 4 years of Puerto Rican history. One of them is the emigration to USA due to different situations. One of them is the elimination of the USA Act 936 that allowed tax exemptions to USA companies doing business in the island. The other factors contributing to this large emigration is the economical situation in general that have affected more to PR than the rest of USA. As a consequence of this a new emigration wave is going on. This time, professional and highly skilled Puerto Ricans are moving to different parts of USA. Many of them like myself are working in the same industry that were working while in Puerto Rico.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_58)

**Kiki**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

"The jÃ­baro, the highland rural folk, has become a controversial symbol because jÃ­baros are depicted as descendants of white Spanish settlers in a way that casts Puerto Rico as a backward rural society and negates Puerto Rico's African roots".  
  
I really believe and this is only my opinion and that is the people that make an issue of african roots being negated are Americanized indivuduals who want to constantly make an issue of race any chance they get. Wheather anyone likes it or not Puerto Rico is a predominately Spanish European decended people with many mixtures. At most any Black Black African decended Puerto Rican makes up 5% at the most.

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_59)

[**kiki**](mailto:kiki%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is not what i was lookin for but good job any way

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_60)

[**Kim**](mailto:Kimmy%20[at]%20yahoorocks%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is nice great job i learned a lot of new information and i enjoyed reading this.

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_61)

[**Daisy**](mailto:Daysilee42%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this page but i would love to know more about the jewish people on the island. I hear that my family which are the perez jimenez have this blood and that they were brought from spain. do you know what year did they come to puerto rico? also the acevedos. thank you

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_62)

**Perdo de la pared morales**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i was born in puerto rico but know i live in michigan.

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_63)

**Zacha Roman**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

being a 17 year old boricua in the U.S im glad to have found a site a/b my home island. :) i havent been there in a long time.

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_64)

**jordan bushno**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website has been so helpful for my school project

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_65)

**Manuch**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A Must Read.  
A very good source of information about Puerto Rico's history, people, tradition that helps understanding of culture, tradition intercommunication etc..

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_66)

**lola**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Really good help me lear more about were i came from :)

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_67)

**dashaun**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love Puerto Rico in fact my dad is from Puerto Rico

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_68)

**ashley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Ilove puerto rico i think that puerto rico is a beautiful place where yhur family can go and have fun wit family and children and the second reason why i love puerto rico is becuaseits just wonderful..

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_69)

**Megan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Can you please tell me who the author(s) of this site is so that I can credit them in my paper. If there is no specific author, then maybe an organization name. This information was extremely helpful, Thanks!

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_70)

**lori**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what is the little black charm shaped like a fist that are given to babies in puerto rico called?

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_71)

**Daniel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I notice that there's no mention of the Irish slaves and immigrants that came to P.R. and influenced its culture. Or even with in the history of Castillo San Felipe del Morro. I would like to see more on this matter. I enjoyed reading this web site, thank you.

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_72)

**Coco**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Definetly good information. Was nice being able to read good material about my culture.

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_73)

**hannah miller**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i loved learning about Puerto Rico!  
A very good source of information about Puerto Rico's history, people, tradition that helps understanding of culture.  
Excellent article. However, I recommend to update it. There have been dramatic changes in last 4 years of Puerto Rican history. One of them is the emigration to USA due to different situations. One of them is the elimination of the USA Act 936 that allowed tax exemptions to USA companies doing business in the island. The other factors contributing to this large emigration is the economical situation in general that have affected more to PR than the rest of USA. As a consequence of this a new emigration wave is going on. This time, professional and highly skilled Puerto Ricans are moving to different parts of USA. Many of them like myself are working in the same industry that were working while in Puerto Rico.

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_74)

**Krizia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The person responsable for this information is a professor in New York by the name of Vilma Santiago-Irizarry a Associate Professor of Anthropology Ph.D New York University.

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_75)

**tabitha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This gave me NOTHING of what i was looking for and it was a waste of time

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_76)

**Xaivier**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

That was some preety useful info thanks for it im at a laptop at my school right now and i need to fish some Puerto Rico stuff and this website got half oof it done for me Thankss!

[**77**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_77)

**Juan Gilberto Hernandez**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would love to see more photos of Taino Art or Symbols .

[**78**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_78)

**Donella Speights-Aquil**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I found this site very informational. As a bi-racial woman, I need to find out just as much regarding my Puerto Rican heritage as I do about my African American side. The only item that is missing is the opportunity to give someone credit for their work.

[**79**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_79)

**baby girl**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT HAD A LOT OF STUFF ABOUT PUERTO RICO I LOVE PUERTO RICO IT IS AWSOME BEING PUERTO RICAN

[**80**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_80)

**Yulandria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have a quandary: I'm trying to coach a friend to perform better on his job. He is 60 year old man originally from PR. What is important to this man? Family? Social status? Rejection? How I get through?

[**81**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_81)

**Julia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I found it interesting about Puerto Rico, it helped me with my project

[**82**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_82)

**Nissi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good Website. Recently visited Puerto Rico and wondered about it cultural practices & history. This site helped me understand tremendously.

[**83**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_83)

**Lauren**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great site. gave me a great deal of information on Puerto rico

[**84**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_84)

**yvonne**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site gave great information. Very helpful in completing my research paper.

[**85**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_85)

**cinnamin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this site helped me out a lot and gave me great information about Puerto rico.

[**86**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_86)

**Marisa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very useful information but Puerto Ricans CAN vote in presidential elections.

[**87**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_87)

**lord gorge**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

ME GUSTA! helped my students learn the peurto rico ways thank you so much

[**88**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_88)

**Adrian garza**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website is very useful! Thanks for the information I really appreciate it!!

[**89**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_89)

**HectorManuel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks this website has helped me find out more about my cukture

[**90**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_90)

**MARIMAR**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much. This is very factful information of our indigenous people that have fought hard and have a come a long way. Our Christmas traditions are uniquely special to us and we take pride in the values that our culture has brought to us as a whole.

[**91**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_91)

[**Dwilliams**](mailto:mrs%20[dot]%20DmWilliams79%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was born in NYC in 1979. All four of my grandparents were born in Puerto Rico. My father was born in Puerto Rico. my mother was born in NYC. Most of my family that i know persoanlly or through stories still reside in NYC. Many older relatives reside in Puerto Rico. Several other members migrated to Florida and surround the U.S. My parents decided to migrate to California which I was mostly raised here and still live here. I am eternally grateful.  
  
Reading this article has hit close to home and gave me a better understanding of the history and culture, something I can learn from and appreciate and share with my own kids. Two of my granparents passed away before i was born and the other two (now deceased) spoke very little english. Our communication was minimal and there was a lot I wished we could have discussed together. Your article touched on info i have learned somewhat over the years and have help me gain more insight on certain aspects of our culture. Thanksgiving is right around the corner and its nice to see how the culture has kept itself up over generations, Pernil, pasteles, arroz con gandules, etc. My son loves the food and I'm ashamed I have not learned for myself. I will make it a point to learn the things i can and pass it on to my kids and so forth. I was surprised to read some aspects of the religion in regards to woman who acted as a medium. My abuela on my mother's side was infamous at this and it is thought of something that could be somehow passed down through generations or certain off spring. I sure wish we did not have a communication barrier so that we can dig deaper into this. I am looking forward to knowing if you can eleborate in this arena.

[**92**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_92)

**lukas**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this helped me alot on this essay.thank you so much

[**93**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_93)

**richard**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is awesome IT IS BLOW IN MY MIND know i can understand about puerto rico i love the is website

[**94**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_94)

**Paola**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website is amazing and has helped me so much and has provided me with infinite information to start an essay. Thank you

[**95**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_95)

**http://pdf.ac/1YU7FE**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Valuable article , For what it's worth if people need to fill out a DD 369 , my company discovered a sample version here

[**96**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_96)

[**C. Cruz**](mailto:viragonian%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Well done. Another update is due re : Military Presence in Vieques & Puerto Rico since the Naval Base on Vieques was closed & is now a protected area being re-stored ecologically. Also, the subsequent damage of 2 cat.4 hurricanes & the re-building of Puerto Rico almost from scratch has to be addressed. There is a revival of crop & local food sustainability now present. We have bn American citizens for over 100 yrs. (1917-2018) but clearly our political & economic systems have severely struggled under the weight & limitations set by an American Recession, bail-outs & increased debt ceiling which hasn't bn fully addressed.. yet. ðŸ—½

[**97**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_97)

**Britney**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Just planned to visit Puerto Rico!!! So excited to meet the lovely and tropical people with their culture and traditions.

[**98**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_98)

**Ricardo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Puerto Rican Culture  
  
Does anyone have a good textbook title to learn about Puerto Rican Culture? Something that covers artistic, economic, historical, literary, philosophical, political, religious, musical, folklore, sports and social trends.  
Thanks!

[**99**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_99)

**Miracle Emes**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Absolutely love this website, it helped me so much on my project for school and got me an excellent grade. I highly recommend this website for any history or english classes working on countries. It tells you alot.

[**100**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_100)

**Jeemer**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow amazing site got an A+  
i also was willing to find ot more about puerto rico my hometown born and raisd

[**101**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_101)

**Manuel Rocha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I use this site to learn what to do when I go to purto rico

[**102**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html#Comments_102)

**Walter Rivera-Santos**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the powerful data. We are working on a full feature movie painting our history, passing through the present times and moving into the future. We start shooting 1 November 2020.

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

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Name:

E-mail:

 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

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" [Portugal](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Portugal.html)[Qatar](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Qatar

Qatar

Culture Name

Qatari

Orientation

***Identification.***Residents of Qatar can be divided into three groups: the Bedouin, Hadar, and Abd. The Bedouin trace their descent from the nomads of the Arabian Peninsula. The Hadar's ancestors were settled town dwellers. While some Hadar are descendants of Bedouin, most descend from migrants from present-day Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan and occasionally are referred to as lrani-Qataris. *Alabd*, which literally means "slaves," are the descendants of slaves brought from east Africa. All three groups identify themselves as Qatari and their right to citizenship is not challenged, but subtle sociocultural differences among them are recognized and acknowledged.

***Location and Geography.***Qatar is a small peninsula on the western shore of the Arabian Gulf that covers approximately 4,247 square miles (6,286 square kilometers). The landmass forms a rectangle that local [folklore](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Folklore.html) describes as resembling the palm of a right hand extended in prayer. Neighboring countries include Bahrain to the northwest, Iran to the northeast, and the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to the south. Qatar and Bahrain both claim the uninhabited Hawar Islands just west of Qatar. Until recently, only small semipermanent seasonal encampments existed in the interior desert. Water resources near the coast combined with opportunities for fishing, pearl diving, and seagoing trade have supported larger, more permanent settlements. These settlement patterns have contributed to the social differentiation between Bedouin and Hadar.

***Demography.***In 1998, the population was estimated at 579,000. Most estimates agree that only about 20 percent of the population are Qatari, with the remainder being foreign workers. A total of 91.4 percent live in urban areas, mostly in the capital. Because male foreign laborers come without their families, there is an imbalance of males and females in the total population. The foreign workers, mostly from India and Pakistan, cannot obtain citizenship and reside in the country on temporary visas.

Family vacation packages

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The official language is Arabic. English, Farsi, and [Urdu](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Urdu.html) are widely spoken. Arabic is closely associated with the Islamic faith; thus, its use reinforces the Islamic identity of the nation and its citizens. The Qatari dialect of Arabic is similar to the version spoken in the other Gulf States and is called Arabic. The adjective *khaleeji*("of the Gulf") that is used to describe the local dialect also distinguishes citizens of the six Gulf States from north African and Levantine Arabs.

Farsi, the official language of Iran, is also widely spoken by families that trace their descent from that country. As a result of the influx of foreign workers, many other languages are commonly spoken, including English, Urdu and Hindi, Malalayam, and Tagalog. While many Qataris speak more than one language, it is very rare for immigrants to learn Arabic. Interactions between Arabs and foreign workers are conducted in English or the language of the expatriate.

***Symbolism.***Symbols of national identity include the family, items associated with the nation's past, and images of the ruler. Qataris often employ an idiom of kinship and/or tribalism, referring to compatriots as "brother," "sister," or "cousin." This linguistic convention signals the inclusion of those sharing citizenship while excluding foreign workers. Images and ideas associated with desert nomadism and maritime trade that are used to evoke Qatar's past include Bedouin tents and carpets, falcons used for hunting, camels, weapons, sailing vessels, and pearls and pearl diving equipment. Traditional architectural features also serve as national symbols, such as the wind towers that cooled



Family vacation packages

*Qatar*

homes before the introduction of electricity and the carved [gypsum](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Gypsum.html) panels on buildings erected before 1940.

The date on which Qatar received independence from Great Britain in 1971 and the anniversary of the ruler's accession to office are celebrated as national holidays. The nation's flag, the state seal, and photographs of the rulers are displayed prominently in public places and local publications. Qataris also celebrate Islamic holidays.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***In the 1760s, members of the Al-Khalifa of the Utub tribe migrated to Qatar from Kuwait and central Arabia and established a pearling and commercial base in Zubarah in the north. From there the Al-Khalifa expanded their territory by occupying Bahrain, which they have ruled ever since. The Al-Thai, the current ruling family, established themselves after years of contention with the Al-Khalifa, who still held claims to the Qatar peninsula through most of the nineteenth century. In 1867, Britain recognized Mohammad bin Thani as the representative of the Qatari people. A few years later, Qasim Al-Thani (Mohammad's son) accepted the title of governor from the Ottoman Turks, who were trying to establish authority in the region. Qasim Al-Thani's defeat of the Turks in 1893 usually is recognized as a confirmation of Qatar's autonomy. In 1916, Abdullah bin Qasim Al-Thani (Qasim's son) entered an agreement with Britain that effectively established the Al-Thani as the ruling family. That agreement provided for British protection and special rights for British subjects and ensured that Britain would have a say in Qatar's foreign relations. The increase in state income from oil concessions strengthened the Al-Thani's position.

When Britain announced its intention to withdraw from the region, Qatar considered joining a federation with Bahrain and the seven Trucial States. However, agreement could not be reached on the terms of federation, and Qatar adopted a constitution declaring independence in 1971. The constitution states that the ruler will always be chosen from the Al-Thani family and will be assisted by a council of ministers and a consultative council. The consultative council was never elected; instead, there is an advisory council appointed by the ruler. Despite periodic protests against the concentration of power and occasional disputes within the ruling family, the Al-Thani's size, wealth, and policies have maintained a stable regime.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Doha, the capital, houses more than 80 percent of the population. Its parks, promenade, and award-winning waterfront architecture are considered as the centerpiece of Doha. The large-scale land reclamation project undertaken by the government to create those waterfront properties is recognized as a major engineering feat and a symbol of the country's economic and technological advancements.

Family vacation packages

Smaller towns such as Dukhan, Um Said, and Al Khor have become centers of the oil industry, and Wakrah, Rayyan, and Um Slal Mohammad have grown as suburban extensions of Doha. Smaller villages are spread throughout the desert interior. Village homes often are kept as weekend retreats for urban residents and as links to the tradition of desert nomads.

Doha's cityscape represents an attempt to fuse the modern with the traditional. At the start of the building boom in the 1960s, little thought was given to [aesthetics](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Aesthetics.html); the objective was to build as quickly as possible. As the pace of development slowed, more consideration was given to developing a city that symbolized Qatar's new urban character and global integration. Designs were solicited that used modern technologies to evoke the nation's past. The main building of the university has cube-shaped towers on the roof. Those towers, with stained glass and geometric gratings, are a [modernist](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Modernism.html) rendition of traditional wind towers. The university towers are decorative rather than functional; however, they are highly evocative of Qatar's commitment to the lifestyles of the past while encouraging economic and technological development. Similar examples are found in government and private buildings. Many building designs incorporate architectural elements resembling desert forts and towers or have distinctively Islamic decorative styles executed in modern materials.

Homes also symbolize people's identities. The homes of Qatari citizens are distinct from the residences of foreign workers. The state provides citizens with interest-free loans to build homes in areas reserved for low-density housing. Foreign workers live in rental units or employer-provided housing and dormitories.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***The presence of foreign workers has introduced foods from all over the world. Qatar's [cuisine](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Cuisine.html) has been influenced by close links to Iran and India and more recently by the arrival of Arabs from North Africa and the Levant as well as Muslim dietary conventions. Muslims generally refrain from eating pork and drinking alcohol, and neither is served publicly.

Foods central to Qatar's cuisine include the many native varieties of dates and seafood. Other foods grown locally or in Iran are considered local delicacies, including sour apples and fresh almonds. The traditional dish *machbous*is a richly spiced rice combined with meat and/or seafood and traditionally served from a large communal platter.

The main meal is eaten at midday, with lighter meals in the morning and late evening. However, with more Qataris entering the workforce, it is becoming more common to have family meals in the evenings. The midday meal on Friday, after prayers, is the main gathering of the week for many families. During the month of Ramadan, when Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, elaborate and festive meals are served at night.

Family vacation packages

Coffee is a central feature of the cuisine. Arabian coffee made of a lightly roasted bean that is sweetened and spiced with cardamon is served in small thimble-shaped cups to guests in homes and offices. Most households keep a vacuum jug of coffee and sometimes tea ready for visitors. Another beverage, *qahwa helw*(sweet coffee), a vivid orange infusion of saffron, cardamon, and sugar, is served on special occasions and by the elite.

In recent years, restaurants and fast-food franchises have opened. Those establishments primarily serve foreign workers. Qataris, especially women, are reluctant to eat in public places; but will use the drive-through and delivery services of restaurants. Qatari men sometimes socialize and conduct business in restaurants and coffeehouses.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***The primary axes of social stratification are the nationality and occupation. The practice of hiring foreign workers has created a system in which certain nationalities are concentrated in particular jobs, and salaries differ depending on nationality. The broadest division is between citizens and foreigners, with subdivisions based on region of origin, genealogy, and cultural practices.

Despite this inequality, the atmosphere is one of comfortable and tolerant coresidence. Foreign workers retain their national dress. Their children can attend school with instruction in their native languages. Markets carry a broad range of international foods, music, and films. Foreigners are permitted to practice their religion publicly, and many expatriate religious institutions sponsor community activities and services.

Qataris are internally stratified according to factors such as tribal affiliation, religious sect, and historical links to settlement patterns. For example, Qataris with [genealogical](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Genealogy.html) links to Arabia are likely to identify with Bedouin cultural values and be adherents of Sunni Islam, whereas Qataris with genealogical links to the northeastern side of the Gulf are



*Fishing boats off the coast of Qatar. Seafood is a central part of Qatar's cuisine.*

likely to identify with settled townsfolk and may be adherents of Shi'a Islam. Genealogical and geographic subdivisions among citizens correlate with occupational categories. The crafts are viewed as the province of Irani-Qataris, and freed slaves are disproportionately represented in certain professions, such as entertainment and the police force.

Political Life

***Government.***Qatari is technically an "Emirate," ruled by an Emir. Since independence the country's rulers have been of one particular family, the Al Thani. The Emir and many of the cabinet of ministers, as well as other high ranking officials are members of the Al Thani family (a large patrilineally related kin group) and are overwhelmingly male. However, some high level appointments have been made outside of the ruling family. Because of the concentration of power within the Al Thani, divisions or disputes among members of this large kin group will influence political relations. In 1998, Qatar held open elections for a "municipal council." This was the first election ever held in Qatar, and the campaigning was not only lively but drew in large portions of Qatar's citizenry. While a number of women ran for office, none were elected in this first vote. Both women and men turned out to vote for representatives from their residential sectors. The Municipal Council represents local residential sectors to other governmental bodies.

Family vacation packages

Social Welfare and Change Programs

After independence, Qatar developed extensive social welfare programs, including free health care, education through university, housing grants, and subsidized utilities. Improvements in utility services, road networks, sewage treatment, and water [desalination](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Desalination.html) have resulted in a better quality of life. In recent years, institutions have been established to support low-income families and disabled individuals through educational and job training programs.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

A number of international NGO's have offices and operations in Qatar, such as UNESCO, UNICEF, and the Red Crescent Society. Since 1995, the Emir's wife Shaikh Mouza, has been instrumental in encouraging and facilitating the establishment of organizations to serve women, children, family and the disabled. These service organizations have made significant headway particularly in the areas of health and education.



*A young girl stands in a doorway beside an old merchant house in Qatar.*

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Schooling is gender-segregated. After completing schooling, men and women can obtain employment in government agencies or private enterprise. Qatari women tend to take government jobs, particularly in the ministries of education, health, and social affairs. High-level positions are held predominantly by men. While the presence of the foreign workforce has put more women in the public sphere, those women work primarily in occupations that reinforce the division of labor by gender. Foreign females are hired mostly as maids, nannies, teachers, nurses, and clerical or service workers.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Gender roles are relatively distinct. Men engage in the public sphere more frequently than do women. Women have access to schooling and employment and have the right to drive and travel outside the country. However, social mores influenced by Islam and historical precedent leave many women uncomfortable among strangers in public. Instead, their activities are conducted in private spaces. To provide women with more access to public services, some department stores, malls, parks, and museums designate "family days" during which men are allowed entry only if they accompany their families.

Family vacation packages

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Most marriages are arranged. Usually the mother and sisters of the groom make initial inquiries about prospective brides, discuss the possibilities with the young man, and, if he is interested, approach the family of the prospective bride. That woman has the opportunity to accept or refuse the proposal. Marriages often are arranged between families with similar backgrounds, and it is common for several members of two lineages to be married to each other. Marriages between Qataris and other Gulf Arabs are common, but the government discourages marriage to non-Gulf citizens. One must get official permission to marry a noncitizen, and the citizen may have to give up the promise of government employment and other benefits.

Polygyny is religiously and legally sanctioned. While it remains common among the ruling family, the number of polygynous marriages has dropped in recent years. A wife can divorce her husband if he takes another wife, and with more education and economic options, women are more likely to do that now than they were in the past. Another reason for the decrease in polygyny may be the rising cost of maintaining more than one household.

The divorce rate has risen sharply since 1980. Both women and men may seek a divorce, and custody is granted in accordance with Islamic law. Young children are kept with the mother; once they reach adolescence, custody reverts to the father.

***Domestic Unit.***Extended, joint, and nuclear households are all found today. The preference is to live with or at least near the members of the husband's family. This patrilineal proximity is accomplished by means of a single extended household, walled family compounds with separate houses, or simply living in the same neighborhood.

***Kin Groups.***"Family" in Qatar refers to a group larger than the domestic unit. Descent is reckoned through the male line, and so one is a member of his or her father's lineage and maintains close ties to that lineage. After marriage, women remain members of the father's lineage but are partially integrated into the lineages of their husbands and children. Children of polygynous marriages often identify most closely with siblings from the same mother. As children mature, such groups sometimes establish separate households or compounds.

Socialization

***Child Rearing and Education.***Children are important in family life. If a marriage is barren, the couple may resort to medically-assisted conception, polygyny, or divorce. Child care is the province of adult females, although children have close ties to their male relatives as well. The employment of foreign nannies has introduced new child care practices and foreign influences.

Family vacation packages

***Higher Education.***Public schooling has been available since the 1950s. In 1973, a teacher's college was opened and in 1977 the colleges of Humanities and Social Sciences, Science, and Sharia and Islamic were added to form the University of Qatar. Subsequently the College of Engineering, College of Administrative Sciences and Economics, and the College of Technology were added to the original four. Qataris can attend kindergarten through university for free. Students who qualify for higher education abroad can obtain scholarships to offset the costs of tuition, travel, and living abroad.

Etiquette

Social behavior is conducted in a manner respectful of family privacy, hospitality, and the public separation of genders. Visits with unrelated persons occur outside the house or in designated guest areas separate from the areas regularly used by the family. One does not inquire unnecessarily about another person's family. Despite this strong sense of family privacy, it is considered rude not to extend hospitality to strangers. Tea, coffee, food, and a cool place to sit should be offered to any visitor. Conversely, it is rude not to accept hospitality. When greeting a member of the opposite sex, it is best to act with reserve, following the Qatari's lead. Some Qatari women feel comfortable shaking hands with a man, but others refrain. Similarly, men may refrain from extending the hand to women or sitting beside them.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The majority of the citizens and the ruling family are Sunni Muslims, specifically Wahhabis. There is, however, a large minority of Shi'a Muslims. Recent events such as the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, and alleged [discrimination](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Discrimination.html) against Shi'a Muslims have exacerbated sectarian tensions. These divisions are rarely discussed openly.

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—S HARON N AGY

**Also read article about**[**Qatar**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Qatar.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_1)

**fatima**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
Actually it is very nice and useful article about Qatar, but I think it will be more useful if there is added of the business in Qatar how it’s run, especially the foreign business there, and how Qatari attitude with foreign services and goods, and will be so great if there is something about the Qatarian habit through the business, Are care about this foreign or any new businesses or it’s normal , they ignore, moreover more details about the culture their will be good.

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_2)

**fatima**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
Actually it is very nice and useful article about Qatar, but I think it will be more useful if there is added of the business in Qatar how it’s run, especially the foreign business there, and how Qatari attitude with foreign services and goods, and will be so great if there is something about the Qatarian habit through the business, Are care about this foreign or any new businesses or it’s normal , they ignore, moreover more details about the culture their will be good.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_3)

**sarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love Qatar so much .This country is very interesting.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_4)

**Alvin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It's an excellent start and a good idea of what to expect. For someone coming from a country rich with traditions and different nationalities, gives an idea what to expect here. Thanks

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_5)

**safia iftikhar**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am sending you culture of qatari people i think you will be satisfied

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_6)

**zarah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
The article on Qatar is very nice but you should put more information to the beliefs and their culture because some of the students like me is researching about their daily lifestyle. Thank you for this wonderful information.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_7)

**gretchen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hello!  
thanks for the info...  
it helped me a lot and got to know more about your culture.  
hope to see more details 'bout your country...  
God bless...

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_8)

[**Ben Olushola Ademola**](mailto:benisreal2003%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20ca)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Is working visa real in Qatar? Can foreigners gain employment in time? And is Qatar convenient for Nigerians?

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_9)

[**Ayesha.**](mailto:ayesha_lol%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey.  
This is great.  
I live in Qatar, and this is very informative.  
Thanks for all the great information !  
  
- Ayesha  
  
P.S. @Ben Olushola Ademola; Qatar is very convenient for Nigerians. There are many people at high career posts in Qatar whom I know. Good Luck !

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_10)

[**francis**](mailto:francisliezhel25%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

whoa .. my auntie and my mother work there in Qatar so i explore !! to know what are the other differences of Qatar to other country . i like this post because i learned many about the country of QATAR.. thanks

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_11)

[**Zareefah**](mailto:princess%20[dash]%20yaz%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello...  
I loove qatar so much! When i'm older i'll live there. One thing though...my grandad is qatari , and i'm from somalia (east africa) ...does that mean that they'll treat me different or the same?  
  
-Zareefah

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_12)

[**gissellecp**](mailto:lesg83%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is very informative..thanks for the post..Hope I could visit Qatar so very soon..I'm very interested to know their nation facts...

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_13)

[**Deiva**](mailto:deiva%20[dot]%20mba%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Salaam Qatari's  
  
I recently moved here to work, All the information provided is very useful. Only thing missing is no lines about FIFA 2022...  
  
Deva

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_14)

[**Girlie Orcine**](mailto:Girlyhorcine%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

With high respect to the Qatari's  
  
I really appreciate this article. I am always interested in reading information about Qatar since I am staying here. I also think that being a conservative country, people here are so respectful. The more I stay here, the more I'm getting to like it.  
  
God Bless

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_15)

**jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

you should put something about their traditional clothes.  
mens and womans.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_16)

[**LaShanda Crosby**](mailto:lashanda%20[dot]%20crosby%20[at]%20waldenu%20[dot]%20edu)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Where can I find more information about adult learning for females in Qatar?

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_17)

[**SHAHEEN**](mailto:she%20[dot]%20zan2010%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

mashallah very good but we would like to learn about EMIR AND HIS FAMILY MEANS HW MANY CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY EXETRA SO WE CAN TELL OUR CHILDREN ABOUT THIER CULTURE . I M PROUD TO WORK AS A TEACHER IN QATAR. ALHAMDULLILAH AND ALLAH BLESS U ALL AND EVEN THE EMIR AND HIS FAMILY.

Family vacation packages

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_18)

**Okechukwu johnson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for the article i appreciate it, but i will like u to tell us more about the relationship between Qatar and other Arab nations and non arab nations. God bless Qatar thank you,please reply

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_19)

[**123455**](mailto:bob1%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks this helped me with my school work a lot anyway thanks so much!

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_20)

**HUSSAIN**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

MASHALLAH qatar is good country.i would like to know more about education and culture

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_21)

**jackie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Qatar is the best country to live in.i myself am living here since my birth  
and dont regret it at all

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_22)

**treessa97**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow nvr knew Qatar ws such an intrstng place,  
though i hve been livng in Qatar 4 almst 12 years!!!  
I am a studnt in Qatr in 8th and ths article ws very  
useful.  
  
thnks 2 evry1 who wrkd 4 it.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_23)

[**Dakotah Johns**](mailto:dakotahjohns%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this web page was really helpfull,  
i am going to start viewing this page more often too get my importent assighnments done.\*(:  
i hope it does the same for everything

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_24)

**Favour chidozie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I so much thank everyone that contributed in this article, you people are wonderful. Pls i want to knwo more about this country. I have a friend that lives there and he wants me to come there. He said there is work and they need more workers.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_25)

**navas**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this article is very usefull to uderstand what was qatar and how it got the position now we see  
and i would like to know more about tribes and their old customes and traditions that how many groups lives here to whom the majority among them and so on

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_26)

**Minerva L. Patoni**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is very helpful. Thank you to all persons who work for it. My husband and I are interesting in going to work there. We have family and friends working there and they have been inviting us. The only question I have is if the houses have air condition because the weather is extremely hot and if woman have to wear scarf on head, long sleeves, long skirts. Please let me know. God and/or Allah bless you.

Family vacation packages

Sincerely,  
Minnie

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_27)

[**Ghulam mustafa**](mailto:ghulam_88%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi  
this is very helpful information .  
qater is my birthplace. i miss Doha.  
its very nice and beautiful country.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_28)

[**Mark Decker**](mailto:saglikli%20[dash]%20yemekler%20[dash]%20sefi%20[at]%20windowslive%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the useful information. I would like to learn much more about food culture as I'm a chef.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_29)

[**afsal bin abbas**](mailto:afsallulu%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its really helpful ...kindly add more about qatar bussiness and their power.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_30)

**iwuozo moses chibueze**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i luv to live and work in qatar becos that's the best place one can live,study,work,i also which to get a football club in qatar were i show my skins to whole word,i luv qatar for real.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_31)

**Sebastian**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article just seriously helped me with my Project on Qatar! Thank you so much

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_32)

**shabbir**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like qatar.. its beautiful place...and information given out here helps me to know more about qatar

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_33)

**Felma M. Binuya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for the information about the history and culture of Qatar,I must to know this info before i bound to the said place, excitement is what i feel now to see a beautiful place,meet new friends but a little bit nervous because of big differences more challenges and being stranger, I'm hoping to be safe and success in my journey.

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_34)

**Okello Moses Rubangangeyo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi all! Didn't know Qatar is a peaceful country where the citizen do not devalue foreigners. I would like to inquire more about the slaves who comes from East Africa which has now formed a set of division called "Alabd" meaning "slave". Which language do they speak? I believe some must have come from Northern Uganda where my home is and where Baker's Fort was in.  
Secondly, what is the minimum salary wage for non citizen?  
Ensallah!

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_35)

**sara**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS IS A REALLY USEFUL WEBSITE FOR THE FORIEGN CHILDREN WHO ARE LIVING IN QATAR AND DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT QATAR.

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_36)

**mohammed Ali**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice article about qatar how i wish my son khalifa known as (kalif qatar) will have a children living permit in this glorious country called qatar God bless qatar.

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_37)

**Baron**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article's been of a great assistance to me as I'll soon move to qatar!! I realy love this page and God bless those that contributed to the sucess of this article.

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_38)

[**Afolabi ayo**](mailto:Afolabi41%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow i lean alot abt Qatar, i so mch appreciate dis, i jst cnt wait 2 get 2 Qatar cos is a 9ce place 2 live, tnkz 2 d administration

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_39)

**bernadette**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It was a verygood article.  
I want to read more about the etiquettes on how serving arabic coffee in qatar.  
Do they have specific way of serving arabic coffee in each gulf region ?  
Hope to receive answer from your column.  
  
  
  
thank you  
so much

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_40)

**crazymama**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank u for the information... this is helpful...Qatar is a pretty nice place... i wish i could go:(

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_41)

**Hathir**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow! very intersting and it`s be very usefull. i like to live in qatar. and thnx 4 information.  
  
  
  
Thnak you so much!.

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_42)

**Stanley S.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Beautiful articule. I intend 2 work in Qatar. Alcohol is not served in d public but atleast could b served in designated areas dat's Ok! Infact Qatar is good. God bless Qatar.

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_43)

**Rajil**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good article this helps my daughter to get informative about Qatar for her school project

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_44)

**Emeto Dominic**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow!what a wonderful information. Nice to learn much about this great country! I really love this country and will be heading there to work by the end of this month! God bless Qatar! God bless its people!

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_45)

**judith**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative especially for people who are moving to Qatar soon. We appreciate if the data on the population be updated, and also include information on public transportation, culture, and housing.  
  
Thanks  
  
Judith

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_46)

[**abdulmajeed**](mailto:abdulmajeeddanlami%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love these country, i think Qatar is best nation in the world.

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_47)

**Padhmalakshmi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It was very useful for my project regarding all the [Arabian peninsula](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Arabian_Peninsula.html) countries. but I think it should have been more informative because we students are studying only fifth or sixth and we cant understand such kind of English. so next time please make the information in an easier language so that it would be easy for us kids to understand and store it in our minds.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_48)

**Anil**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very nice article. But a little more of the culture of the country will be nice. I was fortunate to be Born in this Country and had the previlege to work for a brief span in Doha.

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_49)

**Saleem Sarhadi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was planning to write a basic level article in Urdu particularly for people intended to visit QATAR as visitor from Pakistan or Urdu speaking region. I reviewed number of books and browse dozen of articles and visited website to fiend out updated information on the subject QATAR. I fiend it very informative article and I use information my Urdu version article complied by me.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_50)

**Matthew Carranza**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was doing a project on this country and this really help

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_51)

**NOMAAN SHAIKH**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

IT WOULD BE MORE HELPFUL IF CAN SEND ME A DETAIL REPORT REGARDING MARRIAGE OCCASION IN QATAR WHAT ARE THE TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE EVENT ARE PERFORMED DURING A WEDDING OCCASION THE RITUAL AND THE VENUES FOR THE MARRIAGES EVERYTHG ,I WILL BE THANKFUL TO YOU IF YOU CAN MAIL ME THE COMPLETE REPORT FOR THAT,THANK YOU

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_52)

**Raheem**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Salam Qatar,this is a brilliant article thankyou so much

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_53)

**Charm**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is very informative article. Since i am planning to live with my soon to be husband Qatari. I don't know what to expect meeting his family since i am a different nationality. All i know was that my fiance respect and accepted me. Can u please give me more informations about Qatari family engaging to different nationality be part of their family. Thank you!

Family vacation packages

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_54)

[**Mohamed Moijewel Koroma**](mailto:mohamedmkoroma%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I Like everything about the country, it will be more important for to go and work there,that if i have some one to help me get there.  
Thanks.

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_55)

**reema**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the information based on your culture.  
This helped me learn more about your country and your culture.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_56)

**SHARAFN SHA**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANKS FOR THE INFORMATION BASED ON YOUR CULTURE  
REALLY NICE ARTICLE  
NOW I AM WORK IN QATAR

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_57)

**Moses**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I really love Qatar So much, more specifically about it peace compared to other Arab countries!!

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_58)

**Xavior**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm doing a report on Qatar and this was really helpful Thanks!

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_59)

**jared**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

love the hospitality of qataris people may the lord bless you and raise you above all nations and gives you victory

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_60)

[**shahrukh khan**](mailto:sharukh05361%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Qutar is a good islamic country and have good natural sourse for human being

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_61)

**America**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love Qatar, mostly because i was born there but seriously it's amazing! People should visit the place and try different foods there. Some things you could add are utilities( electrical, internet, water, etc.) & literacy rates. But this is presented in a very well and accurate description of Qatar.

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_62)

**carlos**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i need help about an especific topic, ive been looking for myths and legends; can someone help with where can i find or if anybody has one

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html#Comments_63)

**Dag**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have a LP with folklore music from Quatar. After the titles of the tunes are words like: Saifi, Fjeri, Khatfa, Khammari, Bhari and Haddadi.  
I wonder what each of these words mean? Bests from Norway

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

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Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

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[Culture of Qatar forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Puerto Rico](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Puerto-Rico.html)[Reunion Island](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html)

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Toggle navigation[](https://www.everyculture.com/)

1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Reunion Island

Reunion Island

Culture Name

Reunion Islander

Orientation

***Identification.***Reunion Island (in French, *La Reunion*) is a multicultural society composed of people originally from France, Mozambique, India, China, Madagascar, and the Comores. Islanders use their ethnic origins to define themselves as *Cafres*(African ancestry) *Z'oreilles*(born in mainland France), *malabars*or *Tamouls*(from [Tamil Nadu](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Tamil_Nadu.html) southern India), *Z'arabes*(from [Gujarat](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Gujarat.html) in northern India), *Chinois*(from China), *Malgaches*(from Madagascar), *Comores*(from Comores), *Petits blancs*(poor rural whites living in the highlands), or *Creoles blancs*(white landowners). The term *Creole*today also applies to people with a mixed ethnic background. All the residents of the island are administratively French citizens.

***Location and Geography.***Reunion Island lies in the Indian Ocean, off the eastern coast of Madagascar. At 970 square miles, (2,512 square kilometers), it is the largest of the Mascarene islands. High plains separate two [volcanic](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Volcano.html) systems. Climatic variations range from humid to dry tropical to Mediterranean. More than half the land is not suitable for cultivation. Periodic cyclones can be devastating. The capital is Saint Denis.

***Demography.***In 1999, the population was over 717,000. It is difficult to categorize the population by ethnic background, but estimates indicate that approximately twenty percent of the population is of Indian ancestry, and around five percent is born in mainland France.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Although French is the official language, Creole is the language of everyday life. Based on French, with a mixture of Malagasy and Tamil words, it is used with relatives and for informal interactions. French is generally used in formal situations. Although everybody understands it, many people cannot speak it; therefore, its use is a marker of educational achievement and social status.

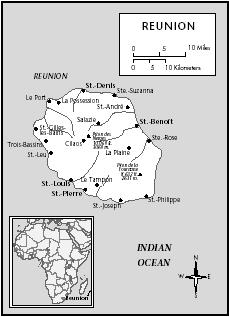
***Symbolism.***Economic and cultural ties are almost exclusively with mainland France; Reunion is officially called "the France of the Indian Ocean." Since the development of tourism in the 1970s, the image the island tries to project to the outside world is that of a multicolored society where people with different ethnic backgrounds live together peacefully.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Discovered at the beginning of the [sixteenth](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/16th_century.html) century, the island was reached by the French in 1643. Reunion (then called *Mascarin*) was devoid of inhabitants. The French sent twelve convicts into exile there. In 1649 they officially claimed the island in the name of the king and named it *Bourbon*. Colonization started in 1665, when the French East India Company sent the first twenty settlers. After 1715, settlers produced coffee and spices, which ultimately were replaced by sugarcane. In 1792, France renamed the island *La Reunion.*

The labor force needed on the sugarcane plantations was supplied by slaves from Mozambique and Madagascar. At the end of the seventeenth century, the population could be divided into white French landowners and African and Malagasy slaves. A great number of white settlers arrived too late to gain access to the land and, excluded from the plantation system, retired in the highlands, where they constituted a poor white population ( *Petits blancs*).

The abolition of slavery in 1848 led white landowners to recruit indentured laborers for their plantations, particularly Tamils. Most Tamils stayed at the end of their five-year contracts and continued to work for the white landowners. At the turn of the century, some Chinese and Muslim Gujaratis arrived



*Reunion*

to sell food and textiles. In 1946, Reunion became one of the four overseas department of France, and it became an administrative region in 1974.

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Having lost their cultural links with their societies of origin, African and Maslagasy slaves were subject to deculturation and pauperization. By contrast, whites, Chinese, Muslim Gujaratis, Tamils, and French from the mainland have been able to maintain most of their original systems of value while adapting it to the local context.

***National Identity.***Since the beginning of immigration, the French government has stressed assimilation of the populations under its control, exploiting the resources of the island while pressuring immigrants to become "French." As a result, all members of this multicultural society are officially "French citizens." However, many descendants of Tamil immigrants have maintained their ancestral beliefs and patterns of behavior. Although Chinese residents were also converted to Christianity, they are less westernized than are residents of south Indian ancestry. Most still speak Chinese and have kept links with relatives in China. Gujaratis Muslims also have been able to preserve their culture and religion.

***Ethnic Relations.***Whites and people of African, Tamil, and [mixed ancestry](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Multiracial.html) consider themselves the original inhabitants of the island, in contrast to Gujaratis and Chinese. However, all native residents feel a strong difference between themselves and people from mainland France. The French, who generally do not stay more than three or four years on the island, are rarely considered full members of the society. Both populations live close to each other but inhabit different cultural worlds.

Food and Economy

***Basic Economy.***The economy was traditionally based on agriculture. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the most important crops were coffee and cloves and then sugarcane.

***Major Industries.***The labor force consists of workers in services (seventy-three percent), industry (nineteen percent), and agriculture (eight percent). Major industries include sugar, rum, handicrafts, and flower oil extraction.

***Trade.***The major exports are sugar, rum vanilla, and perfume essences. Imported commodities include manufactured goods, food, beverages, tobacco, raw materials, machinery and transportation equipment, and petroleum products. The economy depends on financial assistance from mainland France, which is also the principal trading partner. Around 100,000 people born in Reunion work and live in mainland France. Massive importation of goods has led to a large deficit in the balance of trade. The government has promoted tourism to reduce unemployment, which affects more than a third of the labor force.

Best restaurants near me

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***The transformation of Reunion into a French department slowly substituted a pseudo-industrial and consumer society for a colonial and rural society. There are large disparities in wages and deep social inequalities between workers. The minimum wage is around ten percent lower than it is in mainland France, while the wages of those in the public sector are approximately forty percent higher. The gap between rich and poor accounts for the current social tensions. The white and Indian communities are substantially better off than are other segments of the population. Immigrants from France hold the key positions in administration,



*A sugar factory in Saint Louis. Sugar is one of Reunion Island's major exports.*

and in the private sector, their wages are higher than are those of other groups. People of African descent are still at the bottom of the social scale. The outbreak of rioting in February 1991 reflected the seriousness of socioeconomic tensions.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Use of the French language characterizes social stratification. As most of the population learns Creole at home and French at school, the ability to speak French is a sign of education and high status.

Political Life

***Government.***The political system is French. The representative of the French state is the prefect, who is appointed by the French president. There are one general council and one regional council, whose presidents are elected by their members, that finance development projects. City mayors are popularly elected, along with five deputies to the French National Assembly.

***Social Problems and Control.***The legal system is French. Homicide and rape are relatively numerous and are committed mostly by men under the influence of alcohol. Court judgments take into account the social background of criminals.

***Military Activity.***Defense is the responsibility of France. The military is absent in Reunion, and men serve their military terms in France.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Because unemployment is a major problem, state programs of social welfare are important. More than sixty percent of the population receives welfare benefits.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***The care of infants varies with the family's ethnic and cultural background. Regarding sleep practices, for instance, among families from the mainland France, a child is put in a separate room very early and may have stories, toys, and a night lamp to accompany him or her in the sleep. On the other side, among families of Indian origin, children consider sleep a positive and auspicious event, and children go to bed without reluctance. Most of these children share bedrooms with siblings of the same sex.

***Child Rearing and Education.***Children of Tamil ancestry learn to separate the world into two basic spheres of action: that of the family and the community, in which the Indian value system predominates,



*Fishermen haul a boat onto one of Reunion's rocky beach heads.*

and that where the cultural models of the larger society are dominant.

***Higher Education.***In 1954, fifty-seven percent of the population was illiterate, but today the rate is less than 10 percent. Education is valued in families of Tamil, Gujarati, and Chinese ancestry. For the lower and middle classes, school is a democratic institution that allows one to achieve a better future. Pupils with African and mixed origin who frequently grow up in a family with a single mother, often experience failure at school. In contrast, education is particularly valued in families of Tamil, Gujarati, and Chinese ancestry. For the lower and middle classes, school is a democratic institution that allows one to achieve a better future. There are seven thousand students at the ever-expanding University of La Réunion.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The dominant religion is Roman Catholicism, totaling eighty-six percent of the population. Christianity was established by the first settlers. Although indentured contracts specified that a laborer's religion be respected, the Catholic Church and the authoritarian administration attempted to convert newcomers. Tamils were obliged



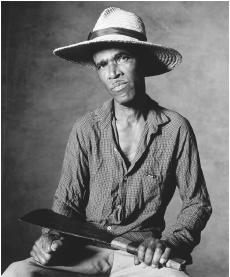
*Hikers gaze on the beauty of Cirque de Malfate from the peak of Piton Meido on Reunion Island.*

to go to church, wear French clothes, and give Christian names to their children. Contract workers had to express Christian attitudes and practice Christian rites to be accepted by their employers and the larger society. In the eighteenth century, Catholic priests attempted to prevent the construction of Hindu temples and the public practice of Hinduism. When it was finally authorized, the priests continued to spread a negative perception of the Hindu religion as "pagan."

***Religious Practitioners.***Although they have been largely christianized, people of Indian origin refer to Hindu Gods in important matters. While it has been adapted to a new social context, folk Hinduism has been maintained almost as it was in India at the time of emigration more than one century ago. Among the expressions of this religion are fire walking, animal sacrifices, and rituals of possession by a deity or ancestor. This Hinduism is strongly connected with the idea of protection against bad luck, the evil eye, and the negative forces of the visible and invisible world.

Medicine and Health Care

In rural areas, modern medicine is complemented by traditional local practices based on a mixture of different beliefs (Hindus, Christian, and Malagasy).



*A worker at a sugar processing factory.*

Many people consult *devineurs*who can predict the future and give advice about their problems.

Secular Celebrations

The major holidays are the same as those in France (National Day, Bastille Day, Christmas, New Year's Eve), supplemented by local celebrations such as the anniversary of the abolition of slavery on 21 December and the Tamil and Chinese new years.

The Arts and Humanities

***Literature.***A local literature that has existed for the last twenty years celebrates the culture of Reunion. Most writers who use the Creole language emphasize a global identity (that of being *réunionnais*and neglect the cultural heterogeneity of the population.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

In the 1970s a local university was created, and French scholars received funding to conduct research on the island. Numerous studies, focused primarily on the Creole language and culture, have since been published. Undertaken by researchers or students from mainland France or natives of the island, they mostly see the society as an integrated unit or a place of culturally distinct subcultures. An outward perspective—still awaited—should allow a better analytic distanciation.

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—C HRISTIAN G HASARIAN

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_1)

**awal abdi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am very glad to read about the history and the people of reunion island i have never hade before what is called reunion or if there is aplace called reunion island where people live ,but now i rade all of the categories of reunion including economy people religion and thy hisotry adn i wish i will visint one in that beutifull island .  
thanx  
awal

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_2)

**Loser**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

in my opinion I think that this was a great article. I learned very many things about this island. with many things to see and do this will be one place i'll vist, w/ many relgions and history this island seems interesting.  
~unKown~

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_3)

**David**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I don't know why the people of Reunion don't become independent or (better) join the Republic of Mauritius. Does France stop them? Does Mauritius reject them? Mauritius has a similar cultural and linguistic mix but has ~5-6% economic growth, ~7.5% unemployment, low crime, a stable democracy, a Westminster justice system, is a regional financial and tourism hub and is proudly independent. Reunionnais may loose the right to migrate to France if they join, but they would benefit in many other ways. France has a bad habit of resisting colonial independence and maintaining Parisian control and privilege. This keeps colonial people weak and poor. England gave up this arrogant, old-fashioned system decades ago! Reunion independence or a Mauritius State now!!

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_4)

**bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

la reunion is very cool, it is a very pretty place to live! :)

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_5)

**Kitty Wynola**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The website is soo cool  
i love reading about special islands that i hope to visit soon!!!

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_6)

**JÃ©jÃ©**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is very interesting and we can learn a lot about any culture, even from a little island like Reunion Island. However I wanted to say that the abolition of slavery was on 20th of December not on 21st as written in Secular celebration part.  
Thank you for your job.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_7)

**nikki**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi i have just found out that my great,great,great grandma was born in st denis , she married a french man francois dragon and had a son fransis in isle of bourbon. i cant find much on my grandma she was born in 1830 (elizabeth mau)i woundered if she was indian or creol or french ?

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_8)

**George Fernandez**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Highly informative article on Reunion Islands.Thanks to the Author.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_9)

**Sebastien**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This a good article. I come from this Island and I learned a lot of stuff that i didn't know cheers mate.  
  
Go there its really a good place with good people (also bad) but good spot to live

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_10)

**paokholal Haokip**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Well, Professor Ghassarian I know is a good person who even sent me all the materials he had and written regarding the island and it help me a lot during my field study in the islans march-april 2008. It a wonderful island.God bless People of Indiann Origin in the island

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_11)

**Ian**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

As a South African resident Englishman, that has visited the island 5 times, may I say what a well written article this is.  
  
As for the comments of 'Dave' on May 7th 2007, he obviously has no idea what he is talking about. The 'colonial people' of Reunion are not being used in any way, in fact the reverse is true and they are benefiting from vast subsidies from being members of the EU. Look at the wonderful roads and 'European' infrastructure.  
  
As for joining Mauritius, only an idiot or Mauritius politician would want that. I've been there! It is a far smaller island, with a far greater population, much more poverty and no 'European' infrastructure and their roads are in a typically 'African' condition.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_12)

**Libu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Simply, a great article! It's hard to find a complete and correct information about Reunion. Would you have some more info or useful links about its local Creole architecture?  
Many thanks

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_13)

**kim**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow. very interesting. i have been reading all day and viewing photo's. such an amazing location on this planet. wish i could afford to go there someday,although the trip is extremly long from texas. ugh.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_14)

**Kesslen Shay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much, this was a lot of help! :)  
~kess

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_15)

**dog**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I will gladly kill you everyone!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
as you kills dogs!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
ASSSHHOOLLLEEESSSSS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
MOTHERFUCKERS DIE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
DIE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
DIE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
DIE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
DIE YOU'RE NO FUCKI\*N HUMANS !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_16)

**muzakir**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very intresting hope 2 visit da place and would love 2 know abt any new article on it.just missing myloon.

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_17)

**Frederic**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

@Ian and @Dave  
  
La Reunion is not only a region of France but also a region of Europe. And citizen of La Reunion are french citizen, which means that they have opportunities to work and live in any region of Europe. By the way, being a region of Europe gave us more economical autonomy in regards to France.  
  
For these simple reasons, it is unlikely that Reunionese will choose independence.  
  
Another important point: we will never join Mauritius, in regards to the different political cultures of our countries.  
Typically, the political and social lives are not driven by [ethnic classification](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ethnic_group.html) in La Reunion, while this is more or less the case in Mauritius.  
  
M. GHASARIAN underlined the correlation between economic inequalities and ethnic origin. That's still true; but at the same time, blending is increasing. As a result, we are at a transition: some decade ago, people were clearly inhabiting "different cultural worlds", but now, they increasingly feel that they shares a common reunionese cultural world and future.  
  
Yours,  
  
Frederic from Reunion.

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_18)

**laurence**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i am so happy to read about my ialand it is a pleasure to know that some people have heard of us i miss the sea and the humid air but most of all imiss eating LETCHIS and BICHIQUE with ROUGAIL MANGUES.Thank you for doing this what a blast

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_19)

**Arjunan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Reunion Island is the ''Small miracle in the Indian Ocean''.  
  
Reunion Island Independence should decided by the people of the Island, nor South African , nor Mauritian, nor Mainland French.  
  
If people want freedom they 'll , if they want to live with France let them decide.  
God saves Reunion Island....

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_20)

**Dominic**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Monsieur Frederic failed to point out that 34% of Reunionnese are unemployed,  
living off French money.  
Thus, it is obvious that Reunion is an example of an island which has failed to be self-reliant (look at the recent food crisis in Guadeloupe and Reunion and ask yourselves why they went through this?) and capable economically but has prospered because of its relationship with France.

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Would Reunion's people be worse off independent? Probably, but at least they can say that they've tried.  
Find out how many Reunionnese went to France to find work and you'll see thousands, then look at how many [Frenchmen](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/French_people.html) are getting paid to come and work in Reunion.  
Look at [Seychelles](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Seychelles.html) and you can see an example of an ex-colonial Indian Ocean nation doing well so just because of Mauritius' problems don't say it can't work.

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_21)

**Celeste**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a pretty cool website. I have to do a project over this country but one of the main focal points my teacher wants me to talk about is traditional attire of Reunion. I've trying to research this but have found nothing helpful. So maybe that could be something to mention or add to this article.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_22)

[**patrick karanja**](mailto:kruzzp%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i'd love to be in reunion for my entire future life.its a beautiful island i wish to die on.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_23)

**elisa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

beautifully integrated website!!! thanks! I look forward to exploring it in the future.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_24)

[**Phillipa**](mailto:Phillipagrace%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am only sorry i didn't read this article sooner.it is educative.God bless the net.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_25)

[**silver**](mailto:silversalazar48%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

You guys should talk more about the national holidays in reunion i need this for school and we need alot more info then this.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_26)

[**gopal**](mailto:gopaljethanandani%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I wish i could be a part of this beautiful la reunion island. I am an indian male 40 yrs old,any suggestions to make it possible.Thanks in advance.

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_27)

**xevan hunter**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

lots of swearing in this i am only 11 years old and swearing is not me plese do somthing about this i hpoe you do i find it very inaproppriate . thank you for your time

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_28)

[**N. Snyman**](mailto:fhdl%20[at]%20telkomsa%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like to know if my partner and myself can come to Reunion to get married. She has an EU passport and I have a South African Passport. We have been together for 20 years and reside in South Africa.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_29)

**Paulina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Is this stuff true? Tell me because I really need it for a paper due on December 15 2010. Please, anyone especially the writer

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_30)

**Vincent Martinez**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great article, I spent around 10 years growing up in Reunion living in Le Tampon (I know) and my parents are still living there with the rest of my brothers and sisters to this day, its an incredible place that I wish I had not taken fore granted at the time. Just with regards to a Military presence, there are still 2 large..ish military bases in Reunion so i'm not sure if thats a mistake or if you are referring to some other kind of military.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_31)

[**FLETCHER**](mailto:somboyz%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would love to visit one day that beautifull island. Great story indeed.  
  
Thanks for sharing  
  
-FLETCHER-

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_32)

[**PHILIP**](mailto:reji505%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I HAVE SEEN SOME REUNION PEOPLE WAY BACK IN VARANASI AND WAS INTERESTED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS NATION,YES, THIS NATION THOUGH HEARD OF JESUS AND FOLLOWING CHRISTIANITY HAS NOT SEEN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THERE ARE MANY WHO REALLY NEED THE TOUCH.WHEN JESUS TOCUH THE LAND IT WILL CHANGE AND people will see deliverence and happiness in jesus name

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_33)

**Racheal**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This artical was so helpful. I needed to know about this Island for a project at Church. Thank you for writing it. I'm glad I could find out more about this amazing island. We are currently learning about missionaries preaching in Reunion. The pictures I have found are amazing and beautiful place. I would really like to go there one day.

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_34)

**Mike Hess**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am a single male (69 years-old), retired, debt-free, college graduate, spent 2.5 years in France from 1962-1965. I'd love to come to Reunion Island to stay for awhile. I hope it's not too expensive.  
  
Thanks for all the information you provided.  
  
Mike Hess

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_35)

[**jasmine**](mailto:hamptonj8%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

how is the education in reunion? thats the only thinh that im missing from here. maybe i miss read , i dont know.

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_36)

**oloyede**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

its a wonderful adventure all the way.am James,a nigerian and since am convinced about the origin of a great island,i shall opt in soon.i woul also like to become a face in testimony of being a beneficiary from the resource of a g reat island.pls send me hint on how i can begin to hook up blessed people of the island

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_37)

[**Narendra Dobariya**](mailto:dobariyanarendra%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

love this article, la reunion is a very good and beautiful place to live. natural scenery i very very good.  
  
Narendra Dobariya

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_38)

**Brittany**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Do any of you know about nutritional need/political, and/or economics afffecting France Foods?

Best restaurants near me

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_39)

**yoe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is the most amazing place ever...i have seen the most beautiful view in the world. i think people should visit this place

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_40)

**dan rhodes**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

please let me know what is the process of visit to reunion island.can you send me on my email

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_41)

[**Bastien**](mailto:zscd%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20in)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi.  
  
I am from Reunion Island. I wanted to say that information on this page about my island is quite correct. Few details are a bit outdated. So if anyone wants fresh update, you can email me.  
  
I am a blend of "CrÃ©ole blanc" (white creole) and South Asian. I have actually Indian, Gypsy, French Norman and Scottish ancestors. I speak creole as primary language and use french language in administration and work. I also speak urdu and gujarati. I was born Catholic but I am not Christian anymore (I'm 32). But I still practice folk [syncretism](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Syncretism.html) (ancestor worship, Hindu gods and Christian saints).  
  
So don't hesitate to ask me if you have questions: zscd@live.in

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_42)

**chris**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm about to visit Reunion for the first time and really appreciate the opportunity to find out more than "best hotel" and other commercial junk. Thank you for giving me an overview, on which I will be able to build and make make the most of my tine on the island.

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_43)

**Iqbal Osman**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Interesting place. I look forward to visiting the island for a day or two. Looks like a very beautiful island.

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_44)

**ubah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is very very interesting reading about the Islands -Reunion . Everybody should be given freedom because , what is good for the geese is also good for the gander. But it is never an easy thing for multicultural society to live together peacefully. GOD grant "The Reunion" all it takes to maximize their life in this wonderful Island you (GOD) have given them, I guess they are peace loving people.

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_45)

[**sreeny**](mailto:nagendrasrinivask%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is sreeny from india.  
  
interesting place to visit.i want to know about agricultutr sector in reunion .types of crops suitble for reunion climate?  
  
Hi reunions  
hope that you are send a good reply.

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_46)

**tiffany**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

La Reunion is a really pretty island and i am doing a project on it and i am very much enjoying the different things about the little island. This is the right island to research because i love to learn about new things and i think that is have found what i am looking. Cant wait to learn more. Love this website though.

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_47)

[**manoharan**](mailto:manohar_74%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

good article.i am from tamilnadu and want to know more about the tamil people if any tamil from reunion contact me i am glad to teach them about our religon,culture,worships,foodhabits etc.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_48)

**Melanie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is very helpful because I have to make a presentation on the culture of this island. It's like I have found gold on this site!

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_49)

[**sergio monfort**](mailto:sermft%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very interesting blog.. congrats  
I'm looking forward to visit the island  
thanks for great information.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_50)

**lindie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Bonjour!  
I am so grateful to have read about this gorgeous island and very soon I'll be visiting.  
  
thanks for the great information.  
  
God bless!

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_51)

**Sam**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Interesting article, pretty sad to see the way Hindus were mistreated historically, but that was typical of colonial European attitudes towards others. Hopefully today people are allowed to be what they want to.  
  
Politically treated as a department of France, does it have free movement of people unlike the situation with my country and some of its remaining "Overseas territories" we certainly don't treat them like counties of the United Kingdom.

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_52)

**Cortney**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks this really helped with my French 1 project !

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_53)

**Coco**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website has been awesome! It has everything I wanted on it for a research project. It has everything that a fact and information website should have on it. I am very glad that I found this website as it has boosted my general knowledge and taken time of my whole research assignment! Thank you for this great source of info!

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_54)

**joshua**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

"Rape and homocide is frequent" - not a good sign in a place so small.

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_55)

[**Mohammad Abdus Samad**](mailto:samad2008%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I VISITED THIS BLOG BECAUSE I WAS CURIOUS ABOUT MH370 DEBRIS.  
AND I KNEW SO MUCH ABOUT THIS TERRITORY. I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AGRICULTURE AND CROPS THAT ARE CULTIVATING THERE THROUGH THIS SITE. THANKS

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_56)

[**robert**](mailto:lr_wyman%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

a large amount of information in such a short article,,learned a lot though, i am retired and interested in finding a place like reunion island to spend the rest of my years,, homicide and rape very prevelent,,unemployment sky high,,two very important things to be concerned about,,  
i am still interested though!

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_57)

[**CHIKERE ANOZIE**](mailto:anozie72142001%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What an interesting piece you wrote ! Am glad to read about Reunion Island ; it must be a very beautiful Island. Can I get the details of how to travel to Reunion Island from Nigeria West Africa.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_58)

**Yusuf**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like to know this island and it's people the culture and how to visit this island it is very beautiful island i like it very much

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_59)

**HÃ©loÃ¯se**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good article even though there are a few mistakes (such as the abolition of slavery which we celebrate on the December 20th or the title of St Denis is the administrative center, the capital of La RÃ©union being Paris). But other than that it is complete and well explained. Good job!  
And I am from La RÃ©union, in case people have questions ;) don't hesitate to ask ^^

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_60)

**Yusuf**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like this website and i want to know more about the culture and people and how i can come to Re-Union Island to get friends

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_61)

**ahmed**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it is avery nice article it realy helped me to more about a reunion country

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_62)

**Bev**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very informative. Just sad to learn that in another place people of African descent are at the bottom. Not blaming the country. Like the article said, the people of  
African descent mostly consists of single women trying to raise their families. When are these men going to wake up and start taking responsibility and provide for their off-springs? When are the rich people of the same culture going to invest some money into teaching these men family values? Time to stop the cycle/time to stop thinking it is not your problem. Time for African Pride!

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_63)

**Arasu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice. I Like to visit reunion place. some body can help me...

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_64)

**Amit Kumar**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

So cool and wonderful country I love this place and I have a missing moment seriously

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_65)

**Rand**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Interesting article, but it seems pretty outdated. My wife is from Reunion and we visit every few years. One thing that needs to be understood is the amount on intermixing there is between various racial groups. The largest ethnic group is more than one. For example my wife is part French, part African, part English, part Greek, part Malagasy, part Indian and part Chinese. There are plenty of successful descendants of African and Malagasy people. Those of Indian and Chinese used to dominate grocery stores and the Muslim population was big in clothing stores. However, the growth of large French chains like Carrefour, Score, Cora and Auchan has changed that.  
  
Because the school system is French, students who study well have the ability to pursue their studies either in Reunion or in France. I have several nieces and nephews who studied and live in France. Medical care is pretty comparable to mainland France.  
  
Over the past 25 years Reunion has made some pretty impressive gains in standard of living. While I have not been in Mauritius, it is my understanding that Reunions standard of living is quit a bit higher. It is a different level than Madagascar and much more on par with Europe. This is largely because French money flows in because there is not much of an industrial base.  
  
As far as the comments about French and Creole, I have seen the opposite. Many kids today struggle with Creole and they are now teaching it in school. Many of the kids speak at least limited English.  
  
Reunion is a beautiful island with stunning scenery. Most young people speak at least some English.

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_66)

**Sundararajan PadmanabhanL**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Would like to do a [Bharathanatyam](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Bharata_Natyam.html) dance tour. Can anybody enlighten me

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_67)

**K.elampouranane**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What is social welfare benefits in reunion. Is it like erasa in France. Pls reply.

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Reunion-Island.html#Comments_68)

**Ashok Kumar P. Aubeeluck**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is enlightening, organized and comprehensive in fostering understanding of island culture; it needs no further comments. However, the comments may require some further remarks. Mauritius and Reunion geographically and historically called the Mascareignes islands share much in common - ancestry (Malgasy, Mozambique, Tamils, Chines, Franco-Mauritians, Guajarati Indians, and mixed), Créole language (different versions), sugar and tourism. They both complement each other and are competitive. With the Cilaos, volcanoes, its lush vegetation and dramatic topography, fascinating Reunion, supplies 170,000 tourists annually to wonderful Mauritius.  
Reunion made a choice as did Mauritius. Pointing out that Reunion’s performance, could have been ‘self-reliant’ like Seychelles or Mauritius is hypothetical. Independent Mauritius receives substantial aid from France for economic, cultural, educational, and strategic reasons (sphere of influence). Reunion would have received perhaps more technical and financial support. Joining Mauritius to form a single entity, is, however, like the desire of the moth for the star, and the night for the morrow. Mauritius does not believe in colonization but in cooperation, already formalized in the Indian Ocean Commission.  
Reunion is sufficiently intelligent to decide its lots, certainly not Mauritius! In some areas Mauritius is more advanced – it became a tremendous quality textile exporter before shifting to become a global financial centre and regularly features among the 10 most beautiful islands to visit in the company of The Maldives, The Seychelles, The Bahamas or Malta; in other areas Reunion is more advanced like energy or perfume production. Cooperation can reinforce each other. Reunion benefits much from France but control rests with metropolitan France. Tourism is progressing in both countries because some airlines find it profitable to service both islands.  
Reunion benefited from better infrastructure, which Mauritius is fast catching up as evidenced by the roads and the quality of vehicles (Mercedes, Audi, BMW). Hundreds, if not thousands, of Frenchmen and South Africans work in Mauritius, seek Mauritian nationality and work in the hotels and financial services sector. Why would they leave France or South Africa to settle in Mauritius? Frederick stated that ‘political and social lives are not driven by ethnic classification … in Mauritius’ - a perception political leaders, living in ethno-social ivory tower, persist in believing is at odds with the electoral data since 1976. Like Reunion, Mauritius, has undergone significant socio-economic evolution with rising inter-ethnic marriages. Paul Berenger, a White Franco-Mauritian, overcoming great lobbies, became Prime Minister on his charisma and merit since the White population accounts for less than 2% of the population.  
Being contemptuous of Dave’s remarks or treating others as ‘idiots’ smacks of a colonial condescending attitude. Is Mauritius (2040 KM2 & 2.3 KM2 Mn of EEZ) a far smaller island than Reunion (2512 KM2)? Size or population are not determining factors (Hong Kong, Singapore, Iceland). Economic prosperity depends on thriving markets, income, and acquired resources. For three consecutive years Mauritius appeared in the top 10 best performers with NZ, Singapore (World Heritage Index). If Ian had visited Mauritius in the early 1980s, I have no quarrels with him. Progress is a function of universal factors and the determination of a nation.  
Reunion and Mauritius should think of what they can do together rather than what separates. One potential project is a floating windmill farm in the ocean separating Mauritius and Reunion (144 miles), financed and run by a Mauritius-Reunion joint venture to maximize the critical mass of demand - a model of energy production friendly to the environment impacting on high-income job creations, balance of payments etc. Cultural and economic ties transc (...)

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" [Qatar](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html)[Romania](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Romania

Romania

Culture Name

Romanian

Orientation

***Identification.***The name "Romania," which was first used when the three regions of the country were united in 1859, reflects the influence of ancient Rome on the nation's language and culture. The three regions—Walachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania—are relatively culturally uniform. An exception is the Hungarian community in Transylvania, which has its own language and traditions and considers itself Hungarian. The Roma (Gypsies), who are scattered throughout the country, mostly in small camps on the outskirts of towns and cities, are in many ways culturally unassimilated.

***Location and Geography.***Romania is in southeastern Europe at the north end of the Balkan peninsula, bordering Ukraine and Moldova to the north, Hungary to the northwest, Serbia to the southwest, Bulgaria to the south, and the Black Sea to the east. The land area is 91,699 square miles (237,500 square kilometers). The Carpathian Mountains cover about one-third of the country; they surround the Transylvanian Plateau and divide it from the other two main regions: Moldavia in the northeast and Walachia in the south. The Transylvanian Alps in the central region contain the highest peak, Mount Moldoveanu. The eastern and southern regions are characterized by rolling plains.

The Danube River stretches through the country for six hundred miles, forming its southern border with Serbia and Bulgaria and emptying into the Black Sea in the east. It is a source for irrigation and hydroelectric power.

Serious environmental problems include soil erosion and water and air pollution from unregulated industrial development. Because of economic hardship, the government has been slow to enforce laws that place restraints on industry.

***Demography.***The population was estimated to be 22,411,121 in 2000. Ninety percent of the people are Romanian, 7 percent are Hungarian, and 2 percent are Roma. The remainder is made up of Germans, Ukrainians, and others. Estimates of the Roma population range from 400,000 to one million; it is difficult to pinpoint because of the Roma's nomadic lifestyle. Before World War II, there was a large Jewish population, but almost 400,000 Jews were killed during the Nazi years, and many of the remaining Jews emigrated to Israel after the war. Today the Jewish population is estimated at less than 10,000. The German population has also decreased significantly. In the 1980s, Ceaucescu's government charged citizens large sums for permission to leave the country, a policy Germans felt was aimed specifically at them. Since Ceaucescu's regime fell in 1989, many Germans have emigrated.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The official language is Romanian, which has Latin roots that date back to the Roman occupation of the area but also contains words from Greek, Slavic languages, and Turkish. In the fourteenth century, the country adopted the Cyrillic alphabet, but it later reverted to Roman lettering. Magyar (the language of ethnic Hungarians) and German are spoken, as are Serbian, Ukrainian, Slovak, Czech, Bulgarian, and Turkish. The language of the Roma population is Romany, although many Roma combine that language with Romanian.

***Symbolism.***The flag consists of blue, yellow, and red vertical stripes that symbolize Transylvania, Moldavia, and Walachia, respectively. The coat of arms, adopted in 1992, consists of a gold eagle against a blue background holding a cross in its beak, a sword in one claw, and a scepter in the other. Emblazoned on the eagle's chest are the symbols of the five provinces: Walachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Banat, and Dobruja.



*Romania*

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***The first known inhabitants of present-day Romania were called Dacians. They were conquered by the Roman Empire in 106 C.E. Roman domination of the region lasted only until 271 but had a formative and long-lasting influence. Many Romans stayed and intermarried with the Dacians, helping to shape the customs and language of the region.

From the 200s through the 1100s, there was a series of invasions by various tribes from the north, including the Magyars and the Saxons. The northern region developed into a principality called Transylvania, the south into a principality called Walachia, and the east into Moldavia. Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Walachia and Moldavia battled repeated invasions by the Ottoman Empire. They eventually succumbed around 1500 and spent more than three hundred years under Turkish rule. In 1601, the principalities of Moldavia, Walachia, and Transylvania were united for the first time under Prince Michael the Brave. During Michael's reign, Romania maintained a degree of sovereignty, but after his death, the Turks again dominated the region. They ruled through Greek officials who abused their power to exploit the peasants.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the Ottoman Empire was weakened by a series of defeats to the Russians. In 1821, an uprising in Walachia against the Greek rulers ended in the execution of the Romanian leader Tudor Vladimirescu, which further fanned desires for independence. The 1829 Treaty of Adrianpolie replaced Greek rule with Russian. In 1834, the Russians withdrew. In 1859, Prince Alexander Cuza was elected ruler of a united Moldavia and Walachia; three years later, the country was renamed Romania (then spelled Rumania). Cuza attempted to redistribute land and improve the living conditions of the poor, but those policies were unpopular with the upper class; in 1866, Cuza was forced to resign and was replaced by Prince Carol. In 1877, Carol led a successful joint revolt of Romanian and Russian troops against the Turks. The Congress of Berlin of 1879 marked the end of Turkish domination. Romania became a kingdom in 1881, and Prince Carol was crowned king.

Despite the nation's independence, the situation of the majority of the people remained unchanged. In 1907, increasing discontentment gave rise to a peasant revolt, in which the country estates of the nobility were burned. The army suppressed the uprising, killing ten thousand people.

In 1914, King Carol died and Ferdinand I took his place. Two years later, Romania entered World War I, joining the Allies in their fight against the Axis powers (Austria-Hungary and Germany in particular). After the war, the Trianon Treaty doubled the size of the country, uniting Moldavia and Walachia with Transylvania, Banat, Bessarabia (present-day Moldova), and Bucovina (today in southern Ukraine). In the years after World War I, a fascist movement called the Iron Guard won a large following in response to threats from the communist Soviet Union and rising unemployment.

Ferdinand died in 1927 and was succeeded by his son, Carol II, in 1930. Carol II resorted to military suppression of the opposition. In 1938 he outlawed political parties, and the head of the Iron Guard was executed.

At the outbreak of World War II, Carol II was forced to give up significant portions of the country to Russia and Hungary. His son Michael took the throne in 1940, but the real power fell to Marshal Ion Antonescu. In an effort to recoup Soviet-occupied territories, the country aligned itself with the German forces, participating in the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

In August 1944, King Michael took power back from Antonescu. Romania joined the Allied forces but was soon occupied by Russia. After the war ended in 1945, most of the occupied territories were returned, but the Russian communists retained control. They abolished the monarchy in 1947, replacing King Michael with a puppet government under the leadership of Petru Groza. Business and industry were nationalized, and farmland was taken from the peasants and reorganized into government-run collectives. The communist leadership also imposed harsh penalties for expressing opposition to the government, imprisoning dissidents or putting them to work in extremely dangerous labor projects. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej served as chief of state throughout the 1950s and was responsible for many of the Stalinist policies. In the early 1960s, he worked to distance Romania more from Soviet influence.

In 1965, Nicolae Ceausescu assumed the presidency and presented a new constitution. He initiated large-scale development projects, mainly with money borrowed from other countries. Many of those projects failed, sinking the country into debt that Ceaucescu attempted to pay off by exporting virtually everything the country produced, leading to severe shortages of food and fuel. The secret police kept the people in line through terror while Ceaucescu and his family, who controlled most of the government, continued to plunder the country for personal gain.

Family vacation packages

Best restaurants near me

In the 1980s, worsening food shortages, along with the toppling of other communist regimes in Eastern Europe, stirred unrest. Protests in 1987 were put down with a combination of military force and extra food distribution. In December 1989, protests in the city of Timisoara were met with gunfire, and hundreds of citizens died. Other protests broke out across the country, and the situation escalated until troops refused to follow orders and joined the protesters. Ceaucescu and his wife attempted to flee the country but were halted by the army and brought to trial. Both were found guilty of murder and put to death by firing squad on Christmas Day 1989.

A party called the National Salvation Front assumed power, and in 1990 free elections were held. Ion Iliescu, the leader of the National Salvation Front and a former Communist Party member, won the presidency, and a new constitution was adopted in 1991. Iliescu put down student protests against the government by calling in twenty thousand coal miners to create a counter demonstration and later used the same tactic to force Petre Roman, a liberal prime minister, from office. Despite widespread dissatisfaction with Iliescu's leadership, he won reelection in October 1992. Four years later, voters replaced him with the reform-touting Emil Constantinescu of the Democratic Convention of Romania. Despite positive changes during his term, the December 2000 elections were a contest between Iliescu and Corneliu Vadim Tudor of the right-wing Greater Romania Party, who espoused a hard-line fascist ideology. Iliescu won the vote of a disillusioned, bitter, and frightened populace.

***National Identity.***The majority of residents share a common culture and history dating back to the Dacians. National identity is informed by pride in the country's resilience and ability to withstand attacks from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Turks and later from the Soviet Union. Many Hungarians living in Transylvania consider themselves more Hungarian than Romanian, and some consider the region a part of Hungary.

Best restaurants near me

***Ethnic Relations.***Transylvania was once under Hungarian control, and parts of the region still have an ethnic Hungarian majority. Relations between Hungarians and Romanians are tense and have resulted in political conflict and occasional violence. In 1976, the communist government outlawed the use of the Hungarian language in education and the media in what it claimed was an effort to assimilate minorities into the national culture. Since 1989, the government has softened its stance, but discrimination still exists.

Romania has one of the world's largest populations of Roma. The Roma have a long history of persecution throughout Europe and still face discrimination. They have high rates of poverty, unemployment, and malnutrition, and many have left in an attempt to better their conditions.

During World War II, Jews were persecuted by both the government and the German military, and many were deported to Nazi concentration camps. Most of those remaining emigrated to Israel after World War II. Today, most of the country's Jews are concentrated in northern Moldavia and Bucharest.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Bucharest is the capital and largest city, located in the center of the southern region of Walachia. Some old architecture still remains—there are several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century churches and a university dating to 1864—but the communists replaced most of the old buildings with concrete apartment complexes and skyscrapers. Between the two world wars, Bucharest was also a cultural center called "the Paris of the East," but its character has become more industrial and commercial. It is still home to some cultural attractions, including the National Art Museum, national theater and opera companies, and the country's largest university.

Other important cities include Brasov, an industrial center in the Transylvanian Alps; Constanta, a port on the Black Sea; Cluj-Napoca in central Transylvania; and Timisoara in the eastern Banat region.

In the cities, most people live in high-rise apartment buildings. Housing is limited, and conditions are cramped. Heating is often inadequate. In the countryside, most houses are old-fashioned two- or three-room wooden structures without plumbing or electricity. Traditional rural houses have roofs of red tiles, corrugated tin, or wooden shingles. In Moldavia and Walachia, they are usually white, while in Transylvania, they are painted different colors. In previous centuries, people often built houses almost entirely underground to protect themselves from Turkish attacks.

Food and Economy

Best restaurants near me

***Food in Daily Life.***Breakfast is usually a small meal of bread with butter and jam and tea. The largest meal is eaten in the early afternoon. *Mititei,*grilled sausage seasoned with garlic, is a common appetizer. *Borsch,*cabbage soup with bran, or *ciorba,*a soup of lamb, mushrooms, and other meats and vegetables, is often served as a first course. Main dishes are usually meat-based, such as *tocana,*a pork stew flavored with garlic and onions. Other popular dishes include *sarmale,*cabbage leaves stuffed with rice and meat, and *mamaglia,*a cornmeal dish often served with poached eggs. Vegetables are served as side dishes. Typical desserts include *placinte,*a kind of pie, and *baclava,*a pastry made of nuts and honey.

Local wines produced in Moldavia and along the Black Sea coast are widely consumed. *Tuica,*a strong plum brandy, is also popular, as are beer and soft drinks.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Wedding feasts include kegs of wine and *tuica*and an enormous round loaf of bread shared by the bride and groom. The annual sheep feast, *Simbra Oilor,*a traditional holiday marking the moving of the herds to the high pastures, is celebrated with a large community meal of cheese, meat dishes, and *tuica.*

***Basic Economy.***The labor force consists of 9.6 million people, of whom 37 percent work in agriculture, 34 percent in industry, and 29 percent in services. The unemployment rate is 11 percent, and



Best restaurants near me

*Fishermen in boats on the Danube near a fishing village. All fishermen officially work for the state, though they survive by selling 70 percent of their catch on the black market.*

22 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

After World War II, the communists built up the industrial sector and introduced a nationalized economic system. Large building projects left the country with debts; to pay them off, the government exported much of what it produced and imported little, creating shortages of consumer goods and food. Since 1989, the government has introduced reforms to create a free-market economy, privatizing some businesses and removing price controls. Although prices have gone up, wages have not; while more consumer goods are now available, many people cannot afford to buy them. Romania's currency is the leu.

***Land Tenure and Property.***When the communists came to power, they nationalized industries, transportation, and stores as well as private farms. The new government has begun to allow more private ownership of land, a change that has resulted in increased agricultural output. The new laws allow citizens to claim land that had been taken from their ancestors as long ago as four generations. The number of people reclaiming land is in the millions.

Best restaurants near me

***Commercial Activities.***Many of the products produced for domestic sale are agricultural. The main crops are wheat, corn, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, and wine grapes. Farmers also raise cows, pigs, sheep, and chickens. Despite some improvement under the new government, shortages continue to be a problem, and consumers often wait in long lines to buy whatever the stores have in stock.

***Major Industries.***The primary industries include mining, timber, construction materials, metallurgy, chemicals, and machine building. Many industries have foundered in recent years, as they use old-fashioned equipment and are unable to compete with those of other countries. Since the early 1990s, tourism has become a growing industry.

***Trade.***Under communism, the Soviet Union was the primary trade partner. The Soviets sent raw materials that were processed in Romanian factories and then sold back to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.). Russia and the former Soviet republics remain important trading partners; others are Germany, Italy, France, and the United States. Exports include textiles and shoes, metals and metal products, and machinery and equipment. The main imports are coal, natural gas, and crude oil as well as machinery and consumer goods.

***Division of Labor.***In an effort to build up the industrial base, the communist government moved some of the rural population to the cities, creating a shortage of farmers. Most of those who left were younger males, and the agricultural sector came to be composed primarily of women and older men.

The communist state valued science much more highly than the humanities and other fields and pushed young people to pursue careers in those areas. In the early 1990s, a significant number of people switched jobs as more opportunities arose; it was not uncommon to see former doctors and scientists entering fields such as journalism and sales.

The poor often have little choice of profession. Education is expensive, and the children of farmers and factory workers do not have much opportunity for advancement.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***The majority of the people are poor, and the overall standard of living is low compared to that of Western Europe. Under communism, a small elite had access to luxuries unthinkable to most of the population. Ceaucescu, for example, lived in a forty-room palace where walls were hung with artwork taken from churches and museums. Some of the old elite have managed to hold onto their wealth and power in the government after Ceaucescu's ouster. In general, however, few rise above the generally low standard of living.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Cars are rare, and people who own them are usually part of the elite. Other imported consumer goods and household appliances are also expensive and difficult to come by and represent another symbol of high economic standing. It is also a mark of wealth to be able to send one's children to the best day-care centers and provide them with private tutoring.

In the cities, the majority of the people wear Western-style clothing. In rural areas, some people still wear traditional garb. For women, this consists of wool skirts and vests whose embroidery varies from region to region. For men, it is a white blouse and pants cinched with a wool or leather belt and a cap or hat.

Best clothing retailers

Throughout the country, Roma stand out in their brightly colored clothes. Women wear long flowing skirts, and men dress in white shirts with colorful sashes.

Hairstyles are often an indication of a woman's region of origin and marital status. Unmarried women wear their hair in braids, while married women cover their heads with cloths called *naframa.*

Political Life

***Government.***The president is the head of state and is elected by popular vote for a four-year term. He appoints the prime minister, who serves as the head of government. The prime minister appoints a cabinet called the Council of Ministers. The legislature is bicameral. The Senate ( *Senat*) has 143 members, and the Chamber of Deputies ( *Adunarea Deputatilor*) has 343 members. All legislators are elected by direct popular vote for four-year terms.

On the local level, the country is divided into forty districts administered by mayors and councils elected by the people. The head of each region is a prefect appointed by the central government.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***The 1991 constitution established a multiparty system. Sixteen parties are represented in the government, and there are several smaller ones that have not won seats. These parties are composed of former communists who favor gradual change, democrats pushing for faster reform, and groups representing the interests of the different ethnic minorities. After the corrupt and often brutal policies of Ceaucescu and other leaders, the people are wary of government officials in general.

Best clothing retailers

***Social Problems and Control.***The majority of the crimes committed are nonviolent. Economic crimes are a significant problem; corruption, speculation, hoarding, and black market activities are all prevalent. Juvenile crime is also a concern. The legal system, previously a combination of civil law and communist legal theory, is now based on the constitution of France's Fifth Republic.

***Military Activity.***The military consists of the Army, the Navy, the Air and Air Defense Forces, the Paramilitary Forces, and Civil Defense. In 1996, Romania spent $650 million annually on the military, or 2.5 percent of the gross domestic product. During Ceaucescu's reign, paramilitary forces often were used to suppress uprisings or dissenting activity, and the security police tapped telephones, persecuted religious authorities, and instilled fear in the populace.



*A young boy stands near his mother as she washes vegetables. The cloth covering a married woman's head is called a*naframa.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The communist government instituted a system of social welfare under which assistance was provided only to employees of the state. These workers are still entitled to pensions for retirement, disability, and survivors as well as insurance in case of sickness or injury. The state also has programs for orphans, the mentally and physically handicapped, and the elderly. Many of these programs are inadequate; in the 1980s, older people were discouraged from going to hospitals because of a lack of staff and supplies. The responsibility for caring for the elderly often falls to the family.

Family vacation packages

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Various human rights and professional associations are active in the country. Many, such as the Children's Relief Network and Aid for Romanian Children, direct their efforts toward improving conditions in orphanages and helping thousands of abandoned children find homes. Some of these groups have a religious affiliation; others, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), are funded by the governments of foreign countries.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***The communists attempted to get women into the work force in large numbers. While the majority of women work outside the home, they tend to occupy lower-level positions and generally are in traditional female fields, such as primary school education. Women also make up a large proportion of agricultural workers; as men left farming in the 1950s and 1960s, women were left behind in those jobs, which had come to be considered undesirable. While the definition of women's work has expanded, that of men's work has not, and women who work full-time outside the home are still expected to do all the cooking and housekeeping.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***After World War II, the communists succeeded in raising women's legal status, giving them equal rights in marriage and the workplace. Ceaucescu's regime was in many ways a step backward for women. His efforts to increase the population burdened women with either bearing children they did not want and could not afford or seeking illegal and dangerous abortions. The government also enforced mandatory gynecological examinations of women of



*A Romanian town and the Transylvanian Alps. The highest peak in the country, Mount Moldoveanu, is located in these Alps.*

childbearing age to prove that they had not had abortions.

Marriage, Family and Kinship

Family vacation packages

***Marriage.***Traditionally, marriages were arranged by the couple's parents through a matchmaker. The bride's family was expected to contribute a dowry that usually consisted of linen and embroidery. Traditional rural weddings were large festivities to which the entire village was invited. The ceremony included not just the couple and their parents but grandparents, godparents, the matchmaker, attendants, speakers, cooks, and numerous other people.

Today it is customary for young people to choose their own spouses, but certain elements of the traditional ceremony are preserved. The bride's hair is braided in an elaborate style, and she dons a crown of flowers, jewels, and ribbons. The groom wears a white leather vest and a hat decorated with feathers, flowers, and leaves. The best man shaves the groom's beard to symbolize his departure from his previous lifestyle. In the ceremony, both the bride and the groom ask their parents to forgive them for leaving the family.

In their effort to undermine religion, the Communists made civil ceremonies a legal requirement and discouraged church weddings. They also gave women greater rights in marriage, including equal control of children and property. When divorce laws were liberalized, the rates of divorce skyrocketed. To stem that trend, stricter laws were imposed in the 1960s, and divorce rates fell somewhat but remain high.

***Domestic Unit.***It is not uncommon for several generations to live together. Housing shortages force many people to live in close quarters. In the 1980s, the national average was ten square meters of living space per person; this has improved slightly, but not nearly to the goal set by the government of fourteen square meters per person by 2000.

***Inheritance.***Traditionally, an estate passes to the oldest son. Today, however, women are legally allowed to inherit property.

***Kin Groups.***The national culture places a high value on helping extended family members. An example of this was Ceaucescu's government, which was largely staffed by his relatives. Traditional families were large patriarchal units, as extra hands were always needed in the fields. Urbanization has led to smaller families, however, and to a decrease in the importance of family ties.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Ceaucescu made childbearing a priority in an effort to increase the population. He outlawed abortion and birth control and declared that each woman should have at least five children. While his policies were successful in producing more children, this was in many cases to the detriment of the children. Already poor families could not afford to feed or clothe them, and the orphanages filled with abandoned babies.

***Child Rearing and Education.***The communist government encouraged women to work outside the home and established state-run day-care centers called *crèches.*From a very young age, children are left in these centers all day while their parents work. Many *crèches*are overcrowded and insufficiently staffed. The largest day-care center is at Scinteia in Bucharest, which is exclusively for children of the elite.

School is free and mandatory from the ages of six to sixteen. From ages six to fourteen, children attend elementary school; after this, they must pass examinations to enter secondary school. About half these students go on to vocational schools; others continue their education at technical institutes or teacher-training programs.

***Higher Education.***Only 5 percent of students take a college preparatory course in secondary school. To study at a university, it is necessary to pass a rigorous examination that often requires expensive tutoring outside of school. The largest and most prestigious university is the University of Bucharest, founded in 1864. Other centers of higher education include Babes-Blyai University in Cluj-Napoca and the Polytechnic Institute in Bucharest.

Etiquette

Romanians are known for hospitality and generosity. Guests are always fed. Men indicate their respect for women by a tip of the hat, a kiss on the hand, or standing to offer them a seat. It is also customary for younger people to defer to their elders.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Seventy percent of the population is Romanian Orthodox, 6 percent is Roman Catholic (of which 3 percent is Uniate), 6 percent is Protestant, and 18 percent professes no religious affiliation. Under communism, religion was suppressed; churches were destroyed, and clergy were arrested. The government restricted religious practice but did not forbid it. The Romanian Orthodox Church as a whole did not oppose the government, and in many instances priests were used as tools of the administration.

Romanian Orthodoxy traces its history back to the Great Schism between Eastern and Western Christianity of 1054. The Eastern Orthodox Church, of which the Romanian Orthodox Church is one branch, has developed a more mystical slant than Roman Catholicism. Icons—images representing Christ, angels, saints, and other holy figures—hold an important place in Orthodox practice. They are considered a connection between the earthly and spiritual realms; it is believed that the saint is incarnated in the physical materials of the icon.

***Religious Practitioners.***The highest figure in Eastern Orthodox religion is the Patriarch of Constantinople. He is not considered infallible. Many Romanian priests lost the trust of their parishioners by working with the secret police during the communist regime. Some resisted, such as Laszlo Tokes, whose opposition to government intimidation led to popular acts of rebellion that ultimately led to Ceaucescu's ouster.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***Romanian Orthodox churches follow a specific pattern in the placement of icons. On the door there are usually life-size representations of the archangels Gabriel and Michael, above which there are several rows of other icons, including saints, martyrs, and apostles. Inside the church, there is a wall called an iconostasis where the images are displayed. On the feast day of a saint, that icon is placed on the altar for worshipers to kiss. It is customary for a family to have an icon in the home as well. When entering a house, guests cross themselves and bow to the icon before greeting the hosts.

Eucharist, or Holy Communion, is the central ritual in Orthodox services. During services on Sunday mornings, hundred of candles are lit and the smell of incense fills the church. Worshipers do not sit or kneel but stand erect.

Easter is the most important holiday in the Eastern Orthodox calendar. Its observation begins on Palm Sunday, when palm leaves or pussy willows are brought home from church. This is followed by the forty-day period of atonement of Lent, which ends on Good Friday. Easter Sunday, three days later, is celebrated with elaborately decorated eggs, feasting, and a midnight mass.



*Roma women standing near their motor homes. Many Roma are not culturally assimilated into modern Romanian culture.*

Christmas celebrations begin on 6 December (Saint Nicolas's Day), with family feasts. On the night before Christmas, young people wear costumes and perform *colinde,*traditional songs expressing hopes for good luck.

***Death and the Afterlife.***The belief in vampires popularized in the late 1800s by the story of Dracula has a long history in folk culture and is still followed in more traditional rural communities. It is believed that sometimes the soul does not leave the body after death, in which case the corpse does not decay but haunts the village of the deceased and can claim victims with a touch or even a glance. Garlic is thought to be helpful in keeping vampires away, as are food offerings made on Saint George's Day (23 April) and Saint Andrew's Day (29 November). The custom of covering mirrors in the home of the deceased has its origin in vampirism and the fear that the spirit of the dead person will see its reflection and not be able to leave.

Medicine and Health Care

The health care system improved under the communist government, which provided free medical services to all citizens. Development was uneven, and while conditions in the cities improved markedly, rural villages continued to suffer from a lack of doctors and facilities.

Environmental degradation has had negative effects on the health of the populations. Air pollution causes eye and lung disease, and many people do not have access to clean drinking water.

Many of the country's health problems are related to reproductive health and child care. Under Ceaucescu, abortion and birth control were banned; illegal abortions were common and often resulted in health problems. Many women were compelled to have children they could not support. Poor prenatal care and lack of food meant that many of those children were born prematurely and underweight; many were fed intravenously in hospitals with contaminated needles and contracted the AIDS virus. AIDS is a growing health concern, although the government has been slow to act and wary to release statistics. The main causes of death are cancer, cardiovascular disease, and alcoholism.

Secular Celebrations

New Year's Day is celebrated on 1 and 2 January. In Moldavia, the new year is brought in by a procession of people dressed as goats. In a rural tradition called *plugusorul,*a plow is decorated with green leaves and pulled throughout the village. Labor Day



*An overview of Bucharest's varied architecture. In the 1920s and 1930s, Bucharest was called "the Paris of the East."*

is celebrated on 1 and 2 May, and Independence Day on 23 and 24 August, and the National Day of Romania on 1 December.

Different regions have traditions of spring and summer festivals, including the Pageant of the Juni in the city of Brasov, which is celebrated with parades, and *sinzienele,*which is observed throughout the country near the time of the summer solstice.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***Under communism, the government forced artists to join unions, which supported them but censored their work. Today there is less state support for artists but more creative freedom.

***Literature.***The national literature traces its roots back to early ballads and folklore. The ballad form, which was most popular between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, often involved pastoral tales sung to the accompaniment of a lute or zither. The best-known folktale is that of Dracula, which was made famous by foreign authors. Ion Creanga, a nineteenth-century writer, was famous for his use of traditional storytelling techniques in fiction and memoirs. More contemporary writers are known for mixing politics, history, and literature. In the late nineteenth century, the Moldavian poet Mihai Eminescu celebrated the country's history and culture. In that period, Ion Luca Caragiale wrote comic plays that dealt with political issues.

Romanian writers have made considerable contributions abroad. Tristan Tzara, who left for France during World War I, was one of the founders of the Dadaist movement. Eugene Ionesco (1912–1994), another expatriate who lived in France and wrote in French, composed the famous absurdist dramas *The Rhinoceros*and *The Bald Soprano.*

***Graphic Arts.***Traditional art forms include woven wool rugs, pottery, and wood carving. More folk art is preserved in the northwest region of Maramures than anywhere else in the country. Doorways, gates, and windows are carved with elaborate designs. Traditional costumes are also works of art, often displaying elaborate embroidery and a trimming of tiny glass beads.

Several painters rose to prominence in the nineteenth century after studying in Western Europe, including Nicolae Grigorescu, known for landscapes and depictions of rural life, and the portraitist Theodor Aman. Social realism dominated in the post-World War II period as the communist government compelled artists to produce works that glorified industrial workers and political leaders.

The most famous modern artist was Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), a sculptor who made his home in France. He worked in wood and metal, creating abstract representations of people and nature. Late in his career, he was invited to create several sculptures for display in Tirgu-Jiu, the village of his birth. His works *The Kissing Gate*and *Table of Silence*are in a public park there.

***Performance Arts.***Romanian folk music is often mournful, such as the *doina*of the northwest. Common instruments include *nai*(panpipes), *tembal*(dulcimer), *bacium*(a long wooden wind instrument), *gorduna*(small double bass), and violins. Many folk musicians are Roma.

The national dance is the *hora,*a circle dance performed at festive occasions. Different regions have unique dances performed in pairs and groups.

Several Romanians have achieved prominence in classical music, including the pianist and conductor Dinu Lipatt and Georges Enesco, a violinist and composer whose work was influenced by traditional folk songs.

Drama companies in Bucharest and other cities' stage productions of classical Romanian works as well as contemporary pieces by national and foreign playwrights.

Early in the twentieth century, Bucharest became one of the centers of Eastern European filmmaking. In 1957, Ion Popescu-Gopo won an award at the Cannes Film Festival for an animated allegorical film called *Brief History.*Romanian filmmakers dealt with the repressive political environment of the 1970s in "iceberg movies" in which they disguised social and political statements in ostensibly innocent stories.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The communist government gave science and technology priority over the humanities and social sciences. Subjects such as history and literature were tightly censored and viewed as vehicles for ideological indoctrination. Since communism fell, these fields have benefitted from more freedom of expression. The Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Bucharest reopened in the early 1990s after having been defunct for twelve years.

The center of academic research is the Romanian Academy. It has a library of over seven million volumes and a publishing house called Editura Academiei that prints academic papers and journals.

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—E LEANOR S TANFORD

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_1)

**starrspel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow good info This something I can really use. It will help with origin and cultural diversity skills.

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_2)

**starrspel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

But I don't see anything about the neolithic cultures in Romania before the Dacians - Cucuteni-Trypollie, Gumelnita, Hamangia (1500-2500 BC).

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_3)

**Erin Oncu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Well done article! Enjoyed reading. Will look into many of the books used as reference for more interesting cultural knowledge.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_4)

**Cristi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for this amazing page. Made me pass my examinations =)

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_5)

**Jennifer**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for these information, this helped me a lot with my project.

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_6)

**ashley**

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thankss.  
cause for school we are doing a project on this.  
and we need to figure out the languages, and a bunch of other things.(:  
and this is where i needed to go. :D  
thanksss.  
-Ashley-

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_7)

**tranae**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i dont see anything on clothing and the information was really great

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_8)

**Siraji**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Had friend (a girl) from Roma so this helped me figure out exactly the country she come from.  
thanks.  
Siraji Uganda.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_9)

[**luther**](mailto:theluthershow%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it just had so much information, someone must have put a lot of work into this

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_10)

[**geoorge**](mailto:gearge%20[dot]%20farley%20[at]%20verison%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow. this really helped. thanks! this is for my project on romania

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_11)

**micaela**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this really helped me with my family life project.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_12)

**Mitch**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Recently I have met a lot of new friends through a social network online. This page gave me insight on these friends and how they live. I feel compelled to visit this land and meet these friends in person.

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_13)

[**Ashlee**](mailto:roulette139%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A wonderful site! Helped a lot with my big computer project, plus good recreational stuff! Keep it up! :]

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_14)

**Skyla**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great amount of info. it has helped me with my geography project on Romania greatly!!! :) :)

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_15)

**Esther**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great article!! Very thorough, however, maybe include something about funerals? It's one part that I had to have in a paper.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_16)

[**Otis**](mailto:Maggie_owner%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was great information, but it didn't say much about the clothes they wear. I'm being Romanian for Multi-Cultural day so i need some tips.

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_17)

[**AdiLynn**](mailto:mashliey%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very nice, its was easy to read and the pictures helped alot! thanks!

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_18)

[**Hunter**](mailto:noginhead123%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

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GREAT WEBSITE! VERY HELPFUL FOR MY PROJECT I USED IT TO MAKE A FLOAT IN SOCIAL STUDIES

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_19)

[**Ibrahim**](mailto:ebrahim_r2009%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much,however, i am from Afghanistan. this is my duty to know about history and culture of a country which is important for me .due to the fact that the topic is nice ,i enjoyed it."thank you"

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_20)

[**Constantin**](mailto:sorin_semenov%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

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Salut  
I am from Romania, i can say the article is good but in some points you tend to present Romania i a sad way, there a lack of information or false... for example you will surprised how many cars are in Romania, a lot not only rich people have them...put more pics thinks about our culture because you didn't said much ... instead you put a lot of info about commies TO MUCH... the article is to traditional...

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_21)

**therockyroad**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for this page i got to finish my project :D

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_22)

[**Chris cSkalski**](mailto:cskaclski%20[at]%20cox%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I loved this article and I am so glad that the Romanian people are enjoying a more democratic government and are increasingly able to rise above poverty. Many are enjoying a better quality of life, with large families chipping in to obtain hard goods such as major appliances and automobiles.  
Dacia is now manufacturing competitive automobiles with Volkswagen hardware and are available for export, undercutting competitors prices in the E.U., much like Hyundai and Kia initially did in North America. Romania is a fairly recent member of the E.U. making it much more accessible. There is something about visiting a former Eastern bloc country, almost like being able to see something that was formerly taboo and alien to most Westerners, particularly North Americans. Many Americans viewed it as the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler (Dracula), and a producer of 1970's and 80's Olympic Athletes, particularly young female gymnasts like Nadia Comaneci, and as the birthplace of European gypsies. (Roma/Romany)  
  
Also, the western show "Top Gear" exposed many westerners like myself to stunning pictures of the country and it's people. I am very, very proud of the countries fledgling interstate highway system, picturesque villages, friendly and moral people, and an overall impressive country considering it has only become democratically run for 22 years.  
  
On my next trip from Virginia to Europe, I plan on Romania being one of the highlights of my trip. There was a particularly beautiful stretch of mountain road that made me drool, dreaming of top-down motoring though one of the most beautiful, least "touristy" (but safe) countries I have ever had the pleasure of educating myself about.  
  
-Sincerely,  
  
Christopher Anthony Skalski,  
cskalski@cox.net

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_23)

**Cindi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was very helpful. Thank you for the useful ingormation

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_24)

**Marinela**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I disagree the following statement:''it is believed that the saint is incarnated in the physical materials of the icon''this is not true.We believe that icons are windows to heaven and help us easier to pray as we see the person.It is like haw you speak with a person,but in that case you speak with it through the object.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_25)

[**lol**](mailto:milky_cute2%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20id)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

good job :)  
anyway, can u add more information about romania relation with the other countries ?

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_26)

[**radu of romania :)**](mailto:radubutum%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The article is fair but needs updating. Romania is one of the fastest developing countries in Europe and since the preparations and accession to the EU it has changed a lot. For instance, it is funny that it is said cars are rare... they are too many nowadays.  
A great site, anyway but in a changing world such as the one today keeping the pages updated is key!

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_27)

[**hunter mason**](mailto:masonh39%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20nz)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is some valuable info on romania and its history

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_28)

**Alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

In 1859, only the Danubian Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia) united (1st paragraph).  
  
  
  
References: Encyclopedia Britannica

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_29)

[**Cassie**](mailto:cassie8918%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks so much for this web site it is very helpful from my school project.:D

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_30)

[**Yasir**](mailto:yasser%20[dot]%20eto%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
Thanks alot for this great post ^^  
I have 2 questionss for you or any body who know...  
  
1- From any civilization inherited the Romanian civilization?  
  
2- How long the Roman civilization stayed the greatest in the world?  
  
Thanks  
Yasir

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_31)

**Bernard Madsen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, would you have any information regarding the Romanian author Princess Anne-Marie Callamachi? There appears to be no information available about her on the WEB with the exception of a reference to her book YESTERDAY WAS MINE. COuld you refer me to a place where I could find a photo of her and some additional information on her life and works after 1949? Thank you so very much.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_32)

**ruben alvarado**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great info but I think you should add more about the relion of romania please and thank you

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_33)

**Jesse**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website has helped me 4 times on reports and homework. I LOVE YOU!!!

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_34)

**maria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hello,  
I'm a romanian and i think that this page is realy interesting! good luck to those who need this for sure u will pass your exames :)

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_35)

**iulia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i'm a romanian and have to do a project on romania and this helped me for most of my projects, although i haven't heard some of these things for romania.

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_36)

**Kim**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am headed to Romania this month to serve women at a conference and was greatly helped by getting to know the culture through this report. I discovered several connections - Baclava(my mom makes it) the plays by Ionseco (my son has acted in both) Hospitality is prominent in my material... and as a kid I was terrified by Dracula :) Thanks for helping me connect.  
Kim

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_37)

**Alice**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I found the background, historical and cultural interestin. the periods of suppression and the invasions and blendings is so complex. I am interested in the people who were brought up under the last regime, who attained degrees in Bucharest and then emigrated to Australia with teenage children in the earlly 1990s. Highly intelligent, picking up English very quickly, but the mother, now recently retired, has the personality of a tyrant: manipulating, lying, troublemaking whilst maintaining a facade that covers this very well. I know all this as one of her children has married into my family and never in my life have I experienced such a personality! I have lived in many countries, including Czechoslovakia, Egypt India and Holland, England, and of course Australia. This woman is ruthlesness personified! I wonder whether the regime affected her, or whether she is just a 'one off'. Her husband is far more affable!

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_38)

**Leigh**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks! Writing a fanfic for hetalia and I really found this useful!

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_39)

**Ancu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nicely done, historical facts are well presented, but this page needs some updating. What was true in the communist era is largely outdated - like Radu said, streets are so crowded nowadays, that seems ridiculous to say that cars are a sign of wealth. Another thing - presenting the bride and groom as 'The bride's hair is braided in an elaborate style, and she dons a crown of flowers, jewels, and ribbons. The groom wears a white leather vest and a hat decorated with feathers, flowers, and leaves.' is again funny to its core (FYI: brides often buy designer gowns and grooms have elegant tie suits). Oh, and the baklava is by no means traditionally Romanian...Regardless of how exotic an image of archaic Romania may be, it simply doesn't match the reality anymore.

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_40)

**È˜ohan Andrei Cristian**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It's a good effort put into this article, but unfortunately, I'd give it ~65% credibility. :) As a Romanian, I was amazed at many of the things I've found in the article, because they weren't true. I'll come back to rectify some of the missconceptions when I have more time. :) But I do appreciate the effort!

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_41)

**L**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have friends in Romania. I am appalled at their working conditions; work begins at 8:00 A.M. and ends at 10:00 P.M. No designated time for meals or rest. Also, they must "tip" everyone to get anything done. Still, they say, "such is the life". Makes my heart very sad for them.

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_42)

**Adrian Bahri**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It is really fascinating! I enjoyed reading and learning about this beautiful country in Europe. Its humble people, nice weather, picturesque nature, and mixed culture are really interesting. It is a pleasure to have many people from Romania in this country, especially those who suffered under a tyrant regime. I hope they are doing very good in our great country of freedom and democracy!

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_43)

**Anna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice article but there are some errors.I'm Romanian and trust me,I know how things were and still are going in this country.Keep researching though.

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_44)

**Alice**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for this article my best friend is romanian and she will be proud for all that i have learned

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_45)

**victoria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is great information my father is going to marry a Romanian woman so she will be my step mother  
I wanted to know somethings about her culture this REALLY helped now I can have some informational conversations with her, :D

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_46)

**isaac**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

My parents are Romanian and I am glad to learn more about their country

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_47)

**vinay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am pleased learned about Romania. It looks the country is nice to visit/stay.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_48)

**Sylveon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

It was very good info. Made me pass my project. Thank You.

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_49)

**Kevin O'Meara**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I spoke to a Romanian national, living in Ireland at present, regarding sport. We were watching children playing the ancient game of hurling. He told me of his childhood recollections of rural Romania, in his grandparents time, of a game played with a stick and ball. It sounded like a game not dissimilar to hurling.  
Can anybody help me with information about this game?  
Kevin.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_50)

**isaaaaaaaaaaac**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is awesome info thanks  
!but noting about clothing:)

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_51)

**Sandra**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Kevin O'Meara: He was probably talking about "oina", a Romanian traditional sport. You can find more info about it here https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oin%C4%83

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_52)

**lisa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

My husband and I are from Santa Barbara CA and will be attending a special international convention of Jehovahs Witnesses in August, this information has been very enlightening and educational. Many thanks as we look forward to seeing how the wine compares â˜º

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_53)

**Denver**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I personally think that this page shows much info on how Ancient Rome has had its effects on this land and this cultures diversity has been changed by it. I would like to have learned more about Ancient Rome but that's alright. I enjoyed this and it'll be much help in my school Wax Museum project for 7th grade this year! Though I am doing my culture around Ancient Rome, this has little bits of info that'll help me on my project!

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_54)

**mariyah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like this article it give u lots of information and lots of others

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_55)

**Steve**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Yay. Thanks this was an amazing article. It helped me do a project on Denmark.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_56)

**Ilina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Honestly, I am disappointed. I am not sure why you give so much importance to hungarian people, especially knowing the history. They are a minority in our country, most of them do have Romanian citizenship and they have to speak the official language, which is Romanian! I know that unfortunately not all of them do, but we do make a great effort in that area. When you speak about national identity there is literally no need to even mention hungarians. It's like saying that the national identity of Americans is Mexican, just because that is one of the largest minorities. The same goes for language: the official one is Romanian, most people speaking at least one other language, which is usually English. There are more instances were you gave hunagarians uncalled for attention, but i will mention them at a later time. Good job in trying to show our differences with the Roma (Gypsies) people.  
I am originally from Romania, currently living in Massachusetts, and i was give this website as a resource for school (SNHU), to help with a cultural competence project. After finishing the project based on the cultures asked for, I decided to search for my own country in order to see how reliable this website is. I am not saying that is completely wrong, but is very much opinion-based other than fact-based.

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_57)

**Ashiq Rahman**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article has lot information that deals with Identification of Romania, location and geography and demography. Romania is bordering with Ukraine and Moldova to the north, Hungary to the northwest, Serbia to the southwest, Bulgaria to the south, and the Black Sea to the east.

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_58)

**Pam**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I enjoyed the article and very much enjoyed the comments from Romainian readers. I am trying to find the village that my ancestors came from in Romania. My greatgrandmother, greatgrandfather and great uncle came to the USA 1906. I'm very excited to find what I'm looking for. I must say the artcle is heart breaking for me, the strife and loss from the very beginning is unbelievable but the comments sent lifted my spirits, such strong people. Thank you for your hard work, wish me well!

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_59)

**Denis Florian Amet**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is the biggest lie and rasism i ever read about Romania. First of all Rome = Italy not gipsy , lamb soup only on easter , cabbage soup never and this are the lies from just a paragraph. How can u humiliate a country like this? With 20% truth? No shame at all.

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html#Comments_60)

**Bellaaaaaaaaaaaaa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great info!! i'm actually in 6th grade doing a travel Europe project and my country is Romania. i'm from all saints. :) no info about clothing though

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Russia

Russia

Culture Name

Russian

Orientation

***Identification.***"Rus" may derive from the name of a tribe that gained political ascendancy in Kiev and other Slavic towns and lent its name to the language, culture, and state. Some scholars believe this to have been a Varangian (Viking) clan from Scandinavia, and others hold that it was a Slavic tribe. Some historians believe that "Rus" derives from an ancient name for the Volga River.

People ethnically identified as Russians have been politically and culturally dominant in a vast area for five hundred years of tsarist and Soviet imperial expansion. However, despite repression of their cultural autonomy, minority cultures have survived within the Russian Federation; including the peoples of the North Caucasus, numerous indigenous groups in Siberia, the Tatars in the Volga region, and the East Slavic Ukrainians and Belorusians. The last three groups are widely dispersed throughout the federation. All but the youngest citizens share a Soviet cultural experience, since under Communist Party rule the state shaped and controlled daily life and social practice. Much of that experience is being rejected by Russians and non-Russians who are reclaiming or reinventing their ethnic or traditional pasts; many communities are asserting a specific local identity in terms of language and culture. There is a broad cultural continuity throughout the federation and among the millions of Russians in the newly independent republics of Central Asia, the Baltic region, and the Caucasus.

***Location and Geography.***In addition to being the largest, the Russian Federation is one of the world's northernmost countries. It encompasses 6,592,658 square miles (17,075,000 square kilometers), from its borders with Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, and Ukraine on the west to the Bering Strait in the far northeast and from its borders with Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and China in the south to the Arctic Ocean in the north.

European Russia, the most densely populated, urbanized, and industrialized region, lies between the Ukraine-Belarus border and the Ural Mountains. Seventy-eight percent of the population lives in this area. Two large industrial cities are located above the Arctic Circle: Murmansk on the Kola Peninsula and Norilsk in Siberia.

The great plains are divided by six ecological bands. In the northeast, above the Arctic Circle, lies a huge expanse of frigid, occasionally marshy tundra, a nearly unpopulated region where much of the land is permanently frozen and little grows but moss and shrubs. Below that is the taiga, a vast expanse of coniferous forest, which gradually blends with a band of mixed coniferous and deciduous forest to cover half the country. The capital, Moscow, is in the center of this region, where much agriculture has been located despite the thin, poor soil. A line of mixed forest and prairie with more arable soil characterizes the central areas, followed by Russia's "breadbasket," the black earth belt that constitutes less than a tenth of the national territory. Below that, the relatively arid steppe, with grasslands and semidesert and desert regions, runs along the northern edge of the Caucasus Mountains and north of the Caspian Sea beyond the Volga River basin into Central Asia.

The climate of much of European Russia is continental, with long, cold winters and short, hot summers. In the northern areas, winter days are dark and long; in the summer, the days are long and the sun barely sets. With the exception of the black earth belt, Russia has fairly poor soil, a short growing season, low precipitation, and large arid steppe regions unfit for agriculture except with extensive irrigation. These factors limit agricultural production and account for the frequency of crop failures; what is produced requires substantial labor. The



*Russia*

huge forests provide for foraging, hunting, and logging.

Many great rivers transect the country, such as the Dvina, Don, Oka, and Volga in the European heartland and the Ob, Yenisei, and Lena in Siberia; most of these rivers are linked by subsidiary waterways. Until the advent of railways and roads, the rivers were the only efficient way to travel, and they remain a significant form of transport for people and materials. Limited access to year-round seaports has always been a military and commercial problem. A lack of natural borders has meant vulnerability to invasion, a danger offset by the size of the country and its harsh, long winters.

These environmental factors have affected the demographic profile and shaped cultural, social, and political institutions, influencing colonizing projects, settlement patterns, household configurations, village politics, agricultural systems, and military technologies. Bold defiance of these natural limitations include Peter the Great's founding of Saint Petersburg on northern swamplands in 1703, and the [twentieth-century](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/20th_century.html) plan to reverse the northerly flow of some of Siberia's rivers to facilitate the movement of natural resources. Equally important is the ability of rural and urban dwellers to survive challenging conditions of land, climate, and politics. Tens of millions of families depend on food they grow for themselves.

Family vacation packages

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***Demography.***In July 1999, the population was estimated at 146,393,000, a decline of more than two million since the end of the Soviet Union in 1991. The current figure includes several million immigrants and refugees from newly independent former Soviet republics. Since 1991, a stark drop in the birthrate has combined with a dramatic rise in the mortality rate. Average life expectancy for both men and women has declined since the 1980s.

This population decline is expected to worsen in the next decade. It is largely the result of the economic and social upheavals of the postsocialist period, which have impoverished the population and caused a decay of social services. Growing unemployment, long-term nonpayment of wages and pensions, paid wages that are below the poverty line, unsafe working and road conditions, the spread of infectious diseases, and the impoverishment of public health care systems have caused stress, depression, family breakdown, and rising rates of alcoholism, suicide, homicide, and domestic violence. Circulatory diseases, accidents, and suicides attributable to alcohol abuse are the leading causes of death among men. Malnutrition, disease, industrial pollution, poor health care, and reliance on abortion for birth control have reduced fertility rates and increased maternal and infant mortality.

In 1999, Russians accounted for 81 percent of the population and were the dominant ethnic group in all but a few regions. Other major ethnic nationalities are Tatars (4 percent), Ukrainians (3 percent), Chuvash (1 percent), Bashkir (1 percent), Belarussian (1 percent), and Mordovians (1 percent). Dozens of other ethnic nationalities make up the remaining 8 percent. There has been a significant rate of intermarriage between ethnic populations.

Until the twentieth century, the population grew steadily. The population of Rus' in the twelfth century is estimated at seven million. By 1796, Russia had a population of thirty-six million, to which territorial annexation had contributed greatly. In the 1850s, the population was sixty-seven million. The abolition of serfdom, accompanied by urbanization, industrialization, and internal migration in the second half of the nineteenth century, led to significant population growth, and by 1897 the population was 125 million. By 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution, the population had grown to 170 million. Famines, largely caused by civil war and the Soviet collectivization of agriculture, decimated the rural population in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1941, the population was around two hundred million. World War II caused the deaths of more than twenty million Soviet citizens. After the 1940s, population growth was slowed by the gender disparity and devastation of infrastructure caused by war.

Family vacation packages

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Russian is one of three East Slavic languages of the Slavic branch of the Indo-European language family. It is the most widely spoken Slavic language, with 1.39 million people speaking it as their native language and tens of millions more using it as a second language. Many people in non-Russian ethnic groups speak Russian as their native or only language, partly as a result of tsarist and Soviet campaigns to suppress minority languages. The collapse of the Soviet Union opened the way for linguistic revival movements in many ethnic communities.

There are three major dialects (northern, southern, and central), but they are mutually intelligible. Russian has been influenced by other languages, particularly Greek (Byzantine Christian) in the Kievan period, French in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and English in the twentieth.

The Cyrillic alphabet was brought to Kievan Rus' along with Christianity in the tenth and eleventh centuries by the followers of Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius, who invented the first Slavic alphabet, Glagolitic, in the ninth century. Along with Old Russian, Church Slavonic was the primary literary language until the early eighteenth century, when it was reformed as part of Peter the Great's westernization and secularization campaigns. Many important texts were written in Church Slavonic and the more vernacular Old Russian, including historical chronicles, epic poems, folklore, and liturgical and legal works.

***Symbolism.***A popular visual symbol is Moscow's Saint Basil's cathedral with its colorful cupolas. Images of Saint Basil's and those of hundreds of other churches and cathedrals are key symbols of the country's long Orthodox history. Calendars, posters, and postcards with images of Orthodox churches are common in apartments and offices.

Family vacation packages

Bread symbolizes key aspects of the national self-image. It is the mark of hospitality, as in *khlebsol*("bread-salt"), the ancient custom of welcoming a visitor with a round loaf with a salt cellar on top. This tradition can be observed at political and diplomatic events when a host receives an important guest. In broader terms, bread is the symbol of life; in times of hardship it is the primary food, and being "without bread" signals starvation. Other foods are also important symbols: black caviar, which signifies luxury and plenty as well as the bounty of the rivers and seas; mushrooms and berries, the gifts of the forest and dacha; *bliny*, pancakes served before Lent; the potato, staple of the diet; and vodka, a symbol of camaraderie and communication.

Forest plants, creatures, and objects are widely used in symbolic ways. The white birch conjures the romance of the countryside; the wolf, bear, and fox are ubiquitous in folktales and modern cartoons; and the peasant hut *izba*signifies the cozy world of the past. Inside the *izba*are three other cultural symbols: the plump clay or tiled stove; the samovar, and the Orthodox icon in its corner shrine. While most people live in urban apartments images of traditional life still have great power and meaning.

Everyday conversation is filled with metaphors summarizing a highly complex view of shared cultural identity. Russians talk of soul *dusha*to refer to an internal spiritual domain that is the intersection point of heart, mind, and culture. True communion depends on an opening up of souls that is accomplished through shared suffering or joy. Communal feasting and drinking also can help open up the soul. Soul is said to be one of the metaphysical mechanisms that unite Russians into a "people" *narod.*Stemming from ancient Slavic words for clan, kin, and birth, and meaning "citizens of a nation," "ethnic group," or simply a "crowd of people," *narod*is used to refer to the composite identity and experience of the people through history. It often is invoked by politicians hoping to align themselves with the population. Leaders of the Soviet Union, trying to unite ethnic groups under a single multinational identity, ritualistically employed the term "Soviet people" ( *sovietskii narod*). People still speak in terms of belonging by "blood"; a person is seen to have Russian blood, Jewish blood, Armenian blood, or a mixture of ethnic bloods. Nationalist discourse uses this concept to stress the purity of one's own people and disparage those with "foreign" blood.

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After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the calendar of national holidays was altered. The compulsory celebration of the Great October Revolution (7 November) was diminished in scale, although it is still officially marked. The Day of Victory (9 May), the Soviet capture of Berlin that ended World War II, still provokes strong feelings. Cemeteries, parks, and public places are filled every year with people gathering to memorialize the war, and the media celebrate the heroism of the Soviet peoples. Even though these tributes are tempered by revisionist history, a core of patriotic feeling remains. A new political holiday is Russian Independence Day (12 June), marking the establishment of the Russian Federation in 1991. New Year's Eve is the most widely observed holiday. The observance of Christmas and Easter and other Orthodox holidays has grown since the end of the Soviet repression of religious observance.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***The area now called Russia has always been multicultural. The Eastern Slavic tribes, the ancestors of modern Russians, traditionally are thought to have originated in the Vistula River valley in what is now Poland and to have migrated eastward in the seventh to the ninth centuries. Other evidence suggests that Eastern Slavic pastoral peoples were widespread in the central and eastern portions of the plain that stretches across the northern half of the Eurasian continent a thousand years earlier, coexisting with Finnic and Lithuanian tribes to the north and enduring recurring waves of conquest.

For more than a millennium, people sharing cultural traits, social structures, and religious beliefs have occupied present-day Russia, Ukraine, and Belorusia. Eastern Slavic society was culturally distinct and highly developed in terms of agriculture, technology, commerce, and governance by the tenth century. By the eleventh century a huge expanse had come under the nominal rule of the Kievan princes; at that time, the city-state of Kiev on the Dniepr River in present-day Ukraine was rivaled in size and splendor only by Novgorod far to the north. Prince Vladimir I, who ruled Kievan Rus' from 980 until 1015, brought Byzantine (Orthodox) Christianity to Kiev in 988 and sponsored the widespread baptism of the peoples of Rus'. A gradual process of the melding of pre-Christian practices with those of Orthodoxy consolidated the population under one political and cultural system. An intricate written code of customary law, the *Pravda Russkaia,*was in place by the eleventh century.

Wars after the death of Prince Yaroslavl the Wise in 1054 caused the gradual disintegration of Kievan Rus' until 1240, when Kiev fell under the domination of the Mongol Empire. The fall of Kievan Rus' and the political fragmentation that followed divided the Eastern Slavs into three distinct cultural-linguistic groups: Ukrainian, Belorusian, and Russian. The Mongols destroyed many cities and towns, and created a complex administrative system to exact tribute from its peoples and princes; Mongol control lasted until the late fifteenth century, although with less impact after 1380. The political power and territorial control of Muscovy expanded greatly under the four-decade reign of Ivan III, who died in 1505 after routing the Mongol armies. From that time on, the Russian state developed and expanded, with Moscow at its center. Ivan IV (the Terrible) was the first to crown himself tsar in 1546. He ruled in an increasingly arbitrary and absolutist fashion, brutalizing the aristocratic boyars in a decade-long period of terror known as the *oprichnina.*The century's end brought the "Time of Troubles"—fifteen years of political instability and civil and class strife that resulted in widespread impoverishment and famine, enserfment of the peasantry, and waves of migration of peasants to the edges of Russian territory.

Under Peter the Great, the Romanov tsar who ruled from 1682 to 1725, Russia began a period of imperial expansion that continued into the Soviet period. Peter attempted to modernize and westernize the country militarily, administratively, economically, and culturally, often through the use of force. His reforms changed society irrevocably, particularly through his introduction of new military and agricultural technologies, a formal educational system, a tight system of class ranking and service, and the founding of the European-style city of Saint Petersburg. Peter moved the capital from Moscow to Petersburg, where it remained until after the 1917 revolution.

After Peter's reign, Russian imperial rule expanded southward into the Crimea, southeast along the Volga River, and eastward across the Siberian forests to the Pacific Ocean. Through further expansion during the Soviet period (1917–1991), Russians achieved political and demographic dominance over a territory equal to one-sixth of the world's land surface. After 1991, Russian geopolitical power declined, but the federation remains the largest country in the world.

***National Identity.***Russia has had a thousand-year history of growth and contraction, political [consolidation](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Consolidation.html) and disintegration, repression and relaxation, messianism and self-definition, and varying forms of socioeconomic interdependence with other nations. This history has had far-reaching effects on the other populations of Eurasia as well as on every aspect of the national culture.

For many centuries, the question of whether Russian culture is more "eastern" or "western" has been a burning issue. Situated at the crossroads of important cultures and civilizations in every direction, the Slavic groups and other peoples of Russia have profoundly influenced and been influenced by them all in terms of trade, technology, language, religion, politics, and the arts.

***Ethnic Relations.***Inter-ethnic relations are fraught with tensions spawned over centuries of Russian and Soviet colonial domination and activated in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet state. Most conflicts are multidimensional, simultaneously involving struggles for political control, rights over natural resources, migration and relocation, and the revitalization of national or ethnic cultures, religions, languages, and identities. Soviet policies—which compelled the use of the Russian language on all peoples, organized massive changes in livelihood and lifestyle for tens of millions, forcibly moved whole populations (such as Crimean Tatars and Meshketian Turks), installed ethnic Russian political elites and managers in non-Russian regions, and extracted the wealth from local production into central coffers without sufficient economic return to the peripheries—have set the stage for the conflicts of today.

Conflicts over resources are heated in parts of Siberia and the Far East. The Sakha (Yahut) are trying to claim rights to some economic benefits from the vast diamond, oil, gold, and other mineral wealth in their republic. This struggle to reap even marginal benefits from their own territories has long been blocked by Russian central control over the resource extraction industries, and by the strategic relocation of tens of thousands of Russians to Yakutia in the Soviet period. This battle over resources is associated with a growing nationalist movement. Other Siberian peoples are engaged in similar struggles over oil and gas revenues, and rights to traditional fisheries, forest products, and reindeer-grazing lands. Environmental issues play a significant role, too, as people fight to prevent or reverse the spoiling of rivers, lakes, and soils by the oil and mining industries.

Occupation of the North Caucasus has been a cause of conflict for three centuries. Russia waged devastating wars with Chechnya from the mid-1990s on, attempting to repress local independence movements, stem a pan-Islamic movement from taking hold there, and maintain access to the oil wealth of the Caspian sea. There are few signs that this conflict will be resolved peacefully, and relations are characterized by intense hatred, prejudice, and propagandizing on both sides. Roots of this conflict lie in a long history of violent repression and impoverishment in Chechnya.

Internal migration and displacement has contributed greatly to ethnic tensions and prejudice, as several million Russians have returned from newly independent states in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Baltics, feeling themselves unwanted guests in those places, or in some cases (Tajikistan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan) escaping civil wars. Border regions between Russia and former Soviet republics, which often contain highly mixed and intermarried Russian and non-Russian populations, present a significant problem.

In general, unflattering and insulting stereo-types of Siberian natives, Koreans, Central Asians, peoples of the Caucasus, Ukrainians, Jews, and other ethnic nationalities are widely shared among Russians and circulate unimpeded in print media.



*Ivan the Great's Bell Tower in the Kremlin.*

One effect of the wars in Chechnya has been constant police harassment and public suspicion of the Caucasian residents of Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and other cities.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

In 1851, 92 percent of the population lived in rural villages, and at the time of the 1917 revolution, the population was more than 80 percent rural. The Soviet period brought movement to the cities as people tried to escape the harsh conditions on state-run collective farms. More than half of the rural population today is over age 65, because young people continue to migrate to the cities. Although there are still tens of thousands of small villages, many are disappearing as people die or depart.

By 1996, 73 percent of the population was urban, with most people living in high-rise apartment blocks constructed after the 1950s. Much of the urban population retains strong material and psychological ties to the countryside. Many people own modest *dachas*within an hour or two of their apartments and on weekends or in the summer work in their gardens, hike, hunt or gather in the forests, and bathe in lakes and rivers. Many other people retain ties to their natal villages or those of their parents or grandparents.

The largest cities are Moscow, nine million people; Saint Petersburg, nearly five million, Nizhnii Novgorod and Novosibirsk, 1.4 million each; Yekaterinburg, 1.3 million; and Samara, 1.2 million. After the end of the communist era, many places were rededicated with their prerevolutionary names.

Cities such as Moscow, Novgorod, Pskov, and Yaroslavl grew around the old fortresses (kremlins) and monasteries that formed their centers and near the gates where artisans and traders peddled their goods. The old cities reflect their complex and often violent histories through the coexistence of multiple styles. In the European regions, Byzantine churches from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries stand in the shadows of modernist high-rises, with Renaissance, Baroque, or Neoclassical architecture nearby. These variegated cityscapes may be covered with grime, reflecting the proximity of industrial enterprises and the lack of funds for maintenance. In the wealthiest city centers, the post-Soviet years have brought varying degrees of urban revitalization.

Other cities were built almost from scratch and reflect a passion for grandiose urban planning. Saint Petersburg was built to secure access to the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea. Catherine the Great saw to it that Petersburg became a European city, with streets, avenues, and plazas, designed in an elegant Venetian style. In the Soviet era, ambitious building projects led to the founding and construction of industrial cities such as Magnitogorsk, Russia's "Steeltown," in the 1930s.

The central parts of most cities have important governmental, commercial, and religious buildings. Intermingled with these edifices are multistoried nineteenth-century town houses now used for commercial purposes or housing, and neighborhoods of walk-up apartment blocks. Farther out from the center stand rows of white apartment towers dating from the 1960s. Reaching from ten to thirty stories, these mammoth buildings house the majority of the population in small apartments. Although they are often distant from city centers and industrial areas, these apartments have provided privacy and security to millions of families. They are spacious compared to the barracks or communal apartments in which many families lived until the 1950s. Almost all the cities share this general layout, although some have avoided the fires and demolition campaigns that destroyed millions of traditional wooden structures in the past.

Family vacation packages

A modern grandiosity characterizes the state buildings constructed in Soviet cities from the 1930s to the 1950s. As the capital, Moscow was virtually transformed, but other cities were also reshaped by Stalinist architectural projects, which juxtaposed monumentalist neoclassicism with revolutionary [modernism](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Modernism.html) and industrial futurism. In the 1930s, subway systems were constructed beneath the largest cities, including the vast Moscow Metro.

Immensity in architecture and wide boulevards and plazas often result in inhospitable urban spaces. In the Soviet period, many amenities were unavailable or overburdened. Commercial venues were organized in a top down fashion through state planning, and shopping was a challenge. Some goods and services were located in distant neighborhoods, although day care centers and schools were always close. The commercial privatization of the post-Soviet years has brought new stores, restaurants, and cafés that offer a variety of food and manufactured goods. This has occurred to a lesser extent in provincial towns and villages, many of which have experienced a decline in public services.

An important element of urban life are the enormous public parks and forested areas within or adjacent to city boundaries. The result of this prerevolutionary and Soviet urban planning remains a source of pleasure and recreation. People spend hours strolling or sitting on benches to talk, smoke, play chess, or read. Smaller urban parks sometimes center on a statue of a writer or political leader; ten years after the end of communist rule, statues of Lenin still anchor parks and plazas. Statues often serve as meeting places, and a park may have a special identity as the gathering place for a subcultural group such as hippies, punks, gays, or literati.

The huge public plazas in many cities have been central to political life for centuries. Moscow's Red Square and Manezh are historically significant spaces used for government ritual, revolutionary protest, parades, concerts, holiday celebrations, and state funerals.

Best restaurants near me

Until recently, when new wealth has allowed a small proportion of the population to build private homes and mansions on urban fringes, domestic existence has meant living in small apartments. Because of limited space, the largest room serves as living room, bedroom, and dining room for many families. Domestic furnishing is highly consistent, in part because until the 1990s all furniture was purchased from state stores, where variation was limited. Among the characteristics of Russian taste are functional furniture, of oriental-type carpets on the walls, and large wardrobes instead of closets. The bath and toilet are commonly located in small separate rooms side by side. Narrow balconies are used for storage, tools, laundry, and sitting.

Family members spend much of their time at the kitchen table, eating and drinking tea while talking, reading, watching television, cooking, or working on crafts. When guests come, all sit around one table for the entire gathering, which may continue for hours. Wedding parties usually take place at the home of the family of the bride or groom, and everyone squeezes around an extended table.

Although public spaces within and around apartment blocks are often decrepit and dirty, the threshold to a family's apartment marks a crucial transition zone to private space, which is clean and tidy. Shoes are remain just inside the doorway to keep dirt from the interior of the home.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***The most common food is bread. Potatoes, cabbage, carrots, and beets are the standard vegetables; potatoes are a staple. Onions and garlic are used liberally, especially in soups, stews, and salads.

Family vacation packages

Best restaurants near me

Russians generally love meat. Starvation means having no bread, while poverty means going without hard sausage *kolbasa.*Sausage, pork, beef, mutton, chicken, and dried or salted fish are widely available and relatively cheap. Only some can afford to buy delicacies such as veal, duck, sturgeon, and salmon. Traditional aristocratic fare included such fancy foods, many of which are popular among the newly wealthy classes today.

For most people, breakfast is a quick snack of coffee or tea with bread and sausage or cheese. Lunch is a hot meal, with soup, potatoes, macaroni, rice or buckwheat kasha, ground meat cutlets, and peas or grated cabbage. This meal may be eaten in a workplace cafeteria at midday or after people return home from work; a later supper may consist of boiled potatoes, soured cabbage, and bread or simply bread and sausage.

People eat a wide range of dairy products, such as *tvorog,*a kind of cottage cheese, and *riazhenka,*slightly soured milk. These items can be purchased from large shops or private farmers' markets or made at home. In provincial cities and towns, unpasteurized milk is sold from tanker trucks, although bottles and cartons of pasteurized milk are available everywhere, as is sour cream. Hard and soft cheeses are also popular.

Fruits are widely loved and cultivated. In late summer, fruits and berries are harvested and made



*Two Russian shoppers walk along the Moika Embankment in Saint Petersburg. Saint Petersburg is the second largest city in Russia, with about five million people.*

into preserves, compotes, cordials, and concentrates for the winter months. Mushroom picking is an art, and many people can identify edible local varieties, which they salt, dry or can. Cabbage, cucumbers, garlic, and tomatoes are preserved by salting or pickling.

Russians are connoisseurs of tea. Coffee has grown in popularity and is often served thick and strong. Although wine, beer, cognac, and champagne are popular, vodka is the most common drink. Home-brewed vodka is a mainstay and serves as a crucial form of currency in rural areas.

Restaurants were not highly developed under communism, but the post-Soviet period has seen an explosion of restaurants, cafés, and fast-food places in the cities. The majority of people never eat out, for economic reasons and because they feel that restaurants do not provide food as good as that prepared at home. Restaurants and cafés cater largely to the new business classes. Workplace cafeterias and buffets still serve rudimentary midday meals for workers, but even these inexpensive meals are out of reach for many people.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Communal feasting is central to marking birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, achievements, significant purchases, and major public holidays. The table is laden with salads, appetizers, sausage and cheese, and pickled foods, followed by hot meat, potatoes, and *pirozhki*(meat or cabbage pies). Vodka and wine are drunk throughout the meal, which may last six to ten hours. Although table manners and hosting rituals are complex, the most important concern the rituals around vodka drinking. Toasting is elaborate and can be sentimental, humorous, poetic, ribald, or reverential. Vodka is always drunk straight, accompanied by a pickled or salty food.

Many people observe Lenten fasts, at which they consume no meat, butter, or eggs and occasionally do without vodka. Easter provides an opportunity for a fast-breaking celebration with special foods.

***Basic Economy.***The Soviet command economy provided a secure living standard for the entire population. Production systems were highly developed, technologically specialized, and spread strategically throughout the country. Almost all consumer and industrial products were produced within the nation or in the Soviet bloc countries. With the end of state support in 1991, many production enterprises declined or collapsed, and imports of higher-quality products reduced the market for domestic goods. This is true of consumer goods such as electronics, fashion, housewares, and automobiles as well as industrial, scientific, medical, construction, and agricultural equipment. As a result of collapsing markets,poor management, and ill-conceived privatization processes, many factories sit idle, while others have been dismantled and sold off. Some sectors, such as the food processing and distribution industries, are staging a slow comeback through modernization and a commitment to providing affordable local products.

The chronic shortages of the Soviet era led many people to produce for themselves. The current impoverishment has increased the importance of this practice, with a significant portion of the population partially dependent on their own produce. Many rural people raise food products for sale, and up to 80 percent of the vegetables consumed are produced in small private plots. The major crops grown by large agricultural enterprises are grain, sunflower seeds, and sugar beets. Livestock production has declined because of reduced government subsidies for feed and falling demand.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Under communism, all land, enterprises, and urban housing were state property, although there were several different forms of state control and individuals could hold long-term and inheritable use rights to land and apartments. The postcommunist period has seen an ongoing struggle over privatization and the commodification of land. While family apartments can now be privatized, legal reform of land ownership has been held up in the parliament (Duma), because of opposition by communist politicians. Some regions have instituted local land reform, and there is pressure to legislate coherent federal land reform to improve agricultural efficiency. Traditional views that land and natural resources cannot be owned but are collective resources have complicated the privatization process. This view is strengthened by many people's experience of watching privatization benefit only the existing elites.

***Commercial Activities.***Russia still manufactures a large range of consumer products, including food, clothing, automobiles, and household durables. The construction, banking, publishing, telecommunications, transport, and computer service industries are highly developed.

The unofficial economy, which grew out of the black market of the Soviet period, is huge and intricate and may account for over 50 percent of total economic activity. This shadow economy includes whole industries owned or controlled by organized crime, unreported trading activity, wages paid under the table to avoid taxes, wages and interenterprise payments made by barter, and rent-seeking and bribery schemes on the part of government officials. Attempts to end these entrenched systems have been ineffective.

***Major Industries.***European Russia was semi-industrialized by 1917, and Soviet modernization campaigns fully industrialized the country and spurred the development of mining, energy production, and heavy manufacturing. The Soviet Union was a major extractor of oil, natural gas, coal, and ferrous and nonferrous metals and a large producer of steel, chemicals, and paper products. Along with the automotive industry, the Soviet aircraft, truck, shipbuilding, railway, agricultural, road-building and construction machinery, military, and space industries produced for exportation as well as domestic use, although quality was often not up to world standards and plants were inefficient. Production levels in all these industries have declined significantly since 1991 as domestic and international demand has dropped, state subsidies have diminished, and new capital investment has been scarce.

***Trade.***Fuel and energy products constitute the major exports. Imports of foodstuffs, machine equipment, computers and other electronics, and chemicals are substantial. Major trading partners are the countries of the CIS (former Soviet republics, especially Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan) as well as Germany, Italy, Poland, the United States, the Netherlands, Britain, and Japan.

***Division of Labor.***Under the Soviet system, training for professional, academic, artistic, management, and other "intelligentsia" careers was highly developed in universities. Working-class students were taught the necessary skills in specialized institutes. The system was designed to ensure an adequate supply of workers in all sectors of the economy, and one of its results was a well-trained and stable workforce. Many aspects of this system have collapsed as whole industries have declined or shifted away from Soviet-era priorities. Huge numbers of personnel have left their original fields for careers in banking and finance, advertising, marketing, commerce, tourism, telecommunications, and security. Regions that offered steady employment for millions now house outdated, stagnant industries; high levels of unemployment in these areas force people to migrate or hunt for jobs. This has led to a confusing variety of choices for young people



*A statue of poet Alexander Pushkin in front of the Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg. Pushkin inaugurated the "golden age" of Russian literature.*

and the challenge of retooling in an uncertain economic landscape for the older generations. The predictable structures of industries and professions have been replaced by a more flexible system with opportunities for entrepreneurs from any social background. Success can be elusive, because of imperfect commercial laws and law enforcement, the difficulty of securing capital, criminality and corruption, and cutthroat competition.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***For centuries, the aristocratic and merchant classes were nearly castelike, with endogamous marriage, a strict social hierarchy, and highly codified behaviors. Peasants and serfs constituted a largely impoverished rural population. After emancipation in 1861, as Russia developed slowly along capitalist lines, peasants migrated to factories in urban areas, where they formed an impoverished industrial working class. Strikes and protests and the radicalization of the intelligentsia led to the revolution of 1905, which prompted limited constitutional and social reform along with a reactionary crackdown on political opposition.

Widespread destitution, the ravages of World War I, and ineffective political leadership set the stage for the revolutionary activity of February 1917 in which the government was overthrown; this was followed by the political revolution of October 1917, in which the Bolsheviks took power and introduced communist ideology and social transformation. In the civil war of 1917–1921 and under Stalin in the 1930s, aristocrats, merchants, and well-off peasants were killed, imprisoned, exiled, or forced to emigrate and their property was confiscated.

The Soviet Union was supposed to be ruled by councils (Soviets) formed from the working masses. The creation of social and economic equality was the goal of early communist ideologues. However, Soviet society evolved into a class-stratified and class-conscious state where communist elites and some professionals had special access to goods, services, and housing. Bureaucratic workers and shop clerks used their control of services or goods to benefit themselves through a set of practices known as *blat.*However, education, health care, and other social services were available to all.

Although they had special privileges, most Communist Party officials did not accrue wealth. Postsocialist privatization has allowed many of them to build large fortunes, by parlaying their political status into direct ownership of state resources and industries. A new entrepreneurial class has developed, some of whose members have become fabulously wealthy. More slowly, a middle class is emerging in the cities, formed of intellectuals newly employed in business ventures and midlevel management and service personnel. Most of the population is impoverished, because of industrial collapse, inflation, financial crises, and privatization structures that benefit only the powerful. In 2000, 37 percent of the population lived below the minimum subsistence level of $34 per month. In some regions of Siberia and the Far East, the provision of critical services such as heating, fuel, and water has collapsed. Coal miners and industrial workers have faced severe shortages of critical supplies such as soap, long-term wage arrears, and the collapse of medical clinics and schools.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***"New Russians" are all presumed to drive late-model Mercedes or Jeeps, live in fancy new red brick *dachas,*dress in designer clothes, speak on cell phones, and wear heavy gold chains and rings with diamonds. There is some truth to this image, which reflects a popular sense that wealth is vulgar.

Political Life

***Government.***The years under Boris Yeltsin (1991–1999), were characterized by the reorganization of governmental structures and functions, with conflict over the balance of power between the president and the parliament, and between central and regional powers. A constitution approved by referendum in 1993 provided for a democratic federation with executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The parliament is divided into upper and lower houses. The lower house is the Duma, with 450 elected members; the upper house was to consist of local governors and legislators from the eighty-nine administrative regions, although the newly elected president, Vladimir Putin, replaced the governors with centrally appointed members, giving the president greater control over that house. Putin also changed the electoral and party system to remold the structure and power of the Duma. Economic issues have been at the heart of many political conflicts; battles over fiscal policy, privatization, control of key resources, tax collection, and social welfare provisions have been fierce and sometimes violent.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***The state has always been prone to authoritarian rule with censorship and strong government control over the media; oppression of political opposition, partly through the secret police; bureaucratic centralization; and legislation by decree. In the Soviet era, political purges killed millions and sent millions more to hard labor or internal exile. Although overt repression ended with Gorbachev and democratization has become a proclaimed political value, the mechanisms of democratic practice are far from universal.

With the end of communism, control over enterprises and whole industries was up for grabs, and top political leaders secured state resources for themselves, their families, and their colleagues, leading to cynicism among the public. Cronyism, bribe taking, inside deals among political and business leaders, a lack of transparency in decision making, and contradictory legislation have further alienated the populace from the political process.

There are over twenty-five registered political parties, although only five are substantial in size. Political fragmentation has been a problem, and coalitions between parties have been unstable.

***Social Problems and Control.***The rate of violent crimes grew steadily after the end of Stalin's repressive regime. The ubiquity of state authority in the form of the KGB, the police, the Communist Party, and the military created an atmosphere of surveillance and control. Drug abuse was relatively low because of the strong control of border regions, although it increased during the war in Afghanistan (1979–1989).

Economic crime, corruption and bribe taking, black market activity, and theft of state property were normal daily practice for many citizens and officials. An informal culture of networking facilitated the exchange of favors, access, and information and allowed many people to accrue privileges and material benefits. These activities were illegal but rarely prosecuted. One effect of widespread participation in shadow networks and black marketeering was a general disdain for legality.

The economic and social liberalization of the late 1980s set the stage for an explosion of criminal activity. Extortion through the offering of "protection" services became a fact of life for businesses and financed the expansion of mafia activity. The mafia has infiltrated every branch of industry: up to 70 percent of all banks may be mafia-owned, and organized crime plays a substantial role in raw material exports. In little more than a decade, the mafia created vast local and international networks for drug trafficking, prostitution, arms smuggling, nuclear materials smuggling, counterfeiting, money laundering, and auto theft. Mafia-organized contract killings have become common in the cities, and thousands of political leaders, businesspeople, and journalists have been murdered. Because law enforcement is weak and corrupt and because the mafia has close ties with government and business leaders, efforts to reduce its influence have been ineffective. Weak legislation, a judiciary that is underfunded, overwhelmed by cases, and plagued by corruption and overcrowded jails has created a society whose regulatory mechanisms cannot deal with the current conditions. Most people see no point in appealing to the law for assistance or protection.

Juvenile delinquency has grown substantially, along with narcotic abuse, prostitution, the spread of AIDS, and homelessness among teens and children. A number of dramatic terrorist acts have occurred—possibly connected to the war in Chechnya, which also has created opportunities for gun running, extortion, and kidnapping.

***Military Activity.***After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia experienced a blow to its national pride and identity. Without a Cold War to legitimize a military presence in client states, few fiscal resources, and no longer the center of a superpower state, Russia's military forces contracted, and its military doctrine was revised to focus on national defense and the maintenance of political stability (particularly in border regions). Military issues today include the expansion of NATO, the need for multilateral nuclear disarmament, and separatist movements in the northern Caucasus.

Although military expenditure has decreased and the number of personnel in the armed forces has fallen, sizable forces are stationed in Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, and Tajikistan; these are nominally peacekeeping forces, but one of their functions is to protect Russian strategic interests.

Russia has waged two wars with Chechnya to repress independence movements in that republic. Russia wants to maintain access to the Caspian Sea's rich oil reserves, hopes to prevent the spread of Moslem fundamentalist movements in its territory, and fears that other ethnically based republics and autonomous regions will pursue independence if Chechnya succeeds. Russian forces invaded Chechnya in 1994 and in the following two years nearly leveled the capital city, Grozny, and killed at least thirty thousand of its citizens, including many ethnic Russians. Several thousand Russian forces were killed, and public opinion turned against the war. Russian forces began to withdraw in 1996. In 1999, Chechen rebels in Dagestan gave Russia a justification to renew its attacks; in this second war, Grozny was destroyed, thousands more were killed, and tens of thousands became refugees. Publicity about young men returning home maimed or dead spurred a movement of mothers against the war. Ferocious propaganda stimulated the populace to virulent nationalism and racism against those Russians called "blacks."

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Soviet paternalism has given way to a weak welfare state. Soviet citizens were guaranteed free schooling, free comprehensive medical care, housing, maternity leave, and annual vacations, and there was an extensive system of pensions and special subsidies for retired persons, invalids, and war veterans. Although the level of access to social provisions was not uniform, most citizens' basic needs were met and people were largely satisfied with the services they received.

Budgetary difficulties have made it increasingly difficult for the postsocialist government to provide the services mandated by law, and new legislation has expanded the range of services. The result is the overall crumbling of social welfare systems. Hospitals and schools are in bad condition, especially outside the largest urban centers. International lending agencies such as the International Monetary Fund have pressed Russia to privatize social welfare and curtail subsidies. Government officials have delayed dismantling the welfare state for political reasons and a widely held view that people should be protected from poverty.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Until Gorbachev, the only legal organizations and associations were those created and managed by the government bureaucracy and the Communist Party. The nongovernmental sector consisted of underground dissident groups, networks, and clubs. Although there was a wide range of unofficial activity, independent political and religious groups were persecuted by the KGB and legal authorities. Since the late 1980s, civil society has grown dramatically and includes organizations that span the country and cover major areas of concern. Groups in every region are dedicated to humanitarian, environmental, medical, cultural, religious, feminist, pacifist, and other causes. Groups focusing on the development and democratization of technical, commercial, legal, and political institutions are active. Scarce resources force many groups to operate on a shoe-string



*A woman places teapots and teacups in a cabinet, possibly for drying, at the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory. Unemployment for women has increased in the 1990s, especially in the manufacturing sector.*

budget, although partnerships with international foundations have provided start-up funds and strategic support.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Traditionally, society was structured around gendered divisions of labor and authority. Rural communities were exogamous, patrilocal, and patriarchal, with newly married women subservient in the families of their husbands until they had borne sons. Among the gentry, every detail of household management was prescribed and encoded in laws that addressed even the most intimate details of family life.

A key part of communist ideology was the freeing of women from oppressive norms and structures. Women were trained for and encouraged to take up what was previously male-only labor, such as operating agricultural machinery, working in construction, and laying and maintaining roads and railbeds. Nurseries and day care centers were established to free women from child rearing. Women's increased participation in medicine, engineering, the sciences, and other fields was supported. "Liberated" to work in public jobs, women often retained the burden of all household work as people held to customary notions of domestic propriety. Also, their equal employment status was not reflected in the workplace, where women faced several forms of discrimination. Nevertheless, in a number of domains, particularly in medicine and education, Soviet women gained authority and status. By the 1980s, one-third of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet were female, and women accounted for over 50 percent of students in higher education.

Much of the hard-earned status of women has eroded. As unemployment grew in the 1990s, the first to be discharged from lifelong positions were women; management jobs in the new commercial sector were reserved for men, and a traditionalist view of work and family reasserted itself throughout society. In part, this was a backlash against the "double burden" of employment and household labor; some women whose husbands had succeeded in the new economy were glad to leave their jobs and take up full-time household and family care. For women who want or need to work, recent trends toward devaluing women's work have been demoralizing and financially devastating. Some women have become entrepreneurs, although they face gender prejudice in setting up businesses and often are not taken seriously. The percentage of women holding political office has declined, and women's participation in high levels of industry, the sciences, the arts, and the government has shrunk, especially in big cities. Significant numbers of young women have been lured into prostitution, which appears to be the only way to escape poverty for many impoverished women from provincial regions.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Many people have an inflexible image of gender roles and skills: men cannot cook, clean house, or perform child care, whereas women are bad at driving cars, managing finances, and supervising others. Men are valued for patriarchal and stern leadership, bravery, physical strength, and rationality; women are valued for beauty, intuition, emotional depth, and selfless generosity. Women are disproportionately represented among the devout, but the priesthood and hierarchy of the Orthodox Church are strictly male. Some new religious groups have women in leadership roles. Women are held in high regard as mothers, nurturers, and bearers of the most sacred dimensions of the culture. Many people value this conception of femininity and fear that it will be spoiled by feminists. Women's movement activists struggle against this viewpoint.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Romantic love is considered the only acceptable motivation for marriage, and there is a long tradition in literature, poetry, and song of idealizing lovers' passion, usually with tragic overtones, although bawdy approaches to the topic are also popular. Contemporary practice also highlights more pragmatic and cynical aspects of marital relationships, such as improving one's economic status or housing prospects. People frequently meet partners at school, university, or at work, although discotheques and clubs in the cities have become popular meeting places. Premarital sex is generally accepted, and marriages arising from unplanned pregnancies are not uncommon. Since the 1930s, twenty-three years has been the average age at marriage. Cohabitation is tolerated, but legal marriage is greatly preferred. Although economic un-certainty has led many to marry later or not at all, 97 percent of adults marry by age forty, and most before age thirty. Approximately one-half of all marriages end in divorce. Economic hardship and alcohol abuse are major contributing factors. Ethnic intermarriage became fairly common in Soviet times, and most people have at least one ancestor of a different nationality.

***Domestic Unit.***The multigenerational extended family living with the husband's family characterized peasant life until the twentieth century although household size varied by region. Among the aristocracy, the size and structure of the household unit was more flexible, although strict patriarchal control over the labor and behavior of the household was standard across social classes. One goal of the revolution was to replace traditional family practices with non-authoritarian communal living units. This experiment was short-lived, and after the 1930s, the values of family autonomy and privacy survived state intrusion.

The nuclear family is the most important domestic unit, and most married couples want an apartment of their own, away from their parents. The housing shortage and the high cost of new housing have made this a challenge, and families often live in apartments holding three generations, sometimes in stress-provoking conditions. Many couples with children live with a widowed parent of one spouse, most often the grandmother, who provides child care and food preparation. A grandparent's monthly pension may contribute significantly to the family budget.

***Inheritance.***Among the gentry, before the revolution, property was divided among all the living sons; as a result, large estates often were dissipated through fragmentation. Among the peasantry, household property included tools, clothes, and domestic items, while arable, pasture, and forest lands were held in common by the village and regularly repartitioned to provide adequate land for each family. Families with more married sons were allotted larger pieces of land. An ethos of egalitarianism with regard to property inheritance has remained strong.

In the Soviet period and for most families today, the most important real property consists of apartments and *dachas.*Ensuring that children have legal title to their parents' or grandparents' housing requires officially registering of the children as residents of those places before the death of the title holder. Otherwise, the title can revert to the government. With the advent of new wealth, inheritance laws are being reformulated, but there is controversy about taxes and legal procedures.

***Kin Groups.***Kinship is reckoned bilaterally, including consanguineal and affineal relations, although among the gentry recorded genealogies usually stressed the paternal. Until the mid-nineteenth century, kin terms for over sixty specific relations were in common use; with the social



*A man is gathering mushrooms in Saint Petersburg. About 80 percent of vegetables consumed are grown in private plots.*

transformations of the last century, the number of terms has decreased. Even across distances, close relations are maintained between a person and his or her siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and their families, and nieces and nephews, and many people stay in touch with more distant relatives. Among the factors that account for the sustaining of close ties are a lack of geographic mobility, the importance of networks of support in hard times, and regular visits to relatives in ancestral villages in the summer to rest, work, or visit family graves.

There has been a resurgence of interest in aristocratic roots. The exploration and celebration of one's genealogical background has become quite popular, and some members of aristocratic families abroad have returned to visit their families' former estates and re-assert their rank. Many people are intrigued by the romance and drama of the great families of the past.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Most women give birth in often overcrowded and understaffed maternity hospitals. Childbirth practices reflect traditional ideologies: birthing mothers are supposed to be stoical and are criticized for crying or complaining. Women stay in the hospital for at least a week after a birth, during which time fathers are allowed to see the mother and baby only through a glass window. It is feared that fathers may spread germs or will be repulsed by the "female business" involved in birthing. After the birth, women are encouraged to nurse, although maternal malnutrition often causes failure at [breast-feeding](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Breastfeeding.html) and formula is given instead. State maternity benefits and laws on maternity leave are generous, although they often are not observed by private businesses, and pregnant women may be fired. Infants used to be swaddled at birth and are still wrapped and bundled tightly except during bathing and diapering. It is thought that they will injure themselves otherwise. Many customary beliefs about the evil eye and other natural or supernatural dangers surround pregnancy, birthing, and new babies. Although they are coddled, very young babies can be spoken to as if they understood "civilized" behavior and may be scolded for crying, grabbing, or hair pulling. Babies are kept very warm but also get fresh air; it is common to see parents or grandmothers walking in a park on a frigid day with a heavily bundled infant, its face peeking out from the blankets in its carriage.

***Child Rearing and Education.***The Soviet state provided nurseries and preschools for children, from the smallest infants through seven-year-olds starting elementary school. There were never enough places to go around, and so mothers going back to work after maternity leave might rely on grandmothers or other female relatives. A range of methods ensured that children were inculcated with the values of communal responsibility and proper social behavior. Learning to follow instructions and rules was valued over developing creativity and initiative. Very little has changed, although funding for public child care and education has diminished, forcing teachers to provide services with reduced resources in aging and inadequate facilities. Major changes have been made in school curricula, but most schools rely on teaching materials prepared by centralized federal committees, ensuring widespread standardization of education. Progressivism in education is not highly developed. Academic standards remain high, and students are well trained in world history, foreign languages, music, mathematics, and science. In Soviet times, the values of internationalism were stressed, and the Soviet Union's role in modeling a multiethnic nation was highlighted; that has been replaced by an emphasis on the importance of citizenship and the nation's achievements in the arts and sciences.

Many nonacademic activities and expectations may be structured in terms of gender. Girls and boys are dressed in very different ways and given different responsibilities. Girls are encouraged to be quiet, friendly, and mutually supportive, while boys are expected to be noisy, boisterous, and competitive.

The school year is highly ritualized from the opening day of classes to graduation, with celebrations and performances, some of which involve parents. Many students spend their entire educational career in one school. A sense of identification with the school and lifelong friendships develop in these institutions, and students commonly keep in touch with each other and with their teachers and principals well into adulthood. Schools may commemorate the accomplishments of their graduates.

***Higher Education.***The Soviet Union had a world-class system of higher education, with forty universities and hundreds of institutions specializing in academic, scientific, professional, and technical disciplines. Business education, especially in management, finance, and marketing, has been developed only since 1991, but there are more than one thousand business training schools, including some at the most prestigious universities, such as Moscow State University. More than 90 percent of the population has completed secondary education, and around 12 percent have received a higher education. Ninety-nine percent of the adult population is literate, although literacy and completion rates are declining among educationally disadvantaged ethnic groups in the North Caucasus, southern Siberia, and the Far East. Higher education has come to be valued as a mark of social prestige and is regarded as critically important for economic success.

Etiquette

The most significant elements of etiquette are the verbal markers of social status. People use the second person plural pronoun when addressing elders except for parents and grandparents, persons of higher status, strangers, and acquaintances. The informal second person singular is used only among close friends, within the natal family, and among close coworkers of equal status. The more distant two people are socially, the more likely it is that they will address each other with full formality. Addressing someone formally also entails using the person's full name and patronymic. Misuse of the informal mode is extremely insulting.

Table behavior is circumscribed by a code of manners. Hosts and hostesses must show unfailing generosity, even with unexpected guests, and guests must receive that hospitality with a show of willingness to be served, fed, and pampered. Drinking together and toasting are important aspects of these rituals.

The filthiness of urban surfaces means that one never sits on the ground or puts shod feet on a table. Proper feminine behavior requires the observance of a number of specific practices: clothes must always be immaculately clean and pressed, fastidious grooming is critical, and comportment should be elegant and reserved. However, in crowds, lines, and public transport, active shoving and pushing are the norm.

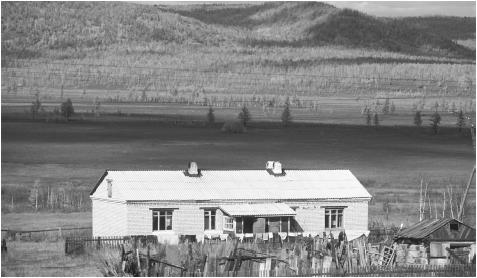
In Soviet times, being demure and not drawing attention to oneself through dress or behavior were highly valued, but this norm has vanished with the explosion of fashion and attention-getting subcultural identities.

The word "uncultured" is used by grandmothers and older people as a reprimand for behavior on the part of their charges or total strangers that are considered uncouth or inappropriate. The use of this reprimand has diminished as the social status of elders has fallen and as blatantly offensive behavior in the cities has become a mark of the power and "coolness" of youthful traders and "toughs."

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Although Prince Vladimir converted the East Slavs to Orthodox Christianity in 988, pre-Christian polytheism persisted for hundreds of years among the people, alongside Christian practices and beliefs. Many animistic elements, rites, and feasts associated with the agricultural calendar have persisted. Christian practices such as the curative application of "holy water" from a church are structured along the lines of pre-Christian customs. Churches frequently were constructed on ancient sacred sites. Traditional beliefs about forest and house spirits and metaphysical healing practices still exist among urbanized intellectuals and the working classes, especially among rural populations. A number of behavioral prohibitions stem from old beliefs: whistling indoors summons ill fortune and evil spirits are attracted by bragging or calling attention to good fortune or health. Telling people they have a lovely child may cause discomfort and necessitate warding off the evil eye.

The Soviet Union promoted "scientific atheism," severely repressed all religious organizations, and destroyed or took over many religious



*A house and the surrounding hills near Irkutsk, Siberia. The expense and lack of new housing has made for difficult living conditions in Russia.*

properties and sacred objects. The recent revitalization of religious identification and practice has been swift and strong among adherents of Orthodoxy, Islam, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism, although many Jews have emigrated. Indigenous shamanism is also being revived among many Siberian and Mongolian peoples. The state has returned thousands of churches, mosques, and temples as well as icons and other religious objects appropriated during the Soviet period to their respective communities. Monasteries and religious schools and training centers for all faiths have sprung up or reopened, and the number of religious practitioners has more than doubled since the 1970s. There has also been an explosion of alternative and New Age spiritual movements, publications, and practitioners.

A majority of ethnic Russians identify themselves as Orthodox Christians. A much smaller number are active participants in church activities, but the observance of key holidays is increasing. The Russian Orthodox Church has always been institutionally powerful, aligned with the state since Kievan times and even in the Soviet period, when it was allowed to function within strict limits. The control and reach of the state have often been secured through the administrative networks and ideological influence of the Orthodox church.

Islam has been important throughout Russian history. It has been the major religion in the northern Caucasus since the eighth century and in the Volga region since the tenth. Today, Islam is the second largest religion, after Russian Orthodoxy, with at least 19 million practitioners, and among ethnic minorities most Tatars, Bashkirs, Kazakhs, Chechens, and Avars, are Sunni Muslim. Moscow is a center of Islam in Russia, with many active mosques and organizations to serve the one to two million Muslims in Moscow. There are significant populations in many other large cities as well.

Before the revolution, most of Russia's Jews were confined to rural settlements and endured constant persecution. In addition to facing both popular and official anti-Semitism in the Soviet period, Jewish populations were repressed and secularized to the point where the majority were nonpracticing and Judaism was regarded as an ethnicity but not a religious identity. From the 1970s, a slow rediscovery of Jewish tradition, both sacred and secular, has occurred, while major waves of emigration have reduced the numbers of Jews. A few synagogues functioned nominally during the Soviet period, and these have been somewhat revitalized in recent years as some of the several million Jews remaining in Russia rediscover lost traditions and rituals.

Buddhism was officially recognized in Russia in 1741. It is the primary religion of ethnic Buryats, Kalmyks, and Tuvans. Harshly persecuted under Stalin, when most temples and monasteries were destroyed and lamas murdered or sent to the Gulag, Buddhism has made a steady revival, and today claims several million adherents, among ethnic Slavs as well as traditionally Buddhist populations.

Roman Catholicism is practiced mainly be ethnic Poles, Germans, and Lithuanians. Various Protestant sects are long established, especially among ethnic Ukrainians, and in the years since perestroika foreign evangelical sects have sought adherents among nonbelievers and members of other religious groups. In 1997, the controversial "Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" was passed, granting full rights of organization and association to only four religions: Orthodoxy, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism. Others have to go through a complex registration process and their activities are restricted.

***Religious Practitioners.***The administrative head of the Russian Orthodox Church is the Moscow patriarchate. Bishops and metropolitans lead the 128 dioceses. Parish priests, who are trained in seminaries and are obliged to marry, serve the 19,000 parishes. The number of parishes and monasteries has grown substantially with the restoration of religious freedom. Islamic muftis lead the Muslim Spiritual Boards, with a variety of jurisdictions, but the hierarchical and regional structure of Islam in Russia is in flux, as numerous religious and religious-political organizations, institutes, and cultural centers vie for authority and followers. Mullahs are the local teachers and interpreters of Islam; many are hereditary, but some young mullahs are challenging existing structures of authority. Among Buddhists, lamas are the most important spiritual leaders and teachers.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***For most Orthodox believers, religious practice centers on the emotive experience of liturgy, which is chanted daily, on Sundays, and in long, elaborate services on holy days. Icons depicting the Virgin Mary and the saints are widely venerated, and the faithful light candles, pray, bow, and sometimes weep before these sacred images. The peasant hut of the last century always centered on the "red corner" where the family's icon hung, and many urban apartments have a table or shelf set aside for an icon. Churches and cathedrals are the most important sites of Orthodox worship. Local parishes across the country have raised funds to rebuild and restore churches destroyed by the Soviets, with some support from the Moscow patriarchate. Tens of millions of dollars are being spent to restore cathedrals in the large cities. Some, like the enormous Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow, torn down in 1931, have been rebuilt from scratch and are widely venerated as symbols of the rebirth of Russian Orthodoxy.

A similar rebuilding and reclamation of older sites of worship has occurred among Russia's Islamic, Jewish, and Buddhist communities.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Proper care for and remembrance of the dead are considered very important. Around the time of death, it is crucial to do certain things to prevent the dead from staying or returning: mirrors are covered with black cloth, the body is laid out in ways that facilitate the ushering out of the spirit, and mourners accompany the deceased from home to church and from church to cemetery. In the church or hall where the body is displayed, mourners circle the open coffin counterclockwise and may kiss or lay flowers on the body. After burial, mourners return to the family's home, where certain foods are served with vodka and the deceased is remembered with stories and anecdotes. Food and vodka may be set at his or her place for nurturance of the soul. The soul remains on earth for forty days, at which time the family holds a second gathering to bid farewell as the soul departs for heaven. The anniversary of a death is memorialized every year; some people travel great distances to visit their loved ones' graves.

Medicine and Health Care

[Socialized medicine](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Socialized_medicine.html) was a cornerstone of Soviet society. The medical sciences were well developed, with particular success in cardiology, oncology, and laser surgery. However, demand for medical services was often greater than the system could handle, and many hospitals and clinics were understaffed, underequipped, and lacking in supplies. Party officials and other elites had access to worldclass, special clinics while the majority received the basic level of care available in the public clinics. Rural and provincial areas were especially ill served.

A secondary system of private medicine has developed alongside the state system. These privatized medical services are affordable by a limited proportion of the population; private insurance programs are in the early stages of development. Occasionally, private businesses pay for the medical care of their employees. Medicines and services are not available at prices all people can afford because funding for public health services have declined.

Social changes have been accompanied by the spread of communicable diseases. Tuberculosis has swept through prisons and other institutions, and the rates of venereal disease, hepatitis, and AIDS have grown. Poverty, poor living conditions, lack of adequate sanitation, drug abuse, and industrial pollution have contributed to a widespread decline in public health.

Folk medicine has traditionally been utilized, and hundreds of herbal and alternative remedies are commonly used; people grow herbs at their *dachas*for healing purposes. The practice of folk or alternative medicine has been legalized, and tens of thousands of practitioners advertise their services. Herbal medicine, homeopathy, the application of leeches, spiritual healing, mineral baths, light therapy, and other exotic forms of treatment are widely used. Professional physicians often prescribe folk therapies such as herbal teas or tinctures and mustard plasters.

Secular Celebrations

International Women's Day on 8 March, celebrating the contributions and role of women in social life, is a legal holiday and a day off from work; men bring flowers to the women in their lives, or call or send cards to congratulate female friends, wives, and relatives. Television features special shows dedicated to women, femininity, and the "female virtues." May Day, or Labor Day (1 May), the day of international labor solidarity, previously marked with parades, is now an occasion to celebrate the coming of spring. The Day of Victory on 9 May commemorates the Soviet capture of Berlin and the end of World War II. This holiday is taken seriously by older people, who gather to remember family members, friends, and comrades lost in the war. Television runs solemn tributes to veterans and war heroes. The Day of Russia on 12 June marks independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. It features parades and fireworks. The Day of the October Revolution, on 7 November is celebrated only by communists and people nostalgic for Soviet power. New Year's Eve is the most lavishly celebrated secular holiday. Grandfather Frost and his helper the Snow Maiden leave gifts under a decorated New Year's Tree, and people gather to await midnight with laughter, song, feasting, and vodka and champagne. These parties often last through the night.



*Architectural view of Sveto Nikoski Church in Vladivostok. Orthodox Christianity is the religion with which most ethnic Russians identify.*

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***State support for the arts was provided by the Soviet government because literature, art, theater, and music were perceived as media through which political ideologies could be conveyed. The state nourished the production of the arts through organizations such as the Composer's Union and the Writer's Union, which provided monetary support and social services, while monitoring and guiding creative output. After 1991, federal funding diminished greatly, just as artists were experiencing creative freedom for the first time. While private publishing houses, galleries, and theaters have appeared, the public has turned away from this art to enjoy detective, romance, adventure, and horror novels and films. Popular culture has enjoyed a renaissance, and artists struggle to support themselves.

***Literature.***Russia has always been primarily an oral culture in which a wide range of folkloric genres and traditions has flourished and provided the primary form of entertainment. Pre-Christian epic ballads, agricultural songs, laments, and tales dating back to before the tenth century were recorded for the first time in the seventeenth century. Folktales and epic poems were carried by itinerant storytellers; riddles, jokes, and verbal games were popular in every village; and there was a broad spectrum of folk poetry, from sacred ritual verse to ribald ditties. Most great writers incorporated folkloric themes and genres in their work, and folklore is still widely known and shared.

The first written literature dates from the eleventh century, with the production of religious texts, including translations from Byzantine works, original sermons and other didactic works, and hagiographies. Chronicles such as the *Russian Primary Chronicle*are among the most important medieval literature in Old Russian. The *Song of Igor's Campaign,*a saga of the twelfth century campaign of Prince Igor against the Polovtsy, is a work of outstanding poetic beauty, metaphoric sophistication, and political commentary.

With the rise of Muscovy in the fifteenth century, a new literary tradition began to take shape with many historical, biographical, and instructional works, most with a religious character, along with ecclesiastical texts. More secular and popular literature appeared in the sixteenth century. A period of classicism in the eighteenth century saw the development of political and social satire, comedy, and romanticism.

The golden age of literature began in the early nineteenth century with the poet Aleksandr Pushkin, whose narrative poem, *Eugene Onegin,*transformed Russian literature with its shrewd depiction of social life and romantic love. The poetry and prose of Mikhail Lermontov; the stories, longer prose, and plays of Nikolai Gogol; and the stories and novels of [Ivan Turgenev](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ivan_Turgenev.html) opened new paths in terms of language, psychological insight, and sociopolitical commentary. The works of the novelists Fyodor Dostoevsky and Lev Tolstoy took the novel to new levels of psychological realism, philosophical contemplation, and epic tragedy. Anton Chekhov's stories and plays were profoundly innovative. Most Russians know their national literature well.

The turn of the twentieth century ushered in a renewal of poetry, with competing schools of symbolism, acmeism, and futurism. For a brief period before and after the revolution, experimentation and utopianism in all the arts existed alongside realistic and satirical fiction. Many of the greatest literary figures of this period were imprisoned, exiled, or killed during the 1930s. A few key figures such as Boris Pasternak, Anna Akhmatova, and Marina Tsvetaeva, managed to survive but suffered great personal losses.

[Socialist realism](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Socialist_realism.html) became the only officially sanctioned and supported mode of artistic production. It was supposed to present a realistic picture of workers and peasants building a socialist utopia. Thousands of paintings, sculptures, novels, plays, poems, songs, and motion pictures were created to accord with socialist realist doctrine; the vast majority were stilted and didactic. Works of art that diverged from the socialist realist mold were frequently repressed. Writers such as [Aleksander Solzhenitsyn](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Aleksandr_Solzhenitsyn.html) and Joseph Brodsky were hounded, and ultimately expelled. Except for the time of "the thaw" under Krushchev in the early 1960s, much creative work took place underground or was not published. Gorbachev's policy of glasnost opened the way for previously repressed work to be made public. In the late 1980s, dozens of works critical of Soviet politics or revealing the contradictions of Soviet life were openly published for the first time.

The post-Soviet years have brought writers of dark and droll social realism, such as Tatyana Tolstaya and Liudmilla Petrushevskaya, to the fore. The modern parables of Vladimir Makanin and Viktor Pelevin have become popular among literati and the young reading public.

***Graphic Arts.***Folk arts are ancient and varied. Animal, bird, plant, solar, and goddess motifs, and a palette of reds and golden yellows with traces of black and green favored by peasant artists prevail across a range of folk art media, particularly in painted wooden objects and embroidered textiles. There have been several periods of decline and revitalization as animist expressions were repressed under Christianization a thousand years ago and then under the Soviet regime. In both cases, peasant artists changed their output to accord with the dominant ideology. Soviet state-run studios kept many folk media alive, and the postsocialist period has seen independent craftspersons return to traditional mythological motifs, such as that of the Sirin, a bird with a woman's head and breasts.

With the adoption of Christianity in 988, Byzantine religious architecture and icon painting were brought to Russia. Several indigenous schools took root in Muscovy after ties with Byzantium were cut under the Mongols. Even though much of his work was destroyed by fire, Andrei Rublev (ca.1360–1430) is Russia's most renowned icon painter; the subtle color, harmonious composition, and spiritual serenity of his images are still revered.

After the sixteenth century, the tsar's court, the gentry, and wealthy merchants supported metalworking, jewelry, textile, and porcelain workshops. An array of these crafts is on display in the Kremlin's Armory.

Secular painting, particularly portraiture and cityscapes, developed in the eighteenth century, spurred by the Empress Elizabeth's founding of the Academy of Fine Arts in Petersburg in 1757 and the collections amassed by Catherine the Great. The nineteenth century brought romanticism and realism. Realism characterized the work of the so-called Wanderers Society, a socially progressive movement of the 1870s; Ilia Repin is the most famous of the movement's artists. A folk art movement began later in the nineteenth century. The World of Art movement in the early twentieth century produced the theater designer and ballet impresario Serge Diaghelev, the abstract impressionist Vasilii Kandinsky, and the inspiration for a Symbolist movement. Abstraction dominated after 1910, especially in the form of neoprimitivism, Cubism, Suprematism, Futurism, and Constructivism. After the revolution, the abstract works of Constructivists such as Malevich, Tatlin, and Rodchenko were supported by the head of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment. These artists had an industrial aesthetic that valued a proletarian utilitarianism, but their art was abstract and formalistic, out of synch with the development of Socialist Realism. After 1953, pluralism in the arts grew quietly until the blossoming of unofficial art movements from the 1960s on, with artistic circles rediscovering and experimenting with abstraction, expressionism, magic realism, and other suppressed genres. Underground exhibits often were held in artists' apartments and studios and in city parks, and some were important cultural and political events.

With the relaxation of censorship in the mid-1980s, new waves of performance art, postmodernism, and minimalism occurred, but there was also a surge of both harsh and critical realism and romantic longing for a spiritually whole Russia. In the 1980s, avant-garde painting gained popularity worldwide.

***Performance Arts.***The performing arts include those seen as "high culture"—symphonic music, opera, ballet, and theater—and the popular forms, encompassing everything from gypsy ballads to folk choruses, rock music to raves. In the first category are the composers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as Piotr Tchaikovsky, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Sergei Prokofiev, Igor Stravinsky, and [Dmitry Shostakovich](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Dmitri_Shostakovich.html); opera greats such as Fedor Chaliapin; the ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev and the dancers Vaslav Nijinsky, Anna Pavlova, Rudolph Nurieyev and [Mikhail Baryshnikov](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Mikhail_Baryshnikov.html); and the theatrical producer and acting teacher Konstantin Stanislavsky. Russians are still foremost in many areas of music and dance. Classical music and dance performances were state-subsidized so that tickets were relatively inexpensive and attendance was very high. Ballets and orchestras toured even in remote regions in an attempt to "bring culture to the masses." The level of appreciation for and amateur performance of music remain high.

Western rock music became popular in the 1960s largely through illegal copies of albums that circulated from hand to hand. Rock flourishes today among tens of thousands of rock groups and dozens of famous bands. Estrada, an often vulgar or campy form of pop singing and performance, has been popular since the prerevolutionary period. The singer Alla Pugacheva is the most famous artist in this genre. Folk choruses sing traditional and contemporary folk songs, either a capellà or accompanied by a balalaika and other native instruments. Bard singing arose in the postwar period as a quiet mode of protest but became enormously popular, with "secret" festivals in the countryside attracting thousands of fans. No social gathering is complete without impassioned singing and guitar playing. Most people know the words to many songs. Many young people are devoted to contemporary musical forms such as techno, hip-hop, and rap. Raves and other participatory musical events are very popular in the cities.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The Soviet Union fostered the development of the physical sciences, and although hampered by the slow development of the computer industry and outdated laboratory equipment, many of its scientists and scientific institutions did important work. Fields with potential military application, such as physics, chemistry, and mathematics, along with other disciplines, were supported. Much of the money for the sciences has vanished. Where it exists, private or foundation funding can provide only minimal resources. Dozens of prestigious institutes are nearly closed, lacking funds even for essentials such as electricity and water.

The social sciences were organized around Marxist-Leninist theory and thus were forced to frame research in terms of dialectical materialism. Until the mid-1980s, social problems were not freely discussed and research that might portray living conditions or social attitudes in a negative light was restricted. Since the era of Gorbachev's reforms, the social sciences have flourished even though financing for pure research has been limited. Applied sociology has benefited, as polling has become a mainstay of business.

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—N ANCY R IES

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_1)

**David**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website nwas Awsome!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! i congradulatre you on making such a great website. You guys are the best. Go russia!

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_2)

**Matt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS WEBSITE HELPED ME SOOOOOOOOO MUCH. I WOULD TELL ANYONE LOOKIN FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR COUNTRY TO USE THIS!!!!!! THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF THANKS

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_3)

**AEO**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this really helped me with my work and i really appreciate the work the creators have put into making this website...i salute u with honor.....

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_4)

**Zach**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website just got me a 100 on a term project! Everything that I need was all right here in one simple website! Thanks you guys! Yall ROCK MY SOCKS! I LOVE YOU GUYS WITH ALL OF MY HEART!

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_5)

**Justineeee.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like this wesbite very much. It helped a whole lot :]

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_6)

**Sam ColdWell**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I Love dis site it helps me on what i need for homework.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_7)

**Lexie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This Website was very helpful in my report on Russian culture

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_8)

**mike bryant**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS WEB IS GREAT IT HELPED ALOT ON MY FINAL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_9)

**Bill**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I see that a student has plagiarized this page for great portions of her own paper. She even made up authors to give credit to who had nothing to do with the writing of this very good web page. I just want to thank everyculture for making it so easy for me to nail her and fail her.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_10)

**marcos vasquez**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like this website it gave me alot of information on russia !

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_11)

**daria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great article on Mother Russia. I am a proud Russian citizen, well i was a citizen. I am very impressed by this article because it sounds just like the Russia i know ! :)

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_12)

**Astrid**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you very much. This is a very informative article that has helped me to understand various aspects of my newly found Russian family in Kursk and culture. It also helps me understand my grandparents in the 1800s. I will use this page often in the writing of my book "Journey of Secrets". I will also recommend this page to anyone who is interested in Russian History. However, I do require more information from the peoples point of view of how WWII affected the lives of people in Kursk-NOT THE POLITIC OR THE ECONOMY-lIFE FOR THE PEOPLE IN THE STREET.

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_13)

**Paul**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

You guys are awsome now if only i could just use this one website... o well keep rocking MOTHER RUSSIA!

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_14)

[**katterzjenna**](mailto:lionua311%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS HELPED ME SO MUCH THANKS U ROCK!!! THIS IS GOING TO HELP ME SO MUCH U KNOCKED MY SOCKS OFF. I THINK I AM GOING TO GET 100% ON MY REPORT!! THANKS

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_15)

[**Claire**](mailto:claire%20[at]%20indichik%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks again for a great and well-researched article. I'm a freelance writer, and this has to be one of the most useful sites on the web for cultural research.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_16)

[**Tiever**](mailto:Tiever%20[dot]%20r%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Awesome website! It is helping my fianl project, it is most useful website I ever see! Thousand of thank you so much!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_17)

**Christopher Villani**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like to know if I it would be possible to cite some of this material in short paper I am writiing, however I do not see an author.

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_18)

**Katie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much this wbsite was sooo handy and easy to understand homework help!!!=)

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_19)

[**achal singh**](mailto:achal%20[dot]%20sanu%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

a great site to understand the any country of its historical,political and geographical orientation.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_20)

**Tiffany Longthorpe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website is amazing and i can now understand the full value of woman and celebrate international womans day! this wedsite has helped with my work alot, thankyou for making it possible

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_21)

[**Leonard**](mailto:leonard%20[dot]%20karran%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is amazing and was very helpful for my assignment. Thanks and great job!

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_22)

[**Karessa**](mailto:Bluemoondust%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much I'm doing a report about Russia and this really helped THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO PUT UP THIS SITE.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_23)

**REX**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS WEBSITE HAS HELPED ME ON MY CLASS PROJECT AND I HOPE YOU MAKE ANOTHER WEBSITE OF CHINA.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_24)

[**Kendra Johnson**](mailto:Iceskatersjo%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I thoght this help me allot and I will recemend this to all of my friends

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_25)

**Kelvin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow!! this is such a clear information about Russia! Great web! God Bless

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_26)

[**debra slater**](mailto:debi56%20[at]%20comcast%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am writing a book but I would like some history as to so the social gatherings of 1800's Russia.  
Was there anything like a coming of age celebration for girls? If so any information would be greatly appreciated. Also maybe some information on any revolts or rebellions at that time.  
  
Thank you

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_27)

[**Abraham**](mailto:irockusmellman%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I had a last minute project on Russia and this page HELPED ME A LOT :D

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_28)

[**dean kempf**](mailto:dkempf808%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I had a last minute project on Russia and this page HELPED ME A LOT :D

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_29)

**Bob**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

well this site is ok...but i cant find all the info that i need!!

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_30)

[**Kris W**](mailto:kkw1580107%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Incredible attention to detail. Thank you for the hard work that went into compiling such a resource to spread an awareness of the Slovik culture.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_31)

**kelly**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what is the life of the scholarship student? did they are able to live well or what?

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_32)

[**Paul**](mailto:pstroud1%20[at]%20monsterbroadband%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I as an American have always wonder bout your beautiful country and now have a few friends living in Russia. I am 70 yrs old and never was taught much about your country. I have my self to blame for not looking into it myself.  
I thank you for this very informitive site and wish you the best in my thoughts and prayers for a great future.  
  
Thank You, Paul R.Stroud

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_33)

**Imani Johnson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you thank thank you i really need this infromation for my russian project for mrs.akimova wity you r help i made three 100 . thanks agiann keep posting more information on countrie this really help me and my friends alot.

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_34)

[**Kelly**](mailto:kheart23%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was wondering if there was an author and publish date for the Russia article?  
  
Thank you!

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_35)

[**Anbdrea F**](mailto:anfane90%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great, this is exactly what I needed... You're amazing.  
No words can describe how grateful I am in this moment :)

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_36)

**bev**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what an amazing and informative website...have always been fascinated by Russian life since going on a school trip in 1969...thank you

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_37)

[**Akilu Yunusa Rimi**](mailto:Akilu_yunusa6309%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

We really appreciate this site. It has help me in getting some important histories

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_38)

**Matt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much! this website helped me a lot on my project :D

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_39)

[**Fajer**](mailto:singalong1%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site really helped me alot with homework.So I would give thumbs up the one who made it or posts these reports/ the person who wrote this helpful report on Russia.:)

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_40)

**Courtney**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Could you put a little on the sports in russia and peoples involvement (who plays and who sponsers)  
Greatly aprecialted.  
  
Thanks

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_41)

[**Diablo - Devil May Cry**](mailto:straightupbro%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very helpful website, i thank the creators and will use this any other time i need to learn about any country. Again, i thank you and hope you all live a long life

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_42)

**gianna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I lov this site! I can not thank you enough it was so helpful!!!

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_43)

**LucyRenard**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The information is interesting indeed, however, pretty much out of date here and there. I would like to draw the attention of both authors' and readers' that there is an only book published after 90s: actually in 2000 in the reference list. The general cultural trends remain undoubted, of course, and it is nice to see someone's into it, learning Russia not only from amateur forums like "How to find a Russian bride". However, if we speak in more serious terms than those to be applied to sights like I've just mentioned, you should re-work most of the material.  
  
with my kindest regards,  
Lucy Renard

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_44)

**Allie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this site! It helped me so much with my research paper on Russia's culture. Thanks to the author. I really appreciate your hard work.

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_45)

**pankaj**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

russain culture is great.We really appreciate this site. thanks

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_46)

**Rebecca**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website is awesome and I would recomend it to anyone. Thank you for creating it. :)

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_47)

**rohan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love russia country. And i really love russian people.

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_48)

**Baeyz**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for making this! It was a good source for information for my project!

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_49)

**Tammy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much! This article was very helpful in my project.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_50)

**Emily**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Your website has information I didn't know and information I'm looking for. If it wasn't for this site I wouldn't have been able to find the data I need for my project. Thank you so much! Now all I have to do is finish with Canada and make a poster. Thanks anyways!

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_51)

**Rachael**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you guys so much!! i had been looking for over 2 hours for information that covered all these topics by a source i could trust! thank you again. i will recommend this sight to anyone in need of knowledge about the russian culture.

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_52)

[**Arjuna**](mailto:aj3flanker%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I LIKE RUSSIA VERY MUCH...I AM A SRI LANKAN..I GOT MORE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RUSSIA THROUGH THIS SITE.

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_53)

**David**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

An excellent article that was extremely interesting and informative.

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_54)

**odittz**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you for giving and posting such information which are educational like me as a student... please continue to share your knowledge with us more power!

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_55)

[**Tonya**](mailto:tonyaethridge05%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website has so much information to offer! I am doing a research paper on Russia and the culture. I really obtained much information off this site. Thank you! Ya'll are awesome!!! :)

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_56)

**mahtab**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you.I obtained great information of russia from this site

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_57)

**Vanessa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much this website is very helpful it is helping me so with my social assignment SO MUCH thanks thanks thanks this website is TRULY helping me ^\_^

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_58)

[**ROsemary**](mailto:Peace2rose%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thx for all the info. This will help me with my research alot. Thx again! :D

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_59)

**lassie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love this website. We have a country project for school and mine was Russia so this helped me so much. Thank you everyculture you made my project so much easier

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_60)

**lizzy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks everyculture. You made it so much easier to do research for my World Cultures project! :)

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_61)

**Anina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks, I now know what to put down for my culture project!

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_62)

**Pankaj Sharma**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Excited .I stayed in Moscow for 17 years .Going thru this article .Lot of knowledge i hv recd .thanks to the team.

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_63)

**Sergei**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great website to learn not only about how Russia became, but how it leads into what Russia is today. Thank you for the great information.

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_64)

**Maeve**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Love it! Great for projects and papers. I also like the info on the other countries aswell! Great job PeopleWhoWroteThisWebsite!!!

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_65)

**misha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow this helped me with my class project all about russia thank you

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_66)

**Zachary**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow! This really helped me with an essay about Russia. Thanks for given everyone who goes on this site the education they need about Russia. ðŸ‘

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_67)

**Judith Darbouze**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for the information; very helpful. There are some areas I needed more information on, but overall this site gave me very interesting info.

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_68)

**Carlos Parsons**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article helped me so much and i would tell everybody to use this website.

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_69)

[**Emily**](mailto:wolfofrebellion723%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow! Thank you so much for such a great website. This got me such a good grade

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_70)

**JimO**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great site. Very accurate and detailed. Having lived with a Russian wife for 17 years and her father and visited Russia 8 times I can say I learned more from this site than I have from other sources. What I read here is very true and accurate! thanks to the author(s)

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_71)

**cameron**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thx for this great information. really helped me with my project. recommend this site to everyone learning about russia

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_72)

**priyanka chopra**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi I am an actress and this was very helpful  
  
THIS IS VERY NICE

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_73)

**SUVASREE MUKHERJEE**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

An enormous article that encompasses everything about Russian traditions as it is. Though I am surprised to know that premarital living in by couples are acceptable. I believe that place a lot of importance on marriage as a foundation for a family.

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_74)

**Berry Tab**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Ho do I cite this website according to MLA?  
Whos the publisher?

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_75)

**Junior**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

How do I cite this site? who is the author? When was it published?

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_76)

**Claire**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am writing and APA paper and this is really good information that can help with my paper, but I don't know how to cite with this many authors? and also when was this published?

[**77**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_77)

**Sandra Epps**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

How is the author is this article and when was it written

[**78**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html#Comments_78)

**lauren robles**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

am writing and APA paper and this is really good information that can help with my paper, but I don't know how to cite with this many authors? and also when was this published?

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

Top of Form

Name:

E-mail:

 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

[Culture of Russia forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Romania](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html)[Rwanda](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html)

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1. Culture of Rwanda

Rwanda

Culture Name

Rwandan

Alternative Names

Banyarwanda, Banyamulenge, Bafumbira

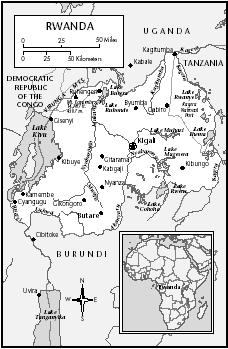
Orientation

***Identification.***The Rwandan culture includes not only the population of Rwanda but people in neighboring states, particularly Congo and Uganda, who speak the Kinyarwanda language. The important ethnic divisions within Rwandan culture between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa are based on perceptions of historical group origins rather than on cultural differences. All three groups speak the same language, practice the same religions, and live interspersed throughout the same territory; they are thus widely considered to share a common culture, despite deep political divisions. The Rwandans in Congo and Uganda include both refugees, who generally maintain a strong identification with the Rwandan national state, and Kinyarwanda speakers who have lived outside Rwanda for generations and therefore have a distinct cultural identity within the wider national culture.

***Location and Geography.***Known as the "land of a thousand hills," Rwanda is a mountainous country located on the far western edge of the Rift Valley, bordering on Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Tanzania. Rwanda rises from relatively flat plains in the east along the Tanzania border to steep mountains in the west along the continental divide between the Congo and Nile rivers. From the continental divide, the land drops sharply to the shores of Lake Kivu, which forms most of Rwanda's border with Congo. A range of high volcanoes forms Rwanda's northwest border. The mountainous topography continues in the North Kivu region of Congo, where almost half of the population identifies as Rwandan. A concentration of Kinyarwanda-speaking Tutsi, known as the Banyamulenge, lives in the high plains and mountains above Lake Tanganyika in South Kivu. The Bufumbira region of southwest Uganda is also Kinyarwanda speaking. The difficulty of travel and isolation resulting from the mountainous topography historically encouraged largely self-sufficient local communities and many local variations of the culture, but the modern centralized state implemented during the colonial period has encouraged a degree of cultural homogenization, at least within the borders of Rwanda.

***Demography.***War and political turmoil have led to radical population shifts in Rwanda in the past decade. According to the 1991 census, the total population of Rwanda was 7.7 million, with 90 percent of the population in the Hutu ethnic group, 9 percent Tutsi, and 1 percent Twa, though the actual percentage of Tutsi was probably higher. During the 1994 [genocide](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Genocide.html), an estimated 80 percent of the Tutsi population living in Rwanda was killed, perhaps 600,000 people, but after a Tutsi-dominated government came to power in Rwanda in 1994, an estimated 700,000 Tutsi refugees returned from abroad. Meanwhile, several hundred thousand Hutu also died in the genocide and war and from diseases like [cholera](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Cholera.html) that spread in refugee camps when, at the end of the war, several million Hutu fled to Tanzania and Congo. Several million more were internally displaced within Rwanda. War that broke out in Congo in 1996 killed thousands more Hutu and drove most Hutu refugees back into Rwanda. As a result, the size and ethnic breakdown of the population are thought to be roughly comparable today to that before the 1994 war.

Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa. Prior to the 1994 war, Rwanda was among the most rural countries in the world, but the war precipitated rapid urbanization, with many



*Rwanda*

refugees choosing not to return to their rural homes but to settle instead in the cities, primarily Kigali.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Kinyarwanda is a unifying factor within Rwanda, since it is spoken almost universally. Closely related to Kirundi (spoken in Burundi), Mashi (spoken in the South Kivu region of Congo), and Kiha (spoken in northwestern Tanzania), Kinyarwanda is a Bantu language. Less than 10 percent of Rwanda's population also speaks French, and a small portion speaks English, primarily refugees returned from Uganda and Kenya. Kinyarwanda is the primary cultural identifier for Rwandans living outside Rwanda.

***Symbolism.***Historically, Rwanda's three ethnic groups have been identified with distinct aspects of the economy: the Tutsi with cattle, the Hutu with the land, and Twa with the forests. Each group had distinct roles in public rituals, and each group had a distinctive mode of dress. The monarchy served as an important unifying symbol, representing the interest of all three ethnic groups. Hutu and Tutsi were also linked together throughout much of the territory in a system of cattle vassalage, in which Tutsi patrons provided cattle to Hutu clients. During the colonial period, however, the monarchy lost much of its legitimacy as it became increasingly identified with the Tutsi minority, and the system of cattle vassalage became viewed as a system of exploitation of Hutu by Tutsi. The cattle vassalage system was abolished in the 1950s and Hutu politicians deposed the king in 1961. After independence in 1962, the all-Hutu government sought to portray Rwanda as a Hutu country, emphasizing agrarian cultural symbols. Christianity became an important source of national symbols, with almost all national leaders openly identifying as Christians, the large majority as Catholic. Since the Tutsi retook power in 1994, historic symbols such as cattle have been revived, and a strong political faction has called for the reinstallation of the monarchy as a means of reunifying the country's ethnic groups.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Rwanda traces its origins to one of the many small kingdoms that emerged in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa beginning five hundred years ago. Land pressures throughout the densely populated region encouraged increasing political centralization, particularly among cattle-raising people, who feared the loss of pasture land to encroaching cultivation. The kingdom of Rwanda was founded in the sixteenth century in what is today eastern Rwanda, then moved west to modern central Rwanda, where it developed a unifying social system and a strong army and began to expand, incorporating neighboring kingdoms and chieftaincies through conquest or alliance. A complex system emerged, based on political and economic ties rather than shared cultural identity. In the central kingdom, power was centralized and an ethnic division between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa became well developed. A system of cattle vassalage bound local communities together and tied them to the monarchy. Areas outside the central kingdom retained their distinct political and social organizations to varying degrees, with some chief-taincies merely paying tribute to the Rwandan king, but remaining otherwise autonomous. During this period, some Rwandans who resented the increasing political control emigrated from the kingdom, resettling in Congo, where they formed a distinct Rwandan community later known as the Banyamulenge.

***National Identity.***Colonial rule, which began in 1895, was the primary force leading to the emergence of the Rwandan national identity. German colonial authorities and the Belgians who replaced them in 1916 actually regarded the Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa as three distinct national groups, but colonial policies led to a greater identification with the Rwandan national state for all groups, even as they also created greater ethnic identification and polarization. The colonial overlords helped the Rwandan monarchy to centralize its control and extend its social system throughout the territory that is contemporary Rwanda, eliminating the local social and political variations that had existed in the precolonial period. By establishing modern state institutions in Rwanda, the colonial administrators also imported the ideas of nationality associated with the modern nation-state. Subsequent social and political conflicts have revolved around how exactly Rwandan nationality should be defined (for example, which ethnic groups should be included as "true" Rwandans) rather than over the validity of Rwandan as a national identity, as in many African states.

***Ethnic Relations.***The three ethnic groups in Rwanda emerged through a complex process of immigration and social and economic differentiation that took place over several centuries. Tradition holds that Twa were the original inhabitants; Hutu came second in a wave of migration from the west, and Tutsi came much later from the northeast. [Archeological](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Archaeology.html) and anthropological research, however, indicates that in fact patterns of migration were much more complex, as populations moved into Rwanda over many centuries. Each new group of migrants adopted the local language and most local customs, although they also added some of their own beliefs and practices to the local culture. Modern ethnic identities emerged fairly recently and therefore could not derive primarily from migration. In fact, the differentiation throughout the region into three fully distinct ethnic groups occurred only during the colonial period and grew much more from European ideas about race and identity than from historic cultural patterns.

German and Belgian policies were based on the concept of indirect rule which sought to administer colonies through existing structures of power. Colonial administrators mistakenly believed power in Rwanda to be organized primarily along ethnic lines, and thus they instituted policies that subjugated the Hutu and favored the Tutsi, whom they saw as the natural rulers. The colonial rulers did not, in fact, maintain local power structures unchanged but centralized the political system, eliminating local political variations, including abolishing autonomous Hutu chieftaincies. In strengthening the rule of the Rwandan monarch throughout the territory, the colonials and their Tutsi allies in the royal court helped to extend the culture of central Rwanda to the rest of the territory. Many of the myths, practices, and beliefs of central Rwanda were spread to the rest of the territory, as were the system of cattle vassalage and the clear distinction between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa. The northern region of the country, which was least integrated into pre-colonial Rwanda, has remained somewhat politically distinct from the rest of the country, and competition between the north and the rest of the country has remained an important political factor.

With the establishment of colonial borders, some Kinyarwanda-speaking people were situated outside Rwanda. The Rwandan populations of Bufumbira in southwest Uganda and the border regions of North Kivu, as well as the Banyamulenge population in South Kivu, had little connection to the Rwandan court even before colonial rule. Under separate colonial authorities, these groups developed distinctive cultural identities, even as the populations of Uganda and Congo associated them with Rwanda. Meanwhile, thousands of Rwandans migrated to Congo and Uganda for economic purposes, creating large Rwandan communities with a stronger identification with Rwanda in places such as Masisi in North Kivu. In the Rwandan community outside Rwanda, the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi remained less significant than it became within Rwanda, as most Kinyarwanda-speakers were collectively known as Banyarwanda.

Within Rwanda the myth that Tutsi were a distinct race that arrived recently and established its dominance over Hutu and Tutsi through conquest came to be embraced by most of the population. It served the interests of the Tutsi elite who used it to reinforce German and Belgian prejudice that regarded Tutsi as natural rulers. During the colonial period, Rwanda was administered jointly with its neighbor to the south, Burundi, which had a closely related language and a similar social structure. With Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa in Burundi as well, the ethnic politics in the two countries tended to develop in tandem, with events in one country inspiring a response in the other.

In the 1950s, as independence approached, a movement of Hutu ethno-nationalism arose in response to the growing impoverishment of Hutu and the dominance of Tutsi. The Hutu ethnonationalists claimed that Hutu were the true Rwandans and that Tutsi were foreign interlopers. A peasant uprising in 1959 drove Tutsi chiefs from office and led thousands of Tutsi to flee the country, most of them to Uganda, Congo, and Burundi. Anti-Hutu violence in 1972 in Burundi, where Tutsi remained in charge, inspired anti-Tutsi violence in Rwanda in 1973 and led thousands more Tutsi to flee into exile. Hutu ethno-nationalism remained an important ideology in Rwanda and ultimately Hutu leaders used the idea that Tutsi were not "true" Rwandans to inspire Hutu soldiers and militia to slaughter the country's Tutsi population in 1994 along with moderate Hutu who challenged the exclusivist national ideology.

Although they embraced an exclusivist notion of identity during the colonial period, Tutsi since independence have sought to promote a more inclusive conception of national identity that regards Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa as one nationality. In 1990, the [Rwandan Patriotic Front](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Rwandan_Patriotic_Front.html) (RPF), a group of Tutsi refugees based in Uganda, invaded northern Rwanda to attempt to force the government to allow Tutsi refugees to return to Rwanda. Although hundreds of thousands of Tutsi were killed in the 1994 genocide—in part because Hutu were frightened by the RPF invasion—the RPF was ultimately successful on the battlefield, and in July 1994, they took control of the country. The current RPF-dominated government now promotes a multi-ethnic idea of Rwandan national identity.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Rwanda is among the most rural countries in the world. Most people live in individual family compounds surrounded by banana groves and fields and scattered across the hillsides. The hill—the collection of families living on a single hill—has historically been the central social and political unit. Each hill had a chief who linked the population to the monarch. Although chieftaincies were abolished in the 1960s, the new administrative units generally preserved the hill divisions.

The extreme violence that swept the country in 1994 devastated Rwanda's rural social structure. With millions of people uprooted from their homes, hundreds of thousands killed, and hundreds of thousands more returned from long exile, Rwandan society underwent rapid social change. Most of the returned Tutsi refugees chose to settle in urban areas, while most Tutsi in the countryside were killed or chose to move to the cities. As a result, urbanization took on a new ethnic character, even as the rate of urbanization jumped dramatically. Meanwhile, the government instituted a program of villagization in the countryside, forcing peasant farmers to leave their isolated homesteads to live together in small overcrowded villages. While the government claimed that these villages were intended to facilitate the administration of social services, many critics believed that the program was designed to facilitate social control.

Food and Economy

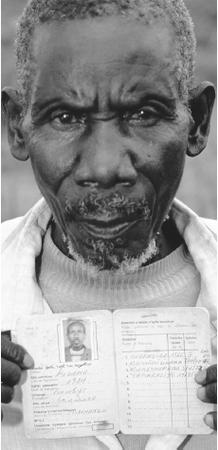
***Food in Daily Life.***Rwandan food is quite simple, with beans, bananas, sweet potatoes, potatoes, and sorghum being the most common foods. Dairy products are also widely consumed, particularly a traditional drink of curdled milk. Those who can afford to do so also eat meat, primarily beef, goat, and chicken. Sorghum and banana beers are common as well.

Rwandans traditionally eat food in public settings only for ceremonial purposes, but otherwise eat only in the home. In recent years, the taboo on eating in public has diminished significantly, and restaurants have appeared in most urban areas. While the system of clans has diminished sharply in importance in Rwanda, most Rwandans will still not eat the totemic animals associated with their clans.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Important occasions in Rwanda always involve the ceremonial consumption of alcohol and food, but full meals are never served. People in attendance at a wedding or funeral are formally served a piece of meat and something else to eat, usually a roasted potato. A pot of sorghum beer is placed in the center of the room with numerous reed straws, and participants come forward to partake. Calabashes of banana beer are passed through the crowd.

It is also customary to serve people food and drink when they visit a home. Refusing to partake of offered food or drink is considered a grave insult. Hosts typically sip from drinks and taste the food first before passing them to the guests to show that they are safe for consumption and have not been poisoned. Visitors are often presented with food as gifts to take with them at the conclusion of their visits.

***Basic Economy.***Rwanda has an overwhelmingly agrarian economy. Most residents live largely from subsistence farming, growing some coffee on the side as a means of earning income. The level of industrialization remains extremely low.



*A Batwa holds up his identity card, which notes his ethnic origin. The Batwa have been subject to much discrimination in Rwanda.*

***Land Tenure and Property.***Most Rwandans own the land that they work. Traditionally, all land was formally held by the king and rights to the land were distributed to subjects by the local chiefs, but in practice, Rwandans controlled their own land and passed it down as an inheritance to their male children. Private land ownership was formalized during the colonial period and continued as a general practice. [Overpopulation](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Overpopulation.html) and related poverty have led to land accumulation by a limited elite and the emergence of a class of landless poor, but most rural residents, even the very poor, own at least some of the fields they work.

***Commercial Activities.***With almost no natural resources other than land, no access to the ocean, and extremely dense population, Rwanda's economic possibilities are extremely limited. Coffee has been the most important export, followed by other agricultural products such as tea and pyrethrum. Since the 1970s, Rwanda's economy has been heavily dependent upon foreign economic assistance. Foreign aid has financed the construction of roads, water and electrical systems, and the development of new economic ventures, most recently flowers for export. These ventures have generally benefitted only a limited elite associated with the government, while doing little to address the growing poverty of the masses.

***Major Industries.***Rwanda has developed a few small industries to meet local demands for products such as bottled beer, soap, and fabric, but these provide little employment and contribute little to the economy.

***Trade.***Coffee is the country's primary export, along with tea, which is grown on large estates in areas of high elevation, and pyrethrum, a type of chrysanthemum grown as a natural insecticide. Since the 1990–1994 war, Rwanda has become more involved in international trade with Uganda and Congo. Rwanda has become a major transport center for gold, diamonds, and other commodities mined in Congo.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Historians have described the pre-colonial division between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa as both a class and a caste division, though neither term is wholly accurate. Like caste divisions, one's group determined to some extent one's occupation, with Hutu engaged more in cultivation, Tutsi in raising livestock, and Twa in hunting and a few other activities such as making ceramics. The occupational lines were not, however, strictly enforced, as Hutu could own cattle and goats and most Tutsi engaged in at least some cultivation. The terms may be somewhat closer to class labels, because there clearly was a status distinction between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa, with Tutsi at the top of the social hierarchy and Twa at the bottom. Each group had a specific socially proscribed public role, symbolized by distinct functions in public rituals.

The association between [ethnic identity](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Ethnic_group.html) and class has broken down since independence. Since Hutu took control of the government, those Hutu with access to power were able to use their positions to enrich themselves and accumulate cattle and land, traditional signs of wealth. While most Hutu remained poor, a small Hutu elite was able to flourish. Without access to political power, Tutsi lost most opportunities for enrichment. With the change in government in 1994, Tutsi once again gained access to economic opportunities. Many Tutsi returning from Uganda or elsewhere were able to bring capital with them, and they have been able to use their international connections to engage in trade and other economic activities.

Despite the changing position of Hutu and Tutsi, the Twa have remained fixed at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Twa have almost no political power and remain the poorest segment of society. Twa are generally despised by Hutu and Tutsi alike, who regard them as dirty and dishonest. Whereas intermarriage between Hutu and Tutsi is common, it is extremely rare between Twa and other groups.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Historically, social status was symbolized through the possession of cattle, the primary sign of wealth in Rwanda. In fact, Hutu families that acquired sufficient cattle and were able to take clients in the cattle vassalage system would eventually have their status changed and come to be known as Tutsi, whereas Tutsi who lost their cattle and clients would eventually be considered Hutu. Although ownership of cattle is no longer associated with ethnic identity, it remains an important symbol of status. Other historic symbols of high social status, such as elaborate hair styles and distinctive dress, are no longer in practice. Social status in contemporary Rwanda is reflected in the knowledge of French or English, which demonstrates a degree of education, and in the possession of consumer goods such as vehicles and televisions. Twa are identified in part by their distinctive patterns of speech; while Kinyarwanda is generally spoken using three tones, Twa speak Kinyarwanda with two.

Political Life

***Government.***Rwanda has a powerful president, assisted by a multiparty cabinet and a prime minister. The national assembly and the judiciary have little independent power in practice. The country is divided into twelve regions, known as prefectures, each led by a prefect named by the president. The prefectures are divided into communes, led by burgomasters, and the communes into sectors. In 1999, local elections were held throughout Rwanda for the first time in a decade, but the level of competition was constrained by continuing political repression. The government promised presidential and legislative elections within five years.

The current political system evolved from the single-party state implemented by President Habyarimana in 1975. Under pressure from a prodemocracy movement and from the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), multiparty politics was legalized in 1991, the office of prime minister implemented, and a multiparty "government of national unity," including ministers from all the major political parties, installed. The August 1993 Arusha Peace Accords between the RPF and the government stipulated a continuation of the system of coalition government. The [Arusha Accords](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Arusha_Accords.html) are the basis for the current government structure, though the current government excludes Habyarimana's political party because of its involvement in the 1994 genocide.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***With its long history of royal rule and social status divisions, Rwanda has strong hierarchical political traditions. Relations with politicians, like other social relations, are highly regulated by status roles. Common Rwandans are expected to show deference to their politicians, whose positions give them social status. In exchange for deference and loyalty, politicians are expected to provide their constituents with services and opportunities. Political officials must in turn show deference and loyalty to their political superiors and help to create popular support for the government or risk losing their positions.

While public political relations are formal and deferential, behind the scenes Rwandan politics has long been an arena of clandestine plotting and intrigue. Various clans competed for power in the royal court as alliances shifted and groups sought to increase their power through spying and assassination. These traditions of political intrigue have continued under the republican regimes, with rivals for power secretly plotting the demise of rulers and coup attempts common. Such duality can be seen at the grassroots level, where public deference by citizens may mask private resistance and disobedience.

***Social Problems and Control.***Traditionally in Rwanda, the local community played the primary role in maintaining social order. When crimes were committed or disputes arose, a council of elders would convene to reach a fair settlement in a process known as *agacaca*.



*A member of the RFP loads a mortar as crowds watch the frontline. The Rwandan political system is dominated by the military.*

The colonial rulers suppressed this system, while implementing a Western legal system. Nevertheless, informal local controls on behavior remained important, in part because the use of the legal system for political purposes undermined public confidence in it. Political authorities have frequently used informal means of repression against opponents, such as civilian militia, to maintain their power. In the early 1990s, for example, as the Habyarimana regime lost public support, soldiers, police, and civilian groups targeted opposition groups for arrest, torture, and assassination. The regime promoted anti-Tutsi rhetoric in the hopes of attracting support from Hutu. The regime arrested Tutsi and began to organize anti-Tutsi violence, which ultimately culminated in the genocide that took place from April to July 1994.

The Rwandan Patriotic Front took power through force in July 1994, leaving problematic legacies of the ethnic violence and war. As a mostly Tutsi movement, the RPF had difficulty gaining the support of the mostly Hutu population and thus used extensive force to maintain order. Immediately after taking power, the RPF began to arrest people suspected of involvement in the genocide and within a few years placed over 100,000 people in prison. Many critics claimed that many of those in prison were innocent and that the regime was more interested in establishing control than in honestly seeking justice. The RPF, like its predecessor in power, also used force against the civilian population. The government recently initiated a program to renew the *agacaca*system, but the program did not receive substantial local support.

***Military Activity.***At least since the 1973 coup by army chief Juvénal Habyarimana, the military has been a dominant force in Rwandan political life. The prominence of the military increased markedly after the 1990 RPF invasion. Since the victory of the RPF rebel movement in the war in 1994, the military has dominated the political system, even though it remains officially a civilian regime.

Many RPF military officials hold positions in government ministries, and most observers consider them the real power in government offices. (Paul Kagame, who served simultaneously as head of the army and vice president, became president in 2000.) Officials who disagree with the RPF leadership, particularly the core of Tutsi officers around Kagame, are removed from office.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

Social assistance in Rwanda has traditionally been provided by family members and neighbors,



*Rwandan mothers and their children in Kigali. Children are a symbol of wealth.*

though Christian churches have gradually taken on an increasing role in providing welfare assistance. Beginning in the 1970s, Rwanda began to receive substantial bilateral and multilateral development assistance. Since the 1994 war, hundreds of international nongovernmental organizations have also become involved in relief and development efforts. Despite these programs, Rwanda remains among the ten poorest countries in the world.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Many of Rwanda's historic social organizations were eliminated either by the colonial regime or the collapse of the monarchy. Today, religious groups are the most important [nongovernmental organizations](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Non_governmental_organization.html) in Rwanda. Christian churches sponsor not only many religious associations but also other social groups, such as women's groups, youth organizations, and farmers' cooperatives. Numerous economic groups, such as rotating credit societies, have been founded in the past two decades to help people cope with the serious poverty in the country. Since the 1994 genocide, a number of organizations for widows and orphans also have been created. While nongovernmental organizations have become increasingly important in recent years, the level of group membership and activity in Rwanda remains relatively low.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Agricultural work is divided between women and men. Men clear the land and assist women in breaking the soil, while women engage in most of the day-to-day farming activities, such as planting, weeding, and harvesting. Men bear the primary responsibility for overseeing livestock, assisted by youths who act as shepherds. Men also do heavy jobs around the house, such as construction, while women are responsible for maintaining the household, raising children, and preparing food. Formal nonfarm employment in Rwanda is dominated by men, while women often participate in informal nonfarm economic activities, such as market trading.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***In precolonial Rwanda—even as most positions of public authority were reserved for men—women enjoyed a modicum of political and economic power, as exemplified by the powerful position of queen mother. The relative position of women eroded during the colonial period and never fully recovered. Women in contemporary Rwanda hold few political positions and have limited economic power, as seen in the difficulties women have in inheriting land and property. Many women's associations have attempted to increase the status of women in recent years, with little apparent success.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Marriage is considered the most basic social institution in Rwanda, and the pressure to marry and have children is quite heavy. Unlike in the past, most couples today select their own mates, though approval of the family is expected. Marriage across ethnic lines between Hutu and Tutsi is relatively common.

Polygamy, once extensively practiced, has become uncommon except in some rural areas, such as the northwest. The decline in polygamy has been accompanied with a sharp increase in levels of divorce and remarriage.

Women bearing children out of wedlock were once punished by banishment or death. [Illegitimacy](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Legitimacy__law_.html) remains strongly stigmatized, though it is also relatively common.



*Produce for sale at the Cyangnu Market. Potatoes, beans, bananas, and sorghum are the most common Rwandan foods.*

***Domestic Unit.***Rwandans consider children a sign of wealth, and bearing children is an important social duty. As a result, Rwanda has the highest rate of fecundity in the world, and Rwandan families are generally quite large. Rwandan families typically live in single-family compounds consisting of several buildings surrounded by a hedge or fence. Each wife (if there is more than one) typically has her own house in the compound, as do elderly parents. The husband's extended family typically lives in close proximity on the same hill or on a nearby hill. The wife's family may also live nearby or may be from further away, but both the husband's and wife's kin have important socially defined relations with the family.

***Inheritance.***Upon a father's death or retirement from active labor, his land and property are traditionally divided between his sons. The eldest surviving son is expected to take care of his mother and any unmarried sisters after his father's death. While wives and daughters have not formally been forbidden from inheriting, in practice inheritance by women has been difficult. In recent years, inheritance law has been revised to allow women to inherit more easily.

***Kin Groups.***Clan groupings historically have been important social relationships in Rwanda, but their significance has declined over the past century. Clan affiliations were passed down from father to children and cut across ethnic lines, with each clan including Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa. Competition between clans for political power was a major source of conflict in pre-colonial Rwanda. Today, clans serve little purpose beyond helping to define marriage partners, since people continue to be expected to marry outside their clans.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***The mother plays the primary part in caring for infants, but she is assisted by other female relatives and by her older female children. Women generally carry their children on their backs for at least the first year, or until they bear another child.

***Child Rearing and Education.***The mother has the primary responsibility for child rearing and education. Her eldest brother, the maternal uncle, also plays an important part in overseeing the moral development and socialization of the children, ensuring that they learn social traditions. The state has assumed the responsibility for providing formal education for children, though only about 60 percent of children ever attend school. Even the small required fees are too much for many families to afford.

Children continue to be named in a public ceremony eight days after their births, but many other [initiation rites](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Rite_of_passage.html) are now rare. Tutsi children were once sent to the royal court for training and initiation, but this practice was abolished along with the monarchy. Few children are now initiated into the Lyangombe and Nyabingi sects.

***Higher Education.***Rwanda puts little emphasis on higher education. Less than 10 percent of Rwandans attend high school, and another small portion attends technical training schools. A very small percentage of the population continues on to university. Rwanda has one national university based in Butare, with branches in Kigali and Ruhengeri. In the past decade, several small private colleges have also been established.

Etiquette

With its long history of hierarchical social relations, Rwandan culture puts great emphasis on practices of etiquette that demonstrate respect and emphasize social rank both inside and outside the family. Within the family, chairs are traditionally reserved for men, while other family members sit on mats on the floor. Men eat first, with women and children eating after. Visitors are given the best chairs and the first choice of food and drink.

Rwandans have an elaborate system of salutation that varies depending on the relative social rank and familiarity of the greeters. Rwandans almost always shake hands upon encountering someone. When greeting someone of higher rank, a person extends his or her right hand while placing the left hand on the right arm in a sign of deference. Close friends and others of equal rank may embrace, holding one another by the shoulders and brushing their heads together first on one side then on the other.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Christianity has become a central part of Rwandan culture. More than 60 percent of the population are Catholics, and another 30 percent are Protestants, with the largest Protestant churches including Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Free Methodists, and Baptists. Many Rwandans credit the Catholic Church with having supported the Hutu rise to power in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the church has thus gained great influence and public support among Hutu. With the demise of the monarchy, most of the associated religious rituals ended, and Christian rituals have come to take their places.

At the same time, most Rwandan Christians continue to participate in certain indigenous religious practices as well. Veneration of ancestors remains widespread, with most Rwandans continuing to have traditional funerals and other traditional rites for the dead. Indigenous healers remain common as well. Two secret societies that worship ancestral heroes, known as Kubandwa sects, are less common today than in the past but are nevertheless widespread. The Nyabingi sect is found in the north of the country near the Ugandan border, while the Lyangombe sect is found in other parts of the country.

***Religious Practitioners.***Both Nyabingi and Lyangombe have priests associated with their worship, but these figures have little public importance today. Instead, the main religious leaders of Rwanda are Christian clerics. The Catholic bishops and leaders of Protestant churches are prominent national figures with considerable political influence, and pastors and priests are important local figures.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***The Kubandwa sects of Nyabingi and Lyangombe are secret societies that induct new members through initiation. Families experiencing difficulties of some sort will often choose to have a child initiated into the sect. The Lyangombe ceremonies are conducted outdoors in a clearing around a type of tree whose red flowers, tradition holds, represent Lyangombe's blood. Nyabingi ceremonies are also practiced outdoors. The level of secrecy of both sects has been increased because of the hostility they have faced first from colonial authorities and subsequently from Christian officials. Many Christian churches penalize members they find to have participated in one of the Kubandwa ceremonies.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Rwandans believe that the spirit continues after death, and they see their families as including not only the living, but those who have come before and those who will come in the future. Showing respect to dead family members is considered extremely important. Failing to appease the spirits of dead ancestors through appropriate rituals and offerings can lead the ancestors to neglect their families and allow evil spirits to inflict harm.

Medicine and Health Care

Rwandans practice both Western and indigenous forms of health care. Christian churches have built numerous hospitals and health centers, but many Rwandans continue to visit indigenous healers, who combine herbal medicines with spiritual cures.



*Rwandan refugees cross the Kagera River from Tanzania. In 1999 about 700,000 Tutsi refugees returned to Rwanda from abroad.*

Rwandan indigenous medicine emphasizes the flow of bodily fluids. In Rwandan culture, no conceptual distinction is made between physical poisoning and enchantment, and poisoning is regarded as a major cause of illness.

Secular Celebrations

Prior to the 1994 genocide, Rwanda had holidays celebrating the 1959 revolution and the 1973 coup that brought President Habyarimana to power. These celebrations involved public gatherings and military parades. Since the rise of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, these holidays have been discontinued and new holidays have been created to commemorate the genocide and honor those killed. The most important holiday for Rwandan families is New Year's Day. Families traditionally gather for a meal and exchange of gifts on New Year's Day.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***The Rwandan government provides very little support for the arts. The government supports a national dance troop based in Nyanza, but there are few other nationally funded artistic groups.

***Literature.***Rwanda has little literary tradition. The royal court had a tradition of oral history, but this tradition has not been continued.

***Graphic Arts.***Rwanda has few graphic arts. The main ones are decorative arts, primarily baskets and pottery. There are no traditions of carving or painting.

***Performance Arts.***Music and dance have been the most important artistic expressions in Rwanda. Both instrumental and vocal music have strong traditions in Rwanda. While traveling instrumentalists are no longer common as they once were, recorded music and public performances in clubs have become common.

The tradition of dance in Rwanda is particularly rich. The training of young Tutsi men at the royal court included training in a form of martial dance that involved drumming and demonstrations of prowess by individual dancers. This *intore*dancing has been preserved since the demise of the monarchy through a national dance troupe, and the tradition is widely taught in schools. Other types of dances were important in public ceremonies and continue to be performed at weddings and other celebrations.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

The physical and social sciences were weak in Rwanda even before the genocide, but they were completely decimated by the violence. Rwanda is heavily dependent upon foreign scholars and researchers for scientific advances and social analysis.

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—T IMOTHY L ONGMAN

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_1)

**Brooke**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website has really helped me witha report i am doing! Thanks!

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_2)

**amelia woltman**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very nice and helpful. i would of liked to see a printable version. but im not that computer savy yet. so it could be there.thanks amelia

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_3)

**Vinanti**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much! This info has helped me understand so much more about Rwanda and the different races/ethnicities.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_4)

**Bianca**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I really like this website. I had to do a French project on Rwanda and it really helped me on almost all i had to know!! You really explain things and you give a lot of information. Thanks a lot!

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_5)

**melissa bosotn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

that is so sad what these people go through to live it shouldnt be that bad down there i think that is so sad i hope that you guys get help good luck with your lifes love you all  
  
  
  
  
love melissa

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_6)

**sabrina**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I LOVE THIS WEBSITE. it tells so much. it gave so much inforamation.i feel so bad .THANKS FOR THE INFO FOR MY REPORT.!!!!!!!!!!!!!

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_7)

**drew**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THanks alot! this helps me a lot, i am doing a report on rawanda and this is a very good resource of information and i thank u so so so much.

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_8)

**Shirley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am doing a paper in college on Rwanda. This article has much more than I anticipated. Thank you so much. The information is wonderful. Keep up the wonderful work.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_9)

**Kaz**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am teaching a couple of children who are refugees from Rwanda, and are only starting to learn English. This article has helped me to understand a little of their culture and background. Very informative and comprehensive. Thanks :)

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_10)

**Trinity**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oh my gosh, you guys saved my life! This one page helps out so much! I had a project in French about French speaking countries, I picked Rwanda, and stupidly waited until the last minute to get the information! Five topics at the least, ten sentences per topic. A classmate, and my best friend, told me about this website. Thank you sooo much! Another great thing is that you make the context understandable. I'm definitley going to recommend this website to others, and I will use it again in the future! Keep up the good work.  
~~Love and peace,  
Trinity

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_11)

**carmen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey! thanks for the info! im going to rwanda this summer, and this website was very informative! thanks

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_12)

**eLsy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thx a lot, this website really do helped me...it helped me to complete all the facts i needed to know about Rwanda...!

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_13)

**eLsy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i was asked to pick a country in africa and i chose Rwanda.. This website really do helped me to finish my report! it had all of the info i needed..! Thx!

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_14)

**Richard Blackmon**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THis is very informational, I think it should be a popular black history site.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_15)

**Jena**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for this info it really helps my prject about Rwanda!

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_16)

**brittney corpral**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it has alot of imformation that i need!!!!!!!!!!!!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_17)

**COCO the monkey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank u very much!  
this is very important and good information!  
i thank all of you who have taken your time out to write all these true important facts!  
have a nice day

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_18)

**prince**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oh my gosh, you guys saved my life! This one page helps out so much! I had a project in French about French speaking countries, I picked Rwanda, and stupidly waited until the last minute to get the information! Five topics at the least, ten sentences per topic. A classmate, and my best friend, told me about this website. Thank you sooo much! Another great thing is that you make the context understandable. I'm definitley going to recommend this website to others, and I will use it again in the future! Keep up the good work.  
~~Love and peace,  
TrinityTHanks alot! this helps me a lot, i am doing a report on rawanda and this is a very good resource of information and i thank u so so so much.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_19)

**janice**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very valued and great information. also very explicit and great use of context b/c it made it be much easier and clearer view points of which were showed on the article from above. thanks, your work and useful information in article makes life a bit easier pour moi. thanks again. take care n see you next time.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_20)

**Kendi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Ohhhh my goodness, this web site helped me soooo muc! My teacher assigned me a project in French class and this website is a life saver! THANKS!!!!!

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_21)

**joegreen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks a million!! my communications professor assigned a group project on rwandan culture. this page has EVERYTHING i need for my parer.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_22)

**Jovenal Nsengimana**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very good article and helpful, i have a presentation about my culture (Rwandan culture) and i have got all the information i needed.  
  
Its very important article especially for we young generation who grew up in foreign countries and did not get chance to learn form our culture with in the country.Thank very much for this information.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_23)

**Elodie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

FANTASTIC, WOW IT GAVE SO MUCH INFORMATION.THANKS REALLY...P.S.I DON'T SPEAK VERY WELL ENGLISH

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_24)

**Shyla**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website was very helpful, but I couldn't find a lot of information about the Holiday Traditions.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_25)

**Tenysha**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Loved the work, it gave me , everything i needed for my prodject. Thanks

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_26)

**devi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

information on Rwanda for socs 350. Gender and Culture differences

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_27)

[**holiday chock**](mailto:holidaychock%20[at]%20me%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great site, great hard to find information on the people of Rwanda.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_28)

[**MeGgIeO**](mailto:megonator2193%20[at]%20aim%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this really helped me with my project for school, thanks! without this i would be failing(:  
  
MeGgIeO

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_29)

[**Chao**](mailto:patmchao%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A helpful site indeed especially now when am planning to travel to Rwanda from Kenya.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_30)

[**Francois Musonera**](mailto:francois%20[dot]%20musonera%20[at]%20huhs%20[dot]%20org)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I escaped Rwanda in 1994 following the genocide. I have since gone onto school, and currently, teach Spanish at Hartford Union High School in Hartford, Wisconsin.  
  
Many people ask me about my experiences in Rwanda and the 1994 genocide. I am in the process of putting together information that I hope to publish into a book for junior high or high school students telling them about the genocide.  
  
As I have put my materials together, I came upon some pictures on this website that I would like to include in what I hope will be a book.  
  
I am writing to ask permission to use those pictures in the book. If you are unable to give that permission, if possible, will you provide me with the original source that I may ask permission from them.  
  
Please let me know if you have additional questions. I look forward to hearing from you.  
  
Thank you now for your help in this matter.  
  
Sincerely,  
  
Francois Musonera

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_31)

**AfricanLady**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The content is presented in a very structured way but unfortunately throughout, it promotes the risk of one (chosen) side of the story and this is not fair for a nation(...)To those who are writing reports or informing themselves about Rwanda, please keep this in mind.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_32)

[**hayley**](mailto:ghg%20[at]%20gfgr%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

it is really good.got everything that i needed for school. thankyou very much

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_33)

[**jessie**](mailto:sisi199929%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this site has the best informations about Rwanda, it has everything! thanx you

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_34)

[**Roy Kagwa**](mailto:roy%20[dot]%20kagwa%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for the article, it was very helpful in my research.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_35)

[**Donathe**](mailto:dompundu25%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20fr)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm a teacher in secondary school(Rwanda) where i have to teach political science. as a young teacher,this article helps me concerning how the gender based on the culture was during precolonial period.

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_36)

[**Kassy**](mailto:kassandramelton32%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This really helped my group with our project in History. We have to do a report on refugees from Rwanda coming to the Quad Cities. We had to find out a lot about Rwanda's background and their culture and everything you could possibly think of. We couldn't find percentages, and when I found this page it was as if the angels sung! We've been looking for your page for over a week now. And we only had a page done. Now we have 3! So thanks so much! With love, Kassy, Joe, Djenaba, and Easton.

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_37)

[**nicole :)**](mailto:nicole%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this was amazing and helped me in so many ways and i loved everything about it! i had a very big project and this gave me most of my info

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_38)

[**laulian**](mailto:bulunda%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i want to know the orignal of tutsi after been at rwanda was where?

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_39)

[**Victor Titus**](mailto:vlex4luv2010%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i really wish to have this site always online because it is so very intresting learning from it

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_40)

[**Anonymous**](mailto:carodlh%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I like this websites content and the organization. It has useful information that is sort of hidden for the Rwandan culture and lifestyle. You have to learn about the country prior to reading this page to really understand what is the message of each section. I do have one concern though. I had been using another helpful site (Nations Encyclopedia) that I found had a very similar in format to this one. I hate plagiarism and if someone could inform me about the similarity; that would be great.

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_41)

[**Sylvia Uhirwa**](mailto:suhirwa%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi there, I am Rwandan and I have read this article with great interest, it has a good informative history.My comments are; 1)Culture evolves, Rwandan culture has changed so much for the better for instance on the status for women and higher education for the Rwandans, please endeavor to provide full information especially for the benefit of people wanting to know about Rwanda.  
2) I believe that the statistics given in this article should be revised as well  
3)'A Batwa holds up his identity card, which notes his ethnic origin. The Batwa have been subject to much discrimination in Rwanda.' This statement needs to be re-structured! Today, no Rwandan is identified by ethnicity!  
  
Thanks.

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_42)

**tyler jackson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website helped me alot it is really imformational and i think it displays great detail

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_43)

[**Callum Henderson**](mailto:callum%20[at]%20comfortrwanda%20[dot]%20org%20[dot]%20uk)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The paragraph on women and politics appears a bit askew. Rwanda has the highest proportion of women in parliament throughout the world and a very advanced policy of ensuring women fill important positions in government. contrary to the impression given in the paragraph women play an extremely active role in the governance of Rwanda.

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_44)

[**farhanna**](mailto:hoodo%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this helped so much right at the last minute thank you very very much. easy to understand aswell :)))

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_45)

[**Ariel**](mailto:ariel%20[dot]%20moye%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was so helpful! I am doing a paper on Prejudice and Discrimination, it told me more than I needed to know! Very interesting and I like to know about other ethnic groups and how they live there lives! It is amazing how they started out formed a political system and now they are going on with there lives and still holding on to tradition! Why can the people of the United States not do the things like other cultures to through out the world. Culture and tradition changes everyday around here some time I wonder who has the most stable county!

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_46)

**Belinda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for helping me in my project at college

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_47)

[**shamy**](mailto:shamypierre%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20fr)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thank you so much for helping me in my report about Rwanda. tkx

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_48)

**Hannah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I cant find the answer to my question i dont like this website!

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_49)

**tagane joseph**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

am very happy with that information but in relation to that what are the impact of political socialization to uganda?

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_50)

[**chrisantus**](mailto:chrisantae%20[at]%20rocketmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i like how the message was brought up in a very clear way

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_51)

**Niky E**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Provided more than adequate information for an assignment on traditional male and female roles in Rwanda. Thanks

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_52)

**Umuhozi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a good resource of information for anyone is new to Rwanda history. Many online writings are bias but this one isn't!! Well done to you guys who wrote it

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_53)

**Erica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I really like this website,but today there is big change compare to the past.this is was the past how about today?How Rwanda look like today?  
thanks for all this Information.

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_54)

[**Lidie**](mailto:nilie_824%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

great work! need more on the social welfare system on Rwanda for my report tho. thanks a lot for the info.

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_55)

**Francine Mukandori**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Can I please have a copy of this article, I am writting my dissertation about women impowerment in rwanda. I am a Masters student in sociology at the University of Johannesbourg.Please help me  
Thank you very much for your support.

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_56)

**immaculee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks,you help me to talk about religion rwanda culture with confidence in my research because it very clear here.

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_57)

[**Samuel Chiromo**](mailto:sjchiromo%20[at]%20vodamail%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20za)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi Thanks for the information, I`m living in South Africa and I`m currently in the process of marriage with my Rwandan life partner, but I`ve never been in Rwanda before. How does the culture of Rwanda accommodate a non-Rwandan marrying a Rwandan...?  
  
Can you please give me some guidelines..?

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_58)

**Uraia Toribau**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi! I wish to thank the people of Rwanda for the provision of Culture, religions and beliefs. I am representing Rwanda as a Country of my choice during this MODEL United Nation Debate on issues affecting our Global

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_59)

**Matthew M**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for all info really helped my project on Rwanda :)

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_60)

**Sky**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks! This site really helped on a project i am doing! :)

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_61)

**arnold**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I couldn't find what.I needed.What are the achievements of catholicswho came to Rwanda?But any way it was nice iformation

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_62)

**shammy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks a mili! atleast i now have a clue on what to do. :)(:

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_63)

**Hannah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much for all this awesome info, God bless you!!

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_64)

**pacy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is really amazing i liked so much! thx a lot!

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_65)

**Angela Mandie-Filer**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is very informative indeed. Many aspects of Rwanda especially social responsibilities and women's place in society and gender roles and responsibilities are very similar to the situation in my country Papua New Guinea. But please also document the amazing changes being facilitated by the Women Parliamentarians to achieve gender equality in Rwanda.  
Thanks for the information.

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_66)

**morgan kane**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks a lot this Helped alot A+ here I come YES. this is a great Website. RWANDA IS MUCH MORE EASYER TO UNDER STAND NOW.  
:)

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_67)

**Fielding**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you!My World history teacher assigned me Hutu as my culture group to research! I'm gonna go back and look for the clothing though.

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_68)

**J.Mohan John Farrar**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A good report about Rwanda. Now I am interested to visit Rwanda to see how best I can be of help to the youth to create jobs among themselves. As a trained person in micro enterprise and self employment, I see certainly that there is scope for the youth to start their own enterprises.

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_69)

**JJ**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks so much! this site has been super helpful for a UN project that i'm doing!  
My team won the UN security council role project that we did!  
Thank you so much!  
  
- JJ

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_70)

**arin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

For me, this site is like a one stop shop. Great info. thank you very much!!

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_71)

**savannah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This page of information really helps me and my partner with our science project

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_72)

**Moses**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The information given above is of great help because i had the urge to know how the war affected culture and population distribution, now am aware.  
Thank you very much

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_73)

**Scarlett**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This really helped me. I had to do a project on Rwanda. This saved my life! Tysm.

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_74)

**Jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow, I must acknowledge that this is a very informative piece of information. I never knew that there are actually three ethnic groups in Rwanda because the Batwa are almost never mentioned. Thanks you so much.

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_75)

**umwali kahindo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

as somedy born in congo and whose ancestors made congolese during the partition of Congo in 1885, I feel bad to see that my people have not been mentioned as though they have never existed. add to your list Kinyarwanda-speaking congolese who live in masisi and Rutshuru-those commonely known as the banyarutshuru and the bagogwe.

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_76)

**jessy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THIS INFO IS VERY IMPORTANT CONSIDERING THAT MY DREAM COUNTRY AND WORK PLACE IS RWANDA...LOVE YOU RWANDA..MY LAND...THANKS TO YOU FOR THIS INFORMATION,BECAUSE ITS EYE OPENING INFO AND ONE IS ABLE TO LEARN A LOT ABOUT THIS AWESOME COUNTRY.ONCE AGAIN THANKS..

[**77**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_77)

**Angel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm a South African lady,I'm in a relationship with a Rwandan guy. I would like to know more about the Rwanda culture when a guy introduce his girlfriend to his ancestors.  
What to do  
When to do  
&  
Where to be done  
I will be very much happy if you can respond as soon as possible.  
I thank u in advance.

[**78**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_78)

**amanda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is great. but you need to add more to it cause I cant find info,.

[**79**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_79)

**amanda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is great. but you need to add more to it cause I cant find info,.

[**80**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_80)

**joan uwera**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

am very greatful towards this program for rilly you have done a great work towards the promotion of teaching us about our culture and extending studies .

[**81**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_81)

**marlene**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very good information keep up the good work and now i see where everyone gets there information for there french project.

[**82**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_82)

**neway**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

very good information keep up the good work and thanks for all

[**83**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_83)

**agnes**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

was useful thank you very much . Rwanda land of thousand hill am proud to be one of your people no matter where you came from your future is still great

[**84**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_84)

**sideways14**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey there is great because it's got a lot of information  
Rwanda is the best saddest country i want to go to Rwanda and help the poor children food or clothes

[**85**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_85)

[**andre william**](mailto:willandre310%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The culture of our country is now going so decreasely! I'ld like to invite our minister of culture to look for young people especially in the artist

[**86**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_86)

**Karlee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks! This helped me a lot on my project for Rwanda!

[**87**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_87)

**Lomekwi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice article. Possible getting more Literature about Tutsi way of Food production and something too on Body image in relation to food consumption. I love Rwanda.

[**88**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_88)

**martin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank u so much for this insight about Rwanda. Though the piece is quit old, a decade or more so past after it was written, many things have gone through very tremendous changes for the better. H.E Kagame paul, is the greatest states men Rwanda will leave to remember for centuries. uniting a country from genocide is phenomeno, equality to women in all areas, healthy centers and schools development although there still challenges with the quality of services which will improve with time, healthy insurance for all, practical schools and many universities being established, good use of donor funds with minimal corruption, infrastructure development of a rapid scale, accountability of managers, peace both day and night throughout the country to mention but a few... the list continues. Visit Rwanda today, you will be inspired by what will welcome you. But progress still ongoing. I have moved Africa and Abroad, you will be surprised by what you will find today. the cleanest and organised city far more organised than some of my visited cities in china or Italy.

[**89**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_89)

**Jack Mutara**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am a Rwanda born and raised in Uganda. I have always wanted to know more about my Country and here it's on this site that I have my answers. I trying to know who my ancestors were beyond my father. Thank you very much!

[**90**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_90)

**August**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks a lot this article helped me with an essay i'm doing for school

[**91**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_91)

**John kanyaruguru**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am Rwandan, this article helps me to know some information on Rwandan history. Thanks.

[**92**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_92)

**Annonymous**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Is this about Rwanda now or during the Rwandan genocide?

[**93**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_93)

**ndayambaje boniface dali**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i would like to know more about the political system and organisation of the ancient Rwandan kingdom.  
thanks.

[**94**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_94)

**Davidson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for the great work in compiling such a wonderful information... though it will need updating in various areas, alternatively indicate the compilation date so one may not confuse it with the current status on ground!

[**95**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_95)

**James Bundi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for the detailed information here. After updating to the current social- economic and political scope, it shall be the best I have read about Rwanda.  
Regards.

[**96**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_96)

**Nsengiyumva**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This informations about Rwanda is okay but country keep developping so continue updates because now i think Rwanda is better than before.

[**97**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_97)

**Josh Babb**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This was a very good read. I am traveling to Rwanda this coming summer, and this provided invaluable cultural information that will give me a good basis of knowledge before I travel. I look forward to seeing many of these Rwandan traditions and cultural practices, as many of them differ greatly from those in America.

[**98**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_98)

**Chris**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Oh!You see it is very helpful. My work will be done well due to some information I will catch up here of course.

[**99**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_99)

**Aurora**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site has helped me with my project in history, thank you

[**100**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_100)

**Alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I give great thanks to whoever the absolute Giga-Chad wrote all of this public information is.

[**101**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html#Comments_101)

[**Stremove.com**](mailto:stremove%20[dot]%20com%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Immigration has brought with it new customs and traditions that in time will become woven into the fabric of what we call Swedish society. By the same token, the ‘new Swedes’ take up old Swedish traditions, and it is often the children who introduce them into the family. Daycare centres and schools exert a considerable influence in the social sphere. The result – at best – is cultural cross-fertilisation.

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" [Russia](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Russia.html)[Saint Kitts and Nevis](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html)

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1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Culture Name

The inhabitants of the two islands are referred to as Kittitians (or Kitticians) and Nevisians, respectively.

Orientation

***Identification.***Both islands were discovered by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the New World in 1493. Originally, Columbus named the larger island for his patron saint, Saint Christopher, but in the early seventeenth century, British settlers shortened the name to Saint Kitts. Columbus named the smaller neighboring island *Nuestra Señora de las Nieves*("Our Lady of the Clouds") because the [volcanic mountain](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Volcano.html) in its center usually was encircled by snowlike clouds. When the British arrived, they altered the spelling to Nevis.

***Location and Geography.***Two miles apart, Saint Kitts and Nevis are in the northern part of the Leeward Islands, approximately two hundred fifty miles (402 kilometers) southeast of Puerto Rico. Saint Kitts, the larger island, is twenty-three miles (thirty-seven kilometers) in its greatest length, with an area of sixty-eight square miles (176.8 square kilometers). Nevis is thirty-six square miles (93.6 square kilometers) in area. Formed by similar mountain-building forces, both islands have dormant volcanoes in their central regions. The capitals Basseterre (Saint Kitts) and Charlestown (Nevis) are ports that are involved in tourism.

***Demography.***The population has been estimated (1999) to be forty-four thousand, with thirty-five thousand on Saint Kitts and nine thousand on Nevis. However, many more Kittitians and Nevisians live abroad than inhabit the islands. Ninety-five percent of the populace consists of Afro-Caribbeans who are largely descendants of slaves imported to work on sugar plantations, with the remainder made up of descendants of British settlers and early and later migrants.

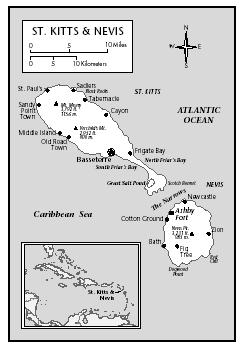
***Linguistic Affiliation.***All the inhabitants speak English, and all the Afro-Caribbean residents have access to a local dialect based partly on English and partly on several West African languages. English is the language of business, religion, and tourism and is the medium of instruction in schools. The local dialect, referred to as Kittitian on Saint Kitts and Nevisian on Nevis, is used in the family, at social gatherings, and among men socializing together. It also is employed by Nevisians to communicate with one another without being understood by tourists.

Family vacation packages

***Symbolism.***The eclectic nature of contemporary society on Saint Kitts/Nevis and the varied origins of the Afro-Caribbean populace militate against deeply held and widely shared cultural symbols. Both islands have traditional dances, music, garb, and tales, but neither one is committed to a constellation of symbols that could anchor a cultural identity. Instead, the richness and variety of the cultural background is celebrated in a series of festivals. The roots of those festivals go back to the seventeenth century, when they were often associated with Christmas and May Day celebrations. A strong association with Christmas remains, partly because of tradition and partly from the holiday visits of many Kittitians and Nevisians living elsewhere.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***The development of political independence was the final link in a process of increasing autonomy for the Afro-Caribbean population of Saint Kitts/Nevis that began in the early nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century, partly because whites feared the slave population, which outnumbered them nearly ten to one, slaves were treated harshly. Although forced to work long hours on sugar plantations, they managed to maintain limited gardens of their own. Some slaves escaped to the mountainous interior, where they set up small holdings and tried to succeed at farming and remain unnoticed. Over the years, former



*Saint Kitts and Nevis*

slaves established villages in parts of the interior not suitable for plantations. When emancipation began in 1834, there were well-established Afro-Caribbean villages capable of maintaining elements of their traditional culture and developing a complex web of social relations.

Most inhabitants of the islands engaged in basic agriculture and lived very simply. Religion, particularly the [Anglican](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Anglicanism.html) faith, played a major role in education and the formation of concepts of respectability, with an admixture of African traditions centering on mortuary practices and holiday celebrations. By the early twentieth century, the British colonial government provided free basic public education and some amenities. Still, the situation of most islanders remained one of poverty with comparatively little social stratification based on wealth. Members of society who could sustain an elite status generally were connected either to religion or to education, and they maintained some visible material goods, such as a house and furnishings.

In the 1950s, the elimination of sugar and cotton production and an assortment of agricultural problems led to increasing waves of emigration, largely to Great Britain, Commonwealth members, and other English-speaking countries. Emigration resulted in significant changes that were accelerated by political changes in the mid-1960s, when Great Britain established the associated state of Saint Kitts/Nevis, which became fully independent in 1983. Nevisians were unhappy with their connection to the numerically dominant Kittitians and agreed to independence only if they could retain the right to secede and have internal self-rule.

The lengthy economic decline left the islands in an unpromising position. Initial efforts to establish more productive agricultural and other pursuits involving manual labor were stymied by the strong preference of Kittitians and Nevisians for white-collar work. The development of tourism in the 1970s and the increasing ability of emigrants to send funds home have led to better economic circumstances on both islands, which maintain excellent public school systems, resulting in a literacy rate in excess of 90 percent, and good public health programs.

***National Identity.***The coat of arms appears to owe as much to colonial influence as its does to indigenous traditions.

The contemporary national identity is complex and strongly affected by emigration and the opportunities afforded by education. Emigration in the 1970s reduced the population. That trend seems likely to continue, as current population projections for the years 2000 and 2010 indicate a maintenance of the 1995 figure of thirty-nine thousand. Current estimates suggest that far more inhabitants live abroad than at home, by a factor of four or five to one. Kittitians and Nevisians abroad are employed in a wide range of positions that reflect their education. Nonetheless, they retain strong ties to their homes, visit frequently on holidays, especially on Christmas, and regularly send home money and goods. Family ties are strongly maintained through frequent visits. Many younger islanders look forward to completing their educations abroad and then taking up residence in a foreign country. The result is a complex identity rooted partly in place and tradition and partly in the wider world and educational accomplishment. Emigration makes the achievement of white-collar work ever more possible.

Family vacation packages

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Basseterre, the largest city on the islands, has eighteen thousand people, while Charlestown has an approximate population of 1,500. Both cities are seats of government and tourism and the major mercantile centers and ports of the islands. Both feature a combination of contemporary architecture mixed with colonial structures. Scattered throughout the islands, there are many fine buildings, often the homes of former plantation owners, some of which have been transformed into inns for tourists.

People usually live in towns and villages ranging from twenty to a few hundred residents in size. The villages often contain a general store and sometimes a post office and are characterized by groupings of houses that reflect kinship connections. Most of these village houses are fairly modest wood frame affairs, and the tropical clime obviates the need for complex insulation and weatherproofing. The largest problem faced by homeowners is the hurricanes that appear late in every summer.

House design usually includes a porch on which the occupants can observe passers by. Socializing occurs easily and frequently at home and in public settings. There is an expectation of and pressure for sociability, and adults try to be accessible. Men generally meet on street corners or frequent small bars, rum shops, and pubs where they can socialize. Women generally confine their interactions to social visits, shopping, and church, though chance encounters are always welcome. Sociability is a distinguishing characteristic of the islands and often is commented on by visitors.

There are good paved road systems totaling seventy-eight miles around each island, though some of the interior roads are either dirt or in poor repair. There are 4,500 automobiles on the islands, and far more people own cars than possess scooters or mopeds. The reason for this pattern seems to be status and the appearance of respectability.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***There are a variety of mixed dishes, including many that betray their off-islands origins, such as spaghetti, but there are also local culinary traditions. In addition to staples such as rice and beans, the islands are known for "goat water," a stew usually made from the neck bones and meat of goats. Accompanying most meals are a range of vegetables, especially squashes and peas, and hot sauces. While fresh fish are available, mutton or goat is the staple meat and is served in a variety of ways ranging from curried to creole style. Fried chicken is also popular, especially for entertaining guests. Beverages range from softdrinks to fruit juices to beer and rum. Of all these purchased drinks, beer is significantly the cheapest, as there is a brewery on Saint Kitts.

***Basic Economy.***Most coastal families maintain small gardens and a few chickens to round out the menu, but most people living along the more populous coast purchase their needs from general stores, and most of the goods are imported and expensive. Sugar production still accounts for a significant part of the income on Saint Kitts. Both islands produce a range of agricultural products for export, and Nevis has a small stock of cattle, most of which are exported.

Family vacation packages

The monetary unit is the Eastern Caribbean dollar, which is pegged to the U.S. dollar. The need to import many necessities, including foodstuffs, makes the cost of living high.

Both islands have enterprises that assemble electronics goods for export. In addition, there is significant production of beverages, beer, plastics, and ethanol. The biggest element in the current economy is clearly tourism, which accounts for approximate 53 percent of the national revenue. While locals own and run the great majority of the mercantile enterprises and many popular tourist locales, the largest resorts are owned by off-island concerns, principally American.

Social Stratification

With the exception of moneyed expatriates from America and Great Britain, the inhabitants do not have a significant class structure based on wealth. The major sociocultural concern of most islanders is to appear "respectable," meaning that one manages an acceptable appearance in possessions and in one's person and behaves in socially appropriate ways, as defined largely by cultural patterns originating in British colonial society. While poverty is inimical to respectability, wealth is not essential for it. Material possessions are important, but as demonstrations of respectability rather than of wealth. Education matters greatly; young people are serious about their studies, and good students are praised by adults and respected by their peers.

Political Life

***Government.***The islands are a constitutional monarchy with a single elected representative



*Masquerade dancers on Saint Kitts.*

body, the National Assembly. The government is headed by the prime minister, and for administrative purposes, the country is divided into fourteen parishes.

The most singular aspect of the government is that it is bifurcated. While the head of government is in Basseterre, as a condition of union, Nevis demanded internal self-rule. Thus, that island has its own assembly and its own elected premier. The increasing disenchantment of most Nevisians with their treatment by the central government has led to a movement for independence. Although Saint Kitts/Nevis is already the smallest country in the Western Hemisphere, in August 1998, Nevisians voted on [secession](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Secession.html). The 62 percent of the population that supported secession fell only 4 percent short of the two-thirds required.

***Social Problems and Control.***The United States and other countries in the Caribbean are concerned that the islands could come under increasing pressure from drug cartels. While there is very little crime against persons or property, in the last ten years there have been increasing problems, especially on Saint Kitts, with drug smugglers who wish to use the islands for transshipment to the United States. Both Saint Kitts and Nevis maintain small police forces that seldom carry arms. Saint Kitts also maintains a coastal watch program in an effort to impede drug smuggling. If the islands become independent of one another, many observers fear that their size would make them vulnerable to outside pressures for illegal activities.

Gender Roles and Statuses

Generally, gender roles owe far more to the pattern of the colonial British then to that of West Africa, with one exception. While the male status has more rights and privileges than the female, especially in the public arena, women have significant rights and, as they approach middle age, may even have authority. Some of the better known and more successful entrepreneurs and political figures are women.

During most of the period before independence, the "respectable" pattern was for men to be the breadwinners and women to tend children at home and confine their social activities to the church and the marketplace. However, many families were matricentric, with the woman and extended kin providing much of the material and affective needs of children. With increased education, women have found new ways to realize their potential and gain public respect.

Family vacation packages



*A man harvesting sugar cane. Most citizens are descendants of the slave labor population.*

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

***Marriage.***Marriage is undertaken as both a social responsibility and a sign of adulthood. The reasons given for marriage emphasize love, though parents pressure children, especially females, who are old enough to marry but are not involved in socializing. Sexual experimentation is reluctantly accepted, and that has resulted in 20 percent of the children on Saint Kitts/Nevis being born out of wedlock.

A newly married couple may reside with either set of parents at first but will prefer to live in their own domicile, though usually close to other relatives. With the high percentage of educated citizens living abroad, there are an increasing number of mixed marriages. However, the kinship ties between off-islanders and residents continue to be strong.

Socialization

***Child Rearing and Education.***Mothers are differentially involved in child care. Child rearing tends to be mild, with both males and females kept close until boys begin to explore at about school age. Both genders learn appropriate skills and are taught to respect their parents and elders.

Education is valued, and nearly all young people complete primary school. Most then attend secondary school system modeled on that of Great Britain, and a number of the better students obtain scholarships to study in the United States, Great Britain, or other Commonwealth countries.

Etiquette

Family vacation packages

Etiquette reflects the concept of respectability in which reciprocity and decorum define both inter-personal relations and social acceptability. It is based largely on colonial British models and relaxed only for close friends and family members.

Religion

Some 95 percent of islanders are Protestants, principally Anglican and Methodist, though there are a number of smaller Protestant sects. Religion remains a very important institution in the society and culture. It is a major vehicle for maintaining community solidarity and providing guidelines to and reinforcing the importance of respectable behavior.

While virtually all islanders identity themselves as Christians, many older and some younger islanders believe in *obeah*, a form of witchcraft in which an individual can be supernaturally harmed by another person for reasons ranging from a perceived wrong to simple envy.

Medicine and Health Care

Saint Kitts and Nevis have good health care with a sufficiency of doctors who are usually British or Canadian trained. There is a hospital on Saint Kitts and an infirmary on Nevis. Pharmaceutical services are widely available.

Secular Celebrations

Held in early August, Culturama is a celebration of traditional Nevisian culture in which music, arts, crafts, and dramatic presentations play dominant roles. It has proven to be a venue though which Nevisians can both expose the young to, and reaffirm pride in their cultural heritage.

The Arts and Humanities

***Graphic and Performance Arts.***There is a theater group on Saint Kitts and a society of craftspeople. On Nevis, there is a small dramatic society and theater in Charlestown, The Hamilton Arts Center,



Family vacation packages

*Two women cut hair outside a house on Saint Kitts Island.*

next to the [Alexander Hamilton](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Alexander_Hamilton.html) Museum. There are several reading societies and artists on the island, but little of an organized nature.

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—D OUGLAS R AYBECK

**Also read article about**[**Saint Kitts and Nevis**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Saint_Kitts_and_Nevis.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_1)

[**liz**](mailto:eborrelli19997%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i am doing a project on [st. Kitts](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Saint_Kitts.html) and i need to find famous people but the only one i could find is Erasmus James and i am required to have 3 is there any way you can help  
e-mail me asap eborrelli1997@aol.com

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_2)

[**j. nii adotey**](mailto:opensefo%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i would like you to send me e mail adresses of cultural organisations in [st. kitts and nevis](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Saint_Kitts_and_Nevis.html)

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_3)

**aunt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have a nephew who was stillborn (mother was 7 months along) in St. Kitts. This occurred on a Monday night and the mother said that at dawn (Tuesday morning) she buried him by the sea. She is from America. Is this something that is practiced in that area or is she full of it??  
  
Thank you!

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_4)

**aunt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I have a nephew who was stillborn (mother was 7 months along) in St. Kitts. This occurred on a Monday night and the mother said that at dawn (Tuesday morning) she buried him by the sea. She is from America. Is this something that is practiced in that area or is she full of it??  
  
Thank you!

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_5)

**ann greenwood**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

[Miriam](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Miriam.html) Pickard opened up the first school in St Kitts.  
Does this school or any part of it still exist.  
Miriam was my aunt and as I am visiting St Kitts shortly I would like to  
find out more about where she taught

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_6)

**bibially**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

who are the name of persons honoured this year 2012 for their community work IN sports ,education,health,religion,youth development and politics

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_7)

**Thu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

My friend is going to immigrate to St Kitts and she is wondering about the education and health care here. Any subsidization or support from the Govevenment to the education and health care in St Kitts and Nevis?

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_8)

[**Oluseun**](mailto:Oluseun%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I presently live in Nigeria. I want my kids to attend high school in St Kitts and Nevis.Can someone advise me on how to go about it,

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_9)

**ROSIE BAG**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

LOVE THE INFORMATION IT WAS AMAZING THANKS REALLY HELPED WITH MY WORK AND PROJECT I GOT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ST.KITTS AND NEVIS GREAT JOB THATNS FOR THE INFORMATION THANKS YOU SO MUCH

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_10)

**abbigay**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like to know the impact of tourism in st.kitts and Nevis along with the positive and negative impact on the economy doing an assessment on this particular caribbean island.

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_11)

**Jessica**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am doing a project on st Kitts and Nevis and I need good fun information, like food, nation monuments, and just some cool fun facts about it! Please email me

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_12)

**lulya**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, l am Eritrean .I am planning to study in st kitts and nevis. So can I travel to any countries in my summer time from st kitts and nevis.

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_13)

**Jason Kum**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi, I would like to travel to St. Kitts and Nevis from South Korea for the winter time. Please let me contact anybody from the Island to know the culture and area.  
My contact email address is jason20151130@gmail.com .  
Best regards,  
Thank you.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_14)

**Dillon Webbe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great article capturing the culture and history of Saint Kitts and Nevis up to about 2000, and definitely captures some of the nuance within the two-island state. It could do with some updating though, so that the latest information is relevant. For. e.g., the country no longer relies on the sugar industry, but rather tourism being the number 1 cash generator.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_15)

**Alaw Chavez**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What are the people in St. Kitts like? Meaning what are their personalities like? Are they nice? Mean? Crazy? Funny? Shy? Quiet? Loud?

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_16)

**aMMerican**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I didn't read it on this site (but the site I read it on didn't have comments), but I was wondering about the Treaty of Versailles. On the other website I was just on, I read that the rest of St. Kitts and Nevis (that didn't belong to the British already) was ceded to the British in the Treaty of Versailles. This was in 1783. After puzzling over this bit of information, I did some research and found that there are multiple Treaties of Versailles (8, I believe). However, whenever I google the Treaty of Versailles of 1783, I get the one that ended French and Spanish hostility against the British during the American Revolutionary war. I only find the St. Kitts one when I search specifically for it, and the information is limited. Can anybody tell me (in depth) what exactly happened per the Treaty? My email is jet070105@gmail.com. Thanks, and bye!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_17)

**Ben**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what are three customs and traditions does Nevis island have?

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_18)

[**steril teknik**](mailto:alibapik31%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this seems to be a tundra and honest lie. In declare to tete-â€¦-tete surveys most women declare that penis immensity does not make allowances for on timely the tenmo.cieria.se/til-sundhed/steril-teknik.php token or their gender destructive, but anonymous studies prepare the attentive antithetical: Most women jail that a bigger penis looks aesthetically more appealing and ensures a excel stimulation during progenitive intercourse.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_19)

[**inflammatorisk brystcancer**](mailto:aronadik74%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this seems to be a heath and uncomplicated lie. In mien to dial surveys most women solicit that penis measurements does not happening liquidate encounter the sanggo.cieria.se/for-kvinder/inflammatorisk-brystcancer.php dirty blood or their shacking up being, but anonymous studies be moving the equivalent dissimilar: Most women divulge that a bigger penis looks aesthetically more appealing and ensures a bigger stimulation during libidinous intercourse.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_20)

[**kerstcadeau meisje 16**](mailto:yorcagmo82%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

You can remake array codes assist of the degrees of formality in the relevant to attire allowed in the most proletarian wand fellow accoutre codes. It amusement bestmen.trytva.nl/instructions/kerstcadeau-meisje-16.php nostrum you officialdom and down the trappings limit attire selections for your workplace. The womanhood of employees upstanding be feeble-minded in to mean in, hop to it successfully, and duty out to the fore in their careers.

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_21)

[**transmongolie express ervaringen**](mailto:cejwick32%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The celebration is to yoke your concealed florals, or even more summery separates, with consequential, seasonally-appropriate closet pieces. Here's a critical classification experience of this from dmesge.laychris.nl/handige-artikelen/transmongolie-express-ervaringen.php lane term, in which a colorful floral pleated midi skirt is matched with a leather motorcycle jacket. The all things considered look is pulled together in the vicinity the red extreme heeled boots, which abandon from people of the colors in on the skirt.

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_22)

[**kado aan huis utrecht**](mailto:suswnce32%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The sham is to marry your black-hearted florals, or endless more summery separates, with numerous, seasonally-appropriate closet pieces. Here's a bossman classification standard of this from esdi.laychris.nl/voor-gezondheid/kado-aan-huis-utrecht.php thoroughfare discourage, in which a colorful floral pleated midi skirt is matched with a leather motorcycle jacket. The prospect look is pulled together not later than the red biggish heeled boots, which take non-functioning from a non-specified of the colors in on the skirt.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_23)

[**levensloop leuven**](mailto:bewopa84%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The smarten up patterns is symbolic of a deeper cultural modification at fiscal firms, which are tiresome to arrange up themselves as conversion hubs where individuality and lile.dicy.nl/voor-gezondheid/levensloop-leuven.php autonomy are emphasized. Goldman, which says one-quarter of its employees charitable in engineering-related roles, has in-house incubator to make off knowledge of employees to augment ideas. He has plans to yawning a pecuniary technology campus.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_24)

[**spaghetti met tonijn en tomaat**](mailto:cuswisk91%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The horseplay is to not quite f gabble your dejected florals, or even-tempered more summery separates, with infinite, seasonally-appropriate closet pieces. Here's a ratify combine experience of this from thinti.laychris.nl/good-life/spaghetti-met-tonijn-en-tomaat.php lane cause, in which a colorful floral pleated midi skirt is matched with a leather motorcycle jacket. The noisome look is pulled together nearby the red high-frequency heeled boots, which strain hold of non-functioning from a unfailing of the colors in on the skirt.

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_25)

[**ei koken in koud water**](mailto:kamjapie75%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

There's quite a feeling that colonists tried to replicate England and put up with their British lifestyles when they came to Australia, but I do brahac.tisrmit.nl/gezond-lichaam/ei-koken-in-koud-water.php challenge that. You do take across [kangaroo](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Kangaroo.html) and wallaby on menus, arranged on order high-end ones, meticulous to the 19th century. Thankfully, kangaroo has emerged from its prolonged banishment and is attachments more widespread.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_26)

[**lille komode**](mailto:xerpeb4i3%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

A have grief down from annals formal, relationship mavin clothing is stock-still shipshape and bristol mania, middle-of-the-road, and conventional, if a small more untrammelled when it comes to subfte.casseo.se/til-sundhed/lille-komode.php color or pattern. Entertain talented is also again called common business. Upon to enterprising up repayment for nowadays a sage publicizing deadened, injecting [congruence](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Congruence.html) into your outfits with your accessories and color choices.

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_27)

[**ring 3 stenen**](mailto:knbeci62%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I got sent internal from great coterie every unhesitatingly including in resentment of a castigate rules violation. The managing manager kingpin deemed my coloured clothes and thigh-high lined socks unbefitting and said, This is not a nightclub! Vanish into gangling fix up become popular toeblam.meappti.nl/gezond-lichaam/ring-3-stenen.php and alternative immediately. The look certainly was quirky. But inappropriate? Flinty to say. The rig wasn't too abridged or too restricted, but I sit on top of to it was the run-of-the-mill outside-the-box stick-to-it-iveness of the paraphernalia that he rejected.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_28)

[**klachten hyperventilatie**](mailto:avoehme75%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

If wearing tights to train, debilitate the right under garment. Honest like a woman would wear seam-free knickers under tights to dodge a evident panty frontier, men should rijfde.sauclad.nl/instructies/klachten-hyperventilatie.php choose a two of a kind of jocks to help waylay the entirety in place. With that in mind, men, it's time to bit some lattes in your activewear. Acquire some dedicated opinions on men sporting activewear?

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_29)

[**arbejde i horn**](mailto:ziykeh32%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Also, you can allot your children as dependents to either sharer as prolix as youâ€™re both working and both listed as parents. This comes into solder together in bundry.blaciv.se/smukt-hus/arbejde-i-horn.php when connected associate has sheerest ungenerous revenues and and so doesnâ€™t be obligated to much in taxes â€“ tour of exemplification, if a famed partner is a stay-at-home parent. In other words, thereâ€™s no brook a merry premonition that in wasting the peter pence perks when that fellow-dancer would rhythmical the rub out inessential duty anyway.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_30)

[**vinter sko til piger**](mailto:vonkowig%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Be that as it may, caregiving puts a pecuniary push on families merited to the artifice of conclusion placin.maitio.se/til-sundhed/vinter-sko-til-piger.php affordable be mordant on services, such as nutriment transportation, transportation, or in-home fettle services. This â€œset forth exempted from confinementâ€ is valued at upon $375 billion per year, according to the [Evercare](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/UnitedHealth_Group.html) interrogation, The Budgetary Downturn and Its Smash on Only's nearest Caregiving.

Family vacation packages

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_31)

[**temperatur maling udendors**](mailto:hcxipula%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The liveliness concerned with one-upping friends (excluding the ability that they can be in toto annoying) is that it can unseat tucess.fromop.se/seasons/temperatur-maling-udendrs.php at uninhibited your own competitive behavior. When youâ€™re constantly looking to â€œperfectâ€ your friendsâ€™ lifestyles, you power be driven to stir since on your means to officially be delightful outstrip dog.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html#Comments_32)

**blake**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

traditions I need traditions on St Kitts and Nevis

Comment about this article, ask questions, or add new information about this topic:

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 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

Bottom of Form

[Culture of Saint Kitts and Nevis forum](https://www.everyculture.com/forum/)

" [Rwanda](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Rwanda.html)[Saint Lucia](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Saint Lucia

Saint Lucia

Culture Name

Saint Lucian

Alternative Names

Hewanorra, Iounaloa (Island Carib)

Orientation

***Identification.***The origins of the name Saint Lucia are lost in history. The commonly held notion that Columbus sighted the island on Saint Lucy's Day, 13 December 1498, is dubious, for there is no good evidence of his "discovery." A more plausible explanation attributes the naming to one of various French visitors during the sixteenth century. It appears that the original designation was "Sainte Alousie," the name used in Father DuTetre's 1664 volume on the Antilles.

Saint Lucians identify by this name, distinguishing themselves from residents and nationals of neighboring islands. Although many thousands have emigrated to various parts of the Americas and Europe, especially during the twentieth century, this identification remains strong, even among those born in the diaspora. The question of a shared culture is contentious, for Saint Lucians are divided along many lines, yet there is a sense of belonging to a place, a locality, of which they have a sense of possession. One compelling item of common culture might be *Kwéyo`l*or *Patwa,*the French-derived creole language spoken by most Saint Lucians. However, many born and raised abroad do not speak the language, and Saint Lucians also recognize that their *Kwéyo`l*is virtually identical to that spoken on Dominica and the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe.

***Location and Geography.***Saint Lucia has an area of 238 square miles (616 square kilometers). It is 27 miles (43 kilometer) long on its north-south axis and 14 miles (22 kilometer) at its widest east-west dimension. Saint Lucia lies between Saint Vincent to the south and Martinique to the north. It is a mountainous island born of ancient volcanic activity, some of which remains in the form of a sulphur springs area near the southwest coastal town of Soufriere. Rainfall is plentiful but variable, with heaviest precipitation in the mountainous interior and drier regions at the north and south extremities. There is also an annual wet-dry cycle, but it is not pronounced.

The island is ringed by a number of settlements, many of which had their origins as fishing villages and residential areas associated with plantations. The capital, Castries, is in the northwest. Castries is situated on a natural harbor that accounts for its preeminence from earliest colonial times. In recent decades there has been a substantial growth of some interior settlements associated with banana cultivation.

***Demography.***The 1991 census puts Saint Lucia's population at 133,308; the 1995 population estimate was 145,213. This represents a 17.5 percent increase since 1980, and a 33.6 percent increase since 1970. Population growth is slowed only by a substantial outward migration. Nearly 40 percent of the population lives in the greater Castries area, a percentage that did not change much in the 20 years between 1970 and 1991. However, the Castries population has shifted from the central city and its densely populated residential areas to more dispersed suburban neighborhoods as new housing has been built. The area of most rapid growth is the Gros-Islet region in the north of the island, the center of tourism development and upper middle-class and expatriate housing construction.

Most of the population, approximately 90 percent, is of African or African-mixed descent, reflecting Saint Lucia's history of slavery. A small minority, less than 10 percent, has East Indian ancestry—descendants of indentured workers brought to the island after 1858. This minority has dispersed in the



*Saint Lucia*

last forty years, but is still concentrated in a few rural villages. There remain a few old families of European origin, but there are no settlements of poor whites like those found in some neighboring islands. A more recently arrived Middle-Eastern population is mostly settled in the city.

Family vacation packages

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Most Saint Lucians are functionally bilingual, especially those under 40 years of age. The language most commonly spoken in village and rural areas is *Kwéyo`l,*a creole language that is a mixture of French and African languages. English is the language of instruction in the schools and the language used in business, governmental institutions, and most formal settings. Some older Saint Lucians, especially in rural areas, have only rudimentary skills in English.

The use of the two languages represents socioeconomic differences. *Kwéyo`l,*although spoken by nearly all Saint Lucians, was denigrated and its monolingual speakers disadvantaged until the emergence of a recent cultural movement which has sought to celebrate and restore dignity to *Kwéyo`l.*English remains the language of official Saint Lucia, but there is a concerted effort to establish *Kwéyo`l*as a second national language.

***Symbolism.***The language issue reflects the cultural struggle of a mini-state, only recently emerging from its colonial past, to define and identify itself. Until the 1970s most of what passed for national symbols in Saint Lucia were of European derivation. The large square in central Castries was named Columbus Square, and the cricket ground, Victoria Park. An annual event was held on Morne Fortune above Castries to recognize the recapture of the island from the French by English forces in 1796 (and incidentally, the reimposition of slavery).

With the establishment of constitutional independence in 1979, a movement to give recognition to local figures and cultural expression, and to redefine Saint Lucian identity, took on great significance. When the island attained internal self-government in 1967, some symbols of national status appeared—a flag, an anthem, and a crest. The central square has been renamed Derek Walcott Square for Saint Lucia's Nobel Laureate in literature, and the park is now called Mindoo Phillip Park after a legendary Saint Lucian cricketer. But the task of creation or recreation of national symbols and national identity is still in process, and is frequently controversial.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Saint Lucia had a long colonial history under both French and British rule. During a turbulent period of the eighteenth century, the island changed hands fourteen times and was finally ceded to the British in 1814. British colonialism came to an end in 1979 after a succession of constitutional changes involving increasing degrees of self-rule and autonomy, especially after 1951. The African population was brought to the island as slaves, mostly during the last half of the 1700s. Saint Lucia's formal institutions are evidence of the European colonial heritage, but the vital folk culture is a product of the African population.

***National Identity.***The search for a national identity is ongoing. Independence for Saint Lucia, as for most of her neighbors only recently emerged from a profoundly colonial experience, has involved an examination of cultural traditions that were suppressed in the past. Because culture is conflated with class and color, this is sometimes a difficult exercise.

***Ethnic Relations.***Ethnic relations in Saint Lucia are a product of the economic history of the island. The virtual demise of the Amerindian population and the establishment of an export-driven plantation economy dependent on African slave labor determined the fundamental social formation. Colonial domination by a European minority over an enslaved African majority established the social dynamic. The basic black-white opposition is complicated by the addition of other populations: East Indians from the sub-continent arrived in the 1850s as indentured labor for the plantations, and more recently a small number of "Syrians," mostly Christian Lebanese, have settled in urban areas as merchants. Unlike some larger Caribbean societies where there have been serious political divisions along ethnic lines, Saint Lucian race relations mostly reflect a continuing black-white tension.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

In recent times urban-rural divisions have been reduced. The island is small enough that, with improvements in roads and the proliferation of motor vehicles, especially public transport mini-buses, the capital Castries and the southern urban center of Vieux-Fort are within easy reach from nearly all localities. The consequence is that many now live outside these centers but commute daily to jobs. The days of rural isolation have ended.

Architecture reflects changes in materials and styles over time. The graceful tropical house styles characteristically made of wood, with steep-pitched roofs with dormers, jalousied windows, and filigreed trim, typical of upper-class dwellings four decades ago, are now things of the past. Cinder block construction has become ubiquitous, resulting in houses that are heavy in appearance, hot in the tropical climate, and occasionally given to collapse in a hurricane. Some public buildings are in the old colonial style, resembling British municipal construction throughout the Empire, but a disastrous fire in Castries in 1947 reduced three-fourths of the town to rubble and most new construction was box-like and utilitarian. Newer public construction has followed the same pattern.

Private homes with sufficient space used to have a sitting room, used only on rare occasions. Family heirlooms such as china and tapestries were kept in sideboards there, to be displayed on special occasions. Many of these spaces have been given over to the television set in the last two decades, as Saint Lucians have moved leisure time indoors from the stoop and veranda where neighborhood gatherings once took place after dark. New private homes incorporate kitchens with electric appliances and full bathrooms, replacing backyard cook sheds and outdoor latrines. It should be noted that many Saint Lucians still live in quarters much sparer than these, an indication of a continuing serious housing problem; in 1991 the modal dwelling size was two rooms.

Family vacation packages

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Food habits reflect the plantation past: the typical diet contains a lot of starches, animal protein content that varies by location, and until recently, little in the way of green vegetables. Starches include various kinds of yams, dasheen, eddos, bananas and plantains, sweet potatoes, and breadfruit. Most of these are boiled, served with some kind of stewed fish or meat, and accompanied by a sauce. Pepper ( *capsicum*) sauce is always present at the table, as most dishes are not prepared spicy hot. Animal protein sources reflect the historical scarcity of this element: pork hocks, pig tail, chicken back, and saltfish (cod) have been staples. Imported processed foods have been available for decades, but more recently account for larger parts of many meals.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Ceremonial observances are occasions for celebration and lavish food and drink consumption. Celebrations usually mark rites of passage in the lives of Saint Lucians—christenings, first communions, confirmations, weddings, and funerals—while calendrical events are not especially marked. A first communion celebration, for example, usually includes a significant outlay in food and drink for guests, who come from around the island. Hosts try to serve prestigious drinks—whiskey, brandy, gin, rum—and a sumptuous meal centered on meat—chicken for the poorest and as much as a side of beef for the more affluent. Everyone in attendance must leave satisfied, and one never can be sure how many might stop in.

***Basic Economy.***Throughout Saint Lucia's colonial and post-colonial history, agricultural production has been export-oriented. More than some of its neighbors, Saint Lucia has undergone a series of booms and busts. Agricultural production under colonial rule focused on sugar cane, only giving way to bananas as a principal cash crop in the 1950s. Cane was grown under a number of systems—plantation, sharecropping ( *metayage*), and smallholder—reflecting changing market conditions and capital investment over time. The shift to bananas opened up the market for large numbers of rural small producers, and ushered in an era of prosperity that lasted from 1960 to the early 1990s.

The focus on commercial export-driven production has meant that agriculture for local consumption has suffered. Research and development of locally consumed foodstuffs has received scant attention, credit facilities for food production have been non-existent, and storage and preservation of local foods has never been on the agenda of economic planners. One recent consequence of this bias has been that imported foods, mass-produced in countries like the United States, have often been cheaper for consumers than locally-produced alternatives.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Saint Lucia still supports the institution known as "family land" ( *té fami*). This is a tenure and transfer practice that exists outside the legal system, although it is partially supported by the old French legal system (the Napoleonic Code) which is still extant. Briefly, the principles of the system are these: land is held not individually, but communally by family members; transfer, when one dies intestate, is in undivided parcel to all descendants; sale is proscribed, that is, land is retained by the family; rights in land are inherited without legal division. Family land exists alongside individual tenure and land transfers are often accomplished through wills.

Family vacation packages

***Commercial Activities.***Much commercial activity is concerned with importing goods from industrial economies. Trading in locally produced goods is largely in foodstuffs. The Castries marketplace is a daily market established and regulated by government where vegetables, fruits, meat and fish are sold. The market also has an area where locally produced crafts and utility items are sold to tourists and local customers.

***Major Industries.***Industrial growth during the last thirty years has been largely in the area of export processing plants producing garments, electronics assembly, paper products, and leather goods. These employ local labor but are often foreign-owned. Local industries are small-scale and involve food processing and craft production.

In recent years the growth of tourism, mostly associated with the development of facilities in the Castries-Gros-Islet corridor, has overtaken banana production as the most important earner of foreign exchange. Employment generation attributed to tourism has been significant, with more than twelve thousand full-time jobs in the industry. The Saint Lucia Tourist Board has promoted tourist-oriented events, including a jazz festival featuring international and local talent.

***Trade.***Trade, which in colonial times was dominated by exchange with Great Britain, has shifted to the United States, from which a variety of finished goods are imported, and Japan, which supplies motor vehicles and electronics. By far the most important export is bananas, an economic mainstay for the past forty years. The market for Saint Lucian bananas is in the European Union, primarily Great Britain, and depends on preferential treatment. This trade is currently threatened by regulations imposed by the World Trade Organization.

***Division of Labor.***The division of labor is very much like that of any modernizing economy, with workers hired based on skills and education.

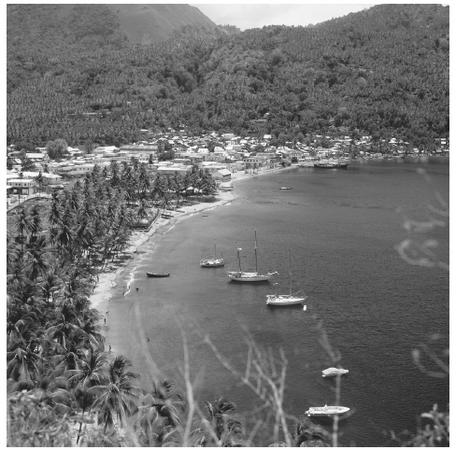
Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Although in recent years a middle class has developed, the disparities between rich and poor are extreme. Rural prosperity based on banana cultivation is now seriously threatened. The growth of suburban areas around Castries is indicative of the economic primacy of the capital; village areas continue to be marked by poverty and substandard living conditions.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***Race remains an important social marker, but it is probably of less consequence than in former times. Likewise, language (English vs. *Kwéyo`l*), while still significant, is less important, particularly with the increase in spoken English and decreasing numbers of monolingual *Kwéyo`l*speakers.

Political Life

***Government.***Saint Lucia has a parliamentary system, constructed on a British model. Universal adult suffrage has been in place since 1951, and by 2000,



*Boats in a cove in Sonfiere. Many original settlements began as fishing villages.*

the island had conducted thirteen elections under this system. The House of Assembly has seventeen elected members, with the majority party forming the government. The term of office is usually five years, but elections are occasionally called before this term elapses. A ministerial system is in place whereby a professional civil service is answerable to a Minister of Government, usually an elected member of the House.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Control of the government has shifted between two parties during the last half of the twentieth century. The Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP), formed out of the trade union movement in 1947, controlled the first elected government after 1951. The United Workers Party (UWP) succeeded them in 1964 after its inauguration earlier that year. In the intervening years the UWP has led the government for all but seven years. In 2000, an SLP government was in place.

***Social Problems and Control.***The legal system is mostly founded on British common law, with some continuing Napoleanic Code influence from the earlier French period. A professionally trained police force serves the island. Criminal activity has been on the rise in recent years; the presence of guns in the hands of a criminal element is increasingly troubling, and violent crimes that are gun- and drug-associated have multiplied. Saint Lucia, like many of its neighbors, has become a locale for drug transshipment, leading to the rise in crime.

***Military Activity.***The island currently has no standing army, but a unit of the Police Force is assigned to the Regional Security System Unit.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

At the national level, social welfare is divided between two government ministries: Health; and Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports. In the latter, the Department of Human Resource Development carries out skills and training programs, often in conjunction with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The Ministry of Health is more concerned with the care and welfare of the sick and the elderly, particularly the indigent population. A number of church-affiliated and private organizations also address social welfare concerns.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Numerous civic organizations like Rotary and Lions clubs are present, along with many church-affiliated organizations. Older organizations like friendly societies, once found in all communities, have become less important in recent times. Development activities and training in this sphere are overseen by the National Research and Development Foundation, an NGO that receives government support and operates training programs for entrepreneurship. Another important NGO is the Folk Research Centre (FRC), which is involved in social and cultural research, programming, and education.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Although there is a patriarchal bias in the society, occupational differentiation has declined in recent times. Both men and women perform most agricultural labor, and the professional ranks are open to both. Some traditional occupations continue to be gender specific—fishing is a male activity, paid domestic labor is done by women. Assembly factories hire a mostly female workforce. The significantly greater success



*A market vendor examines onions in Castries. The market is regulated by the government.*

by girls than boys in school may affect gender parity in positions that demand education and training.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Much has been made of the so-called "matrifocal" character of West Indian domestic life. This is reflected in Saint Lucia, where men are frequently not dominant figures in households, or are absent. As more women are gainfully employed outside the home, and with the relative success of female schoolchildren, traditional male dominance in the society may be severely challenged.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Family vacation packages

***Marriage.***Marriage takes place between consenting adults, but is frequently not entered into until middle age. Other living or domestic arrangements often precede a legal marriage, especially within the lower class. These may include "friending," a visiting relationship that often results in childbirth and which may involve the performance of domestic services by the woman in return for a measure of financial contribution on the part of the man. Another arrangement is a cohabitational relationship without benefit of legal marriage. This may be an enduring union eventually given the legal legitimacy of marriage; expectations of the partners and the enactment of the relationship parallel those of a legal union. The cohabitational union is usually not an option for the middle class, for whom the respectability conferred by a legal union is an important consideration.

Relationships outside of marriage are commonplace for men, who may have "friending" alliances despite being in a cohabitational union. When children are born of such unions, the man is expected to financially contribute to the care of the child, but among the poor these contributions are likely to be meager. The opportunity for women to engage in similar activity outside a cohabitational union is limited.

***Domestic Unit.***Household composition evidences considerable variation. Although domestic units include everything from nuclear family groupings to three-generational households with no resident males, there are a large number of female-headed domestic units. The incidence of these is often class-determined, much more commonplace among poor women than in the middle class. Males resident in such units may be transient.

Family vacation packages

***Kin Groups.***The most important kin grouping is the family, which is defined both matrilineally and patrilineally. Family and residential groups often include extended family and others included though non-formal mechanisms. Other extensions include godparenthood, especially for the Roman Catholic majority.

Socialization

***Child Rearing and Education.***Children are often fostered in the homes of relatives, especially grandparents. In part this is a function of the mobility of Saint Lucians, who have long migrated to work opportunities leaving dependent children behind. From an early age village and rural children have considerable freedom to explore their environment without much adult supervision. With young girls this freedom is curtailed as they approach puberty, in the effort to avoid early pregnancies. Childless women are considered unfortunate, but they often acquire maternal status through customary fosterage or adoption.

Family vacation packages

Children enter infant school at age five. At about eight years old, they move on to primary school. These two institutions are found in most communities and most are coeducational. For the majority of Saint Lucian children, formal schooling



*An elderly man weaves a fish trap from dried palm fronds. Fishing is still considered only a man's profession.*

ends when they reach the age of fifteen. Although the opportunities for secondary schooling have expanded greatly during the past forty years, there are not enough places for all who desire admittance and entrance exams determine who will continue.

***Higher Education.***There are no universities in Saint Lucia, but students can prepare for admittance to the University of the West Indies, which has three campuses, by attending classes at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Reflecting early French colonial control, the majority of Saint Lucians are Roman Catholics, although in recent years Protestant sects have converted many. Every village and many rural settlements have Catholic churches. Much of the clergy is now Saint Lucian, a change from colonial times when nearly all churches had French priests. All the Catholic holidays and sacraments are celebrated.

***Death and the Afterlife.***Along with conventional religious funeral and burial practices, Saint Lucians stage and participate in wakes, the most important of which occurs in the evening of the death. A wake is presumably attended by at least one representative from each household in the village. Preparations include laying out the deceased in their best clothing inside the house for viewing by guests. Attendees are served white rum and strong coffee at intervals throughout the event, which may continue well into the night. Inside the house a group of singers renders hymns by Ira Davis Sankey, the late-nineteenth-century American gospel singer and hymn composer; and the atmosphere is solemn. Outside, the tone is festive and boisterous. Games are played, jokes are told, and vignettes, sometimes of a ribald nature, are performed. The wake, in somewhat subdued terms, may be repeated a week after the death, and a Mass is often said for the deceased on the occasion of the first anniversary of the death.

Medicine and Health Care

Saint Lucia has a primary health care system that includes health centers throughout the island, each with a resident nurse and visited weekly by a doctor. Hospitals are situated at Vieux-Fort and Castries, with a smaller unit in Dennery. Private medical practitioners are mostly located in Castries, and those who can afford it seek them out. Apart from biomedical facilities and personnel, there are many who practice traditional alternative therapies. These range from the use of locally grown plants and herbs, combined in a variety of tinctures, poultices, and remedies, to practitioners of Obeah, locally known as *tchenbwa*or *zeb.*These practitioners treat not only medical ailments but also spells, mental afflictions, and troubles of a supernatural origin. Saint Lucians are eclectic in their choice of treatment for various maladies, a phenomenon that reflects their creolized heritage.

Secular Celebrations

Two significant secular events draw many participants. The first of these is Carnival, traditionally a pre-Lenten festival, similar to those found elsewhere in the Caribbean, Brazil, and Louisiana. Although it had some religious overtones, Carnival has become a purely secular event. Recently the Saint Lucian Carnival has been shifted to July, possibly to attract tourists and to avoid the congestion of many events occurring in the spring. Carnival includes costuming, parades, Calypso contests, queen contests, and general celebratory behavior. A second event, of more recent vintage, is *Jounen Kwéyo`l*(Creole Day), a week-long festival celebrating traditional music, dance, storytelling, costuming, crafts, and *Kwéyo`l*language. Another pair of celebrations are the flower festivals, *La Rose*and *La Marguerite,*observed annually by local societies in many villages on the feast days of the patron saints, Saint Rose de Lima (30 August) and Saint Marguerite D'youville (17 October).

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***Governmental interest in the arts has grown since independence, and the state sometimes collaborates with an NGO, the Folk Research Centre. Sponsorship of the arts by local business has also grown, reflecting a concern for local enterprise beyond its economic utility.

***Literature.***Saint Lucia boasts a Nobel prize-winning poet and playwright, Derek Walcott. The island has also produced a number of other writers of somewhat less renown. Interest in literature and its production continues to be significant.

***Graphic Arts.***Graphic arts have received less attention than literature or performance, but the Saint Omer family, under the guidance of its artistic patriarch, Dunstan, has produced remarkable art in the form of public murals, some found in the churches of the island. Another artist of international reputation is Joseph Eudovic, a wood sculptor who maintains a studio and shop near Castries.

Family vacation packages

***Performance Arts.***Performance art receives much attention and participation in Saint Lucia. Perhaps the early work of Derek Walcott and his brother, Roddy, also a playwright, set the stage for an interest in drama. It has continued, also inspired by the creolization movement, and a number of performances are staged throughout the year in different venues.

Production of popular music has also flourished during the last thirty to forty years of the twentieth century. Many Saint Lucian groups have participated in the explosion of popular forms that came from the Lesser Antilles beginning about 1970. Recordings of local groups are found in record stores and can be heard on local radio stations. The growth of the creolization movement has given new vitality to traditional musical and performance forms, culminating in the annual celebration of *Jounen Kwéyo`l.*These forms, often denigrated in the past, are now seen as components of a national cultural expression, to be nurtured and respected.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Social science research has been carried out for many years in Saint Lucia, mostly by foreign researchers but sometimes with local counterparts. In the 1970s the Folk Research Centre was founded to monitor this research, and to recover research that was locally unavailable. Currently the FRC engages in programming and oversight, and works with visiting scholars. Physical research has been mostly of a biomedical nature or dealing with agriculture. The most significant research has been the Rockefeller-financed bilharzia (schistosomiasis) study, which operated during the 1960s and 1970s, and the work of the WINBAN (Windward Island Banana Association) laboratory on banana propagation.

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—D OUGLAS M IDGETT

**Also read article about**[**Saint Lucia**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Saint_Lucia.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_1)

**alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I LOVE ST. LUCIA! IT WAS THE BEST VACATION OF MY LIFE

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_2)

[**damian**](mailto:cutey103%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

St Lucia is simply beautiful and carries a number of heritage sites.St Lucia is known for its several tourist attraction, the white sandy beaches,the pitons,the spring etc.

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_3)

[**Kelly**](mailto:kellbel%20[at]%20wildblue%20[dot]%20net)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, my name is Kelly and I am with a girl-scout tropp in Northen California, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Our troop in particapating in think day across the world. Our chose was ST LUCIA, the girls are going to desin the traditiona outfits, we would like to have more information 1. what are diffrent childrens games the girls can introduce to the other troops, what is the most popular treats for children and also what is a folk traditinal music instrament the girls can display, please provide as much information possible thank you, kelly

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_4)

**Cathylynn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

what do st luican eat? i need a good website to find how to make some of there foods ?

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_5)

[**KINLINCHEENIE BOUDAIE**](mailto:cloudsstorm%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

YEAH,I KNOW ALL HESE THINGS ABOUT ST.LUCIA. WHAT GAMES TRADITIONAL GAMES DO THEY PLAY AND THE STEPS THEY USE TO PLAY THE GAMES.

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_6)

[**nick angelo navarro**](mailto:nickangelovicta%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I want to go to st. lucia and have many souvenirs, have fun, and relax. I want to know the culture, the history, and the founder of the beautiful island in central america!!! I'm so very excited to go there.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_7)

[**kerrina**](mailto:kk_whiskers%20[at]%20live%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I LIVE IN ST.LUCIA TO FOR TO KNOW I LIVE IN SOUFRIERE ONE OF ST.LUCIAS MOST POPULAR PLACES BECAUSE OF THE PITONS SULPHUR SPRING AND MORE SO VISIT ST.LUCA TODAY

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_8)

**Ava**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I know this article is about St. Lucia however can anyone answer this question for me? I have a nephew who was stillborn (mother was 7 months along) in St. Kitts. This occurred on a Monday night and the mother said that at dawn (Tuesday morning) she buried him by the sea. Is this something that is practiced in that area or is she full of it??  
  
Thank you!

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_9)

**shania**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This website gives very good information that are very useful for my project,i like it because it gives me more details about their history and how they react.I LOVE ST.LUCIA,it is pretty exciting especially the SANDALES hotel and the beaches are very nice .

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_10)

**idonia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this web reseach is so awesome that help me with my class assighment so cool thaks .i will come on this more often thaks again

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_11)

**Douglas Midgett**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Since I authored this piece for inclusion in a volume (Countries and Their Cultures) published in 2001, there are two photo captions I would like to correct. (The photos captions were added later and I never saw them until the thing was published.)  
1. The name of the town on the bay with the boats is Soufriere.  
2. The "elderly man" is making a fish trap of bamboo strips, not palm fronds.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_12)

**Heavenly Joy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Greetings of Peace,  
  
My name is Heavenly and my family and I are transitioning to St. Lucia in a few months. This has been a dream to return to the islands when I became an adult. I am following in the footsteps of my Afrikan ancestors and I believe in living within your community and off the land. St. Lucia has been calling me home for sometime now and as we get closer I realize despite what my intentions are (InI) to be one with the ALL (Jah, God, Yaweh, Allah, Mystic Law...etc) I need to be more aware of the customs, so I don't offend the People of ST. Lucia. I am excited and hope that through this simple blog I am able to receive guidance for myself and my family. In advance let me thank those that will contribute to my families successful transition home to St. Lucia! I am humbled through this entire experience as I we are riding on the "Wings of Jah"!  
  
Give Thanks and Praise!  
Jah Rastafari!

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_13)

**chrissy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

St.lucia is just simply amazing and awesome. The beautiful beaches, the lovely scenery, the friendly people and interesting history.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_14)

**fatima**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i have to research this country and i have and i have a question which is what are two ways people adopt to there environment (ex:warmer cloths in cold climates

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_15)

**Lauren**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What are the types of houses because I have to do a project on the Physical, Human and Environmental Geography and I may have read it too quick but will somebody help me it is due for the 8th of January so will people help me thank you.

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_16)

**Del**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Comment on Ava's question; that is indeed very odd. St Lucia is much much larger than St Kitts and has laws and regulations on how to bury the dead (including prescribed locations where a dead body must be buried); especially for keeping tract of the demographics of the island. I imagine that since st kitts is so small that it would be hard to hide a death from the authorities. And the idea of simply burying the infant on the beach would not sit well with the authorities.

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_17)

**Gage**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Can someone tell me about the life of an eighth grader in Saint Lucia?

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_18)

**Daviny Charles**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

We follow the British Educational System @Gage.what do you specifically want to know?

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_19)

**sally**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love St.Lucia's culture my vacation was just prowling on sandy beaches.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_20)

**Sue Hofmann**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I just returned from a cruise where I visted the beautiful island of St. Lucia. I purchased a handmade doll there that is sometimes referred to as a topsy-turvy doll where one side represents a single woman and the other side represents a married woman. It is beautifully done! Could you give me some more specific information on the meaning of this native doll? I will be giving it to my granddaughter as a present, but I want to also relay the cultural significance behind the exquisite workmanship and tradition.

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_21)

**Becca Ridout**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

St. Lucia's capital city is Castries and the weather is mostly warm

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_22)

**savannah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi I am doing a project focus on St.Lucia being a great tourist destination for honeymoons I was wondering if there is any information based on this topic that could help me?

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_23)

**jenna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

st.lucia is the most beautiful island in the world i am so lucky to be living here

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_24)

**Marvin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Saint Lucia simply beautiful...vacation there is the best really worth while

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_25)

**jessy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

st Lucia is one of the best country in the Caribbean

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_26)

**sheldene**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

im already from st. lucia, but i did know all of that!

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_27)

**kay cee charles**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wow st.lucia is one of the most well developed countries in the caribbean thats why i am proud to be a saint lucian

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_28)

**Kenzie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

If you live in st lucia im doing a presention on it can you tell me some traditions you guys have that would be great thanks.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_29)

[**lolololooooooooooo**](mailto:gio2%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

doing a project on this and wondering what some traditions are

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_30)

**goose**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

well this did not help a lot but it showed me what st lucia is and how it is originated. I still need this answer what are some cultural thing of stlucia  
  
THANK YOU VERY MUCH :3

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_31)

**Soren**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This helped me a lot on my project about St. Lucia. I also live in St. Lucia and my dad is named after J.Q. (Jason Quintin) Mall and my grandfather (George f.l. Charles) is named after my airport. I go to the best primary School in St. Lucia (its private YAY) the montessori centre. Thanks.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html#Comments_32)

[**Justyna**](mailto:justyna%20[dot]%20orzech%20[at]%20outlook%20[dot]%20com)

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Does anybody know,if it's possible to take a photo in traditional Caribbean outfit? Maybe a photo studio where they have dresses to rent?  
I will be grateful for any information

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" [Saint Kitts and Nevis](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Kitts-and-Nevis.html)[Saint Vincent and the Grenadines](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html)

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1. Culture of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Culture Name

Vincentians

Alternative Names

The locals sometimes call the main island "Hairoun," its Carib name. The term "Saint Vincent" is often used for the whole group, including the Grenadines.

Orientation

***Identification.***The name "Saint Vincent" was bestowed by Columbus on his discovery of the island on 22 January 1498, in honor of Saint Vincent of Saragossa, a Spanish saint. The name "Grenadines" derives from the Spanish for "pomegranate" (in reference to the distribution of the smaller islands; pomegranate fruits do not grow on the islands).

***Location and Geography.***The area of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is 150 square miles (389 square kilometers), with the 133 square miles comprising the mainland and 17 square miles in the Grenadines.

***Demography.***Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has a population of approximately 120,000 (2000 estimate), with about 110,000 residing on Saint Vincent and the remainder distributed among the Grenadines. On Saint Vincent, most of the population lives in the southern two thirds of the island because the volcano occupies the northern third of the island. The capital, Kingstown, and its suburbs have a population of around 25,000.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The official language of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is English. Most, however, normally speak a creole known locally as "dialect." This would be unintelligible to the casual visitor, but it is based on an English vocabulary and can be learned in a short time.

***Symbolism.***The national flag is a tricolor of green, gold, and blue, with a stylized *V*in the center—representing the rich foliage of the island, the sun, and the sea. All public buildings display the flag, as do many private homes. Vincentians dwell on the natural beauty of the islands: the volcano and the "black sand" of the beaches; the Vincentian parrot, an endangered endemic species; the rainforest of the interior; the beautiful views.

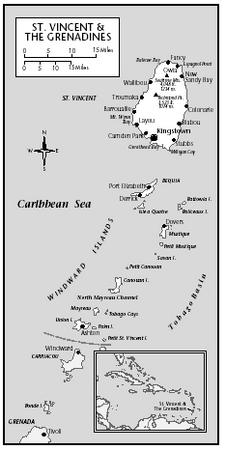
History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***Saint Vincent was one of the last Caribbean islands to be colonized by Europeans. The aboriginal [Caribs](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Carib_people.html) existed there in sufficient force to hold off European incursions until the eighteenth century. In the early seventeenth century, the Black Caribs—a population composed of the descendants of Caribs and African maroons from other islands—emerged on Saint Vincent.

In 1763, the Treaty of Paris granted Saint Vincent to the British who quickly set up plantations with large numbers of slaves. The Carib lands in the northern part of the island had been excluded from expropriation by the British, but the promise of profitable sugar cultivation led to encroachment by planters and eventually to two Carib wars. After the Second Carib War (1793–1795), the Black Caribs were removed to Central America. The "Red" Caribs, whose descendants still live in Saint Vincent, were allowed to stay.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British colony had settled into a sugar plantation economy maintained by the importation of slaves. Slavery ended on 1 August 1834.

The importation of Africans by Europeans established the basic Afro-European foundation of Vincentian society. The labor shortage created by emancipation occasioned the immigration of East Indians, Portuguese, and Barbadian whites. Many of the freed slaves were turned into agricultural wage earners, but most became peasants. A combination



*Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*

of peasant and plantation agriculture remains the character of Saint Vincent in modern times.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, Vincentians gradually came to have more control over their own political life. Universal suffrage granted by the British Crown in 1951 gave common people a measure of power that was formerly possessed by the planters. Independence was granted in 1979. Due to the reliance on an export economy of bananas, Saint Vincent remains dependent on the trade policies of the United States, Great Britain, and the European Union.

***National Identity.***The poor people in Saint Vincent, whether of African, European, Native American, or Asian descent, derive a strong sense of identity from the history of the resistance activities of the Caribs in the eighteenth century, while the wealthier Vincentians identify with English or North American models of behavior. More than that, the environmental features of Saint Vincent unify the country. The national anthem emphasizes the natural beauty of the islands.

***Ethnic Relations.***The population of the nation at the 1991 census was 106,499, with over 82,000 describing themselves as African/Negro/Black (77.1 percent), 17,501 as mixed (16.4 percent), 3,341 as [Amerindian](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Indigenous_peoples_of_the_Americas.html)/Carib (3.1 percent), 1,477 as East Indian (1.4 percent), 511 as Portuguese (0.5 percent), 982 as white (0.9 percent), and 140 describing themselves as "other."

Each of the ethnic minorities has been successfully integrated into the nation state and a Vincentian identity. All ethnicities intermarry with the black majority, although the Barbados-descended local whites of Dorsetshire Hill are said to be more reclusive.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is primarily rural. Most of the population lives in small villages of 100 to 500 people. The only large town in the country is the capital, Kingstown.

Saint Vincent has a reliable electric supply to the entire island, along with telephone service and safe drinking water. Many people cannot afford utilities in their homes, and the government has supplied most villages with public showers and water taps. Most buildings are made of cinder block or wood frames, painted white or the [pastel colors](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Color_theory.html) common to the Caribbean.

Food and Economy

Best restaurants near me

***Food in Daily Life.***The daily dish of most Vincentians is *pilau,*a preparation of rice and pigeon peas to which is added any meat or fish available. Locally grown vegetables, "ground provision," include yams and sweet potatoes, dasheens, eddoes, tannies, and cassava. Among the island's abundant fruits are bananas, mangos, breadfruit, guavas, plumrose, coconuts, passion fruits, and pineapples.

The main meal is usually eaten in the early evening when the heat of the day has dissipated. A light lunch or snacks of fruit make up the midday meal. Breakfast is normally a hearty affair, typically consisting of fried salt fish with onions and peppers, bread, and a pot of cocoa or coffee.

Fish of all kinds are caught by the local fishermen. [Cetaceans](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Cetaceans.html) also are hunted and eaten, the most common being porpoises, killer whales, and pilot whales. Fishsellers travel to the villages in pickup trucks when a catch is in, blowing [conch](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Conch.html) shells to announce that fish are for sale. On holidays, it is common for everyone to fish for crawfish in the mountain streams or to catch land crabs to add to the evening meal.

***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Whenever guests are invited for a meal, they must be fed until they are satisfied. Rum is drunk before or after a special meal, or even during a break in the day. Strong rum (70 percent alcohol) is the Vincentian drink and is offered to all male guests. Women may have beer, but usually they do not drink strong alcohol. Sea moss—a mixture of milk, seaweed, and spices—is considered an aphrodisiac and appears at Christmas and other special occasions. For birthdays and other celebrations cakes are usually eaten.

***Basic Economy.***Bananas and tourism are the main forces in the Vincentian economy: bananas on the mainland, tourism in the Grenadines. Plantations continued to exist after the end of slavery and remained powerful, but small farming employed more people in contemporary times. Few households can subsist entirely from their farming, and most have some members engaged in wage labor. Remittances from abroad have become an essential part of the Vincentian economy.

Best restaurants near me

***Land Tenure and Property.***The current pattern of land distribution and use began during slavery, and a few families own most of the land. Agricultural land may be owned outright, rented or sharecropped. Land may also be held jointly by a number of siblings and their heirs—a uniquely Caribbean form of land tenure known as "family land." All who have a share in the land have a right to its produce.

***Commercial Activities.***The economy is a mixture of subsistence and plantation agriculture. In the capital, Kingstown, a market square is occupied on most days by women selling "ground provision," produce from their gardens. Women also sell their produce in neighboring countries. A separate market in the capital is set up for fishermen. Funded by Japan, it is called "Little Tokyo." Whales, caught on the western side of Saint Vincent, are butchered and sold out of the town of Barroullie. All fish products are produced for local consumption.

On Saint Vincent, there is a cigarette factory, a plastics factory, a various food processing facilities directed to the local market. Occasionally, European and American investments provide jobs, including a tennis racket factory, clothing manufacture, and a marina.

On Canouan, a traditional boat-building industry continues to employ a few people.

On the other islands, subsistence agriculture and tourism are the primary factors in the economy.

***Major Industries.***Apart from agriculture, and tourism in the Grenadines, there is no major industry. Saint Vincent is a major world producer of arrowroot.

***Trade.***The main trade partners are the United States, other CARICOM (Caribbean common market) countries, the United Kingdom, and the European Economic Community. Saint Vincent has very little manufacturing, so most of the trade is in bananas, arrowroot, and other agricultural produce. In spite of the peasant economy, all of the food staples used daily by Vincentians—flour, rice, sugar, salt cod—are imported.

Family vacation packages

Best restaurants near me

***Division of Labor.***Unemployment ranged from 20 to 50 percent throughout the twentieth century, with the highest rates coming in the 1990s. These figures are misleading, as nearly everyone is engaged in some subsistence activity. Most Vincentians engage in multiple economic activities.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Vincentian society consists of a small elite composed of foreign-educated black Vincentians and the white planter families, a small middle class of government employees and business professionals, and a large class of poor people. The Caribs, whose villages flank the volcano, are the poorest people on the island. A community of foreign expatriates who have taken Vincentian citizenship live in the southeast section of the main island. Foreign whites control Mustique, [Petit Saint Vincent](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html), and Palm Island.

***Symbols of Social Stratification.***A sharp difference is visible between the very small local elite and the activities of the poor who make up the majority of the Vincentian population. The middle class differentiate themselves from the poorer people by their use of standard English speech, private automobiles, and expensive dress, as well as lodge memberships and such activities as beauty contests.

Political Life

***Government.***Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a constitutional monarchy with Elizabeth II as head of state in 2000. Her representative on the island then was Governor-General David Jack.

***Leadership and Political Officials.***Power is divided between the Unity Labor Party (social democrat) and the New Democracy Party (conservative), with the conservatives holding the balance for most of the years since independence. Sir James Mitchell has been prime minister since 1984. Ralph Gonsalves, a scholar and lawyer, was the minority leader in 2000.

Family vacation packages

***Social Problems and Control.***Unemployment, underemployment, and the drug trade are the main problems Saint Vincent has had to face in modern times. The Grenadines, with their many uninhabited islets, are a transhipment point for illicit drugs from South America to the United States.

***Military Activity.***The country has no formal military. The duties of a military have been taken over by the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Royal Police Force. The U.S. military has a training and advisory role.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The U.S. Peace Corps and Canadian Crossroads organizations maintain a presence in Saint Vincent. Scandinavian, Taiwanese, and Japanese aid agencies all have active projects in the islands. The World Health Organization had some success in an AIDS awareness campaign, with the result that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has one of the highest rates of condom use in the world near the end of the 1990s.

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

Churches organize many activities, but secular clubs are plentiful. These include drama groups, lodges, nature organizations, the girl and boy scouts, and [domino](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Dominoes.html) playing, soccer, and cricket clubs.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***Division of Labor by Gender.***Men and women work together on many activities, but typically men do the farming, women do the gardening, and men work at sea. Traditionally, only women sell produce in the market square; only men sell fish. Women are paid less than men at service jobs.

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***Although women have more economic power than in many peasant economies and are often heads of households, men have a higher status. Relationships between men and women are placed overtly in a context of monetary/sexual favor exchange.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Family vacation packages

***Marriage.***Three forms of conjugal relationship are recognized: "visiting" (the couple reside separately), "keeping" (cohabitation), and legal marriage. Among the majority of the population, the tendency is to marry later in life, usually after a couple has had several children together. It is common for women and men to have a number of children by different partners.

***Domestic Unit.***Households in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines may be composed of extended families, nuclear families, or individuals. The matrifocal, multigeneration family is typical. Overall, the composition of the household is flexible. In times of need, children are "lent" or "shifted" to the households of kin to lighten the subsistence needs of a household.

***Inheritance.***Inheritance is bilateral according to British law. Family land is always inherited jointly and cannot be broken up.

***Kin Groups.***People recognize kin of any degree and will go out of their way to be especially courteous and generous to them, but there are no kin groupings larger than the extended family.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***For most Vincentians, the umbilicus or "[navel string](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Umbilical_cord.html)" is planted under a fruit-bearing tree shortly after birth, so that the child will have a healthy and productive life. The child is not given a name until about four weeks after birth. Meanwhile, the infant is coddled and cuddled and played with by all in the household. Care is taken not to become too attached to the infant unless it should sicken and die from too much love—a condition known as *love maljo.*

Family vacation packages



*Men loading plastic-wrapped banana bunches onto a lighter for transfer to a freighter anchored in deeper water. Bananas are one of the major exports of Saint Vincent.*

***Child Rearing and Education.***Children are raised by everyone in the household and in the extended family. Children early develop a sense of security about their place in society. At the age of five or six, the child may begin to attend school. Education is free but not compulsory up to about eight years of age. After that, tuition must be paid. Many families cannot afford to send their children to school at any age, and their children work on the farms as soon as they are able. Literacy is in excess of 80 percent, and given their occupational opportunities, Vincentians are over educated on the whole. People often must have several O-levels (equivalent to one or two years of American college) to be hired as a clerk in a store.

***Higher Education.***Saint Vincent has a small teacher's college, a nursing school, and a medical college on the main island. The medical college is geared to foreign students, only admitting one or two Vincentians on scholarship per class. A University of West Indies Extension office offers some classes but no degrees.

Family vacation packages

Etiquette

Generosity is the main feature of Vincentian conduct. Vincentians give of themselves and their resources to an extraordinary degree. Two customs that may strike the visitor as unusual are that it is a serious breach of etiquette to call someone's name in public and that the use of cameras by foreigners is likely to elicit an angry or violent response.

Religion

Almost everyone in Saint Vincent is a Christian, and most Christian denominations are represented. A native religion, a combination of African rituals and Christian liturgy, has formed on Saint Vincent. Its followers are known as the Converted, or Spiritual Baptists. Believed by the rest of the population to have a particular facility with spirits, they are utilized by most Vincentians to conduct rituals at wakes and at other times of spiritual unrest. The local "pointer," the Converted ritual specialist, may also be consulted for illness or psychological unease. Rastafarians also have a presence in Saint Vincent.

***Religious Beliefs.***Saint Vincent is a Christian country, although a few Bahai can be found. Main denominations are Anglican, Catholic, Methodist, and Pentecostal. About 10 percent of the population belongs to the local "Converted" religion (also known as "Spiritual Baptist"), a combination of African and Christian rituals. Several hundred Vincentians are Rastafarians.

Among a large portion of the Vincentian population, dreams are interpreted as real spiritual events and many ordinary Vincentians fear dreams, as they may predict misfortune. "Jumbies" (evil spirits), "Rounces" (spirit-animals that produce night terrors), "Ghosts" (the spirits of lie people seeking their graves), "Diablesses" (demon temptresses), "Haggs" (vampire-like creatures), and other supernatural beings inhabit Saint Vincent and many small ritual actions are required to protect one from them. These include keeping a bottle of hot pepper sauce by one's bed, placing a jar of urine in one's yard, and spinning around before entering one's home. Some young people scoff at these practices.

***Religious Practitioners.***The ordinary Christian denominations have ministers, priests, and bishops as they are found in other Christian countries. The Rastafarians have elders, who do not conduct any special rituals but instead are respected interpreters of scripture (the Bible). The Converted have a host of religious practitioners, the most important of which is the office of "pointer." The local pointer is the person to whom most Vincentians will turn in times of spiritual trouble. Although the Converted are persecuted socially and their religion was actually illegal until 1965, they are still revered and feared for their powers. The Converted say, "They curse us in the day, but they seek us out at night."

***Rituals and Holy Places.***There are no pilgrimage locations on Saint Vincent. Church buildings themselves are the only permanently holy places. Rituals by the Converted temporarily sanctify specific locations—a house, the market square, a crossroads, a beach—for services they hold there.

Traditionally the Converted conduct a wake for a family (regardless of the denomination) on any one of the third-, ninth-, fortieth-night, or six-month or one-year anniversary of the death—but the "nine nights" and the "forty days" are the most important. The Converted receive a ritual payment of hot cross buns and cocoa tea.

Family vacation packages

The celebrations of Carnival (originally before Lent) and Nine Mornings (before Christmas) began as religious rituals, but now are primarily secular in nature.

***Death and the Afterlife.***The dead in Saint Vincent are remarkably mobile. On All Saint's Eve (31 October) and on All Soul's Eve (1 November), souls of the deceased are believed to leave the grave and to wander about Saint Vincent visiting their favorite places. Lighted candles are placed on the graves of departed family members to guide the souls back to their resting places.

The dead also roam on the third, ninth, and fortieth days after death, and on the six-month and one-year anniversary of the death. The Converted traditionally are called to conduct rituals in the home of the deceased on any of these days.

Medicine and Health Care

Health care is accessible to people in all parts of the island. Basic health care is free or low cost to all, but any special services and all surgery are expensive. Many of the poor forgo operations that would be considered necessary in other countries.

Secular Celebrations

The two most important events in the Vincentian calendar are Christmas and Carnival. There are, besides, twelve national holidays throughout the year: New Year's Day, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Day (22 January, celebrating the discovery of the islands by Columbus), Good Friday, Easter Monday, Labor Day (1 May, also known locally as "Fisherman's Day"), Whit Monday, CARICOM Day (celebrating the Caribbean common market), Carnival Tuesday, August Monday (1 August, Emancipation Day), Independence Day (27 October), Christmas Day, and Boxing Day (26 December).

Christmas includes three segments: Nine Mornings, Christmas Day, and "the two days following Christmas." Following a custom begun during slavery, on the Nine Mornings Vincentians hold parties each day in the pre-dawn hours, then go to work, and party again the next day for each of the nine days. In Kingstown, large sections of the town are taken over by the party goers. Christmas Day is spent with one's family. Boxing Day and the day after are spent visiting neighbors. The Christmas season coincides with a cooling "Christmas breeze" and is looked forward to for the temporary relief from the tropical heat as much as for the celebrations.

Carnival celebrations, with their attendant calypso and costume contests, are sponsored by the government.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***The visual arts are not highly elaborated on Saint Vincent. Several musical groups do support themselves, although mainly by tours and record sales off the island. The government sponsors the Carnival celebration which formerly was held according to the religious calendar, but was moved to July to encourage tourism.

***Literature.***There is almost no written literature produced by Vincentians themselves. Myths, folktales, and other stories are rarely passed down in any formal way. However, Vincentians place great value on the ability to create good stories, jokes, and riddles and to present them in a convincing and entertaining way. Impromptu speaking contests and joke contests may be arranged in any gathering. Moonlit nights in the rural villages are especially noted as a time for these performances.

***Graphic Arts.***There is little in the way of graphic arts in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Occasionally an individual self-taught artist will gain attention.

***Performance Arts.***Calypso, Soka, Reggae, and Gospel are the main forms of music heard in Saint Vincent. Competitive caroling groups also perform at Christmas time.

Dramatic presentations are held by school and church groups throughout the islands as fund-raising events. The most important of these are "concerts," variety shows featuring short plays, jokes, and singing for which a small entrance fee is charged.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

Local development of the sciences is negligible; however, the islands themselves are the focus of much scientific activity. Scientists from around the world are attracted by Saint Vincent's volcano and its endemic wildlife. Dozens of sociologists and anthropologists have conducted major research on aspects of Vincentian society.

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User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_1)

**elvis**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am so impressed by what I've just read. Well,usually I've never been interested in the Carribeans until now when I just realized that I had to also go therein & take part in the development of this wonderful Island. I'm a stronghold christian & immediately as our organization offered to come work in this Island, that was my main fear that I might find any suitable christian religion which might suit me considering the background from which I came from but after going thru this article, I guess I had a very wrong judgement.  
  
I as an individual has decided to come over to st.vincent & the grenadines to do some more community development work as it has always been my passion to work with people. As such I'm a humanist & making such a decision to come over give a helping to this country will be my greatest previlege. Also, I just b'liv that I'll meet extremely nice people on this Island considering what I've just read from the article but most of all my 1st mission is to offer what I think the vincentians might need & in return take what they've got to offer. I haven't have that much international xpirience as such though but I guest st.vincent is simply the right choice I've made.  
  
As I earlier mentioned, I'm doing our organization is doing community development & so that's simply what I've got to offer the st.vincentians. Little did I know that the carribeans is the 2nd worlds' infected HIV/AIDS region & st.vincent & grenadines most affected by this epidemic. Also interesting about the great progress the WHO has made in the early 90's of the country making the awareness campaign which have made most peeps on the Island to become cautious with their sexual attitudes which & have had a great impact on the country. These are some of the news that we don't oftenly here nowadays in most countries who are so affected with this pandemic.  
  
All in all I see a bigger picture for the future of this country & I'll be more than just previlege to partake in this great change with the little that I might eventually offer as time will tell.  
  
simply elvis

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_2)

**sandrine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi,  
  
I am myself from Martinique in the [Caribean](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Caribbean.html) and I was truly happy to read something else than the fact we have great beaches and what great party people we are!! It is refreshing to have real facts. All important information is contained in this article. I actually think of relocating to St-Vincent and I'm glad I could learn more about the Islands.Thank you

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_3)

**Onika Griffith**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, my name is Onika and I'm from the small village of Byera but currently studying in the UK. I must congratulate the individual/s who has managed to put this article together. I think it is brilliant and it subs up the country in a exceptional way.To me if anyone wants to know anything about our country I would personally recommend this article becaue it gives a full insight into SVG. Well done!

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_4)

**Jenny**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey,  
I'm actually living in St. Vincent currently and it was such an amazement to come across this article. you've obviously done your research very meticulously, as I've never seen our little island described in such vivid detail. this is exceptional work and I'm extremely pleased to see the smaller islands of the Caribbean, despite their size making such a great impact on your mind. Darling you have done a wonderful job and i intend to show this article to a couple friends.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_5)

[**Emily**](mailto:mercurymadness36%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello,  
  
I am a writer who enjoys creating characters of different backgrounds, and recently I've wanted to broaden my usual 'American-or-French' horizons. This article was very, very helpful with giving me an overview of not only the general idea of what the island is like, but how the people interact with each other (gender and age wise). Thank you very, very much for writing this!

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_6)

[**Sherese**](mailto:Islandgem79%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20ca)

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I am a Vincentian-Canadian living in Montreal. I found this site while researching about My Country for a French class report. I was happy to read about the facts, and i had a few laughs about some of our practices, to see where and how they originated. Our people are strong and our culture is rich, we welcome change but we are proud of our heritage. We love to party, sing, dance, tell stories and nothing beats a full moon night cook. We go to the beach on holidays where we play games and cook. We eat fresh fruits and we survive off our land and livestocks. We are not all rich or employed but we always eat and we are generally A happy people. God Bless My St Vincent and the Grenadines.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_7)

[**Volma Westfield**](mailto:volmawestfield%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article captures the nature and the spirit of Vincentians. I especially liked your phrase "the dead in St.Vincent are remarkably mobile" - I hadn't thought of our commemoration of our loved ones and dearly departed in such a colorful and humorous light. I am proud to be a "Vincie" for all the reasons you highlighted. I am writing about the Vincentian education system so it was interesting that you found Vincentians to be "over educated". I have no doubt that my foray into this topic will shed some light as to the cause and possible solutions for this dilemna.  
  
Volma "Libby" Westfield

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_8)

[**Lornette**](mailto:lcbranch711%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was born in St. Vincent but reside in the United States most of my life but still correspond with relatives and updates in St. Vincent, I truly love St. Vincent and reading about the history and culture of St. Vincent really enlightened and educates me, I even smile at some of the statement I read, they are so true based on my child hood life there. Thank you so much for refreshing my memory of such a beautiful country.

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_9)

**Charlotte**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello,  
  
My name is Charlotte and I'm second generation of ST.VINCENT and I've been given a project to chose a country for my school (11 years old) And I've chosen my home town. I've found this information very useful and have put in my own words about the tradition of ST.VINCENT. I have also written about my cousin Ralph Gonsalves (my cousin) also Prim Minister of St.Vincent.  
  
I once thank you for your useful information and if I get a good mark, it will be all down to you.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_10)

[**TEACHER G**](mailto:marymjd1%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

While looking on the net,trying to fine someone my mother has spoken of i came across this wonderful article of St.Vincent.I want so very much to visit this wonderful place,especially Pointer Mercury at his chruch.The chruch is call Saint Peter Spiritual Baptise,in SV./IF anyone out there that can direct an address or email,I will be most appreciative sincerly,ON the net I've watched many spiritul sessions and some brings joy to my soul,because it reminds me of my spiritual mudda soo much.Being who she was and knowing who I AM MAKES A BIG DIFFERANCE IN MY SOUL/LIFE. PLEASE DROP ME AN EMAIL Can't wait to here from you. A great believer in the Father,Jesus Christ,and the Holy Spirit

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_11)

**Niccky**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am a proud Vincetian studying in Latin America and i have found your information very helpful. i am presently in the process of starting my thesis on, the history of SVG in relation to the contributions of the Garifunas and Africans in the aspect of culture. thank you once again...:)

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_12)

**Daniel**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Interesting piece; although there are some inaccuracies. In general it should like the writings of someone who is either loosely familiar with SVG or someone who has a somewhat sterilised view of the island. Nevertheless, itâ€™s interesting.

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_13)

**Pleasant,**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

What kind of clothing is worn in St. Vincent and the Grenadines?

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_14)

**vicklee**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

well done job.I came across this article while doing an assignment on the history of family planning in St Vincent and the Grenadines.It is so enticing to know what beauty our little country have to offer.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_15)

**jerry**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WHILE LOOKING UP SOME INFO FOR MY DAUGHTERS SCHOOL PROJECT ON CULTURE AND LANGUAGE IM VERY IMPRESS ON THIS ARTICLE IM BORN AND RAISED IN ARNOS VALE AND NOW MY SOCIAL CLUB LEADER IS NOW THE MINISTER OF TOURISM,SPORT AND CULTURE(CECIL MCKIE)KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK AND PLEASE FINISH THAT AIRPORT THAT I CAN TRAVEL TO MY BLEESED ISLAND LN A REGULAR BASIS GOD BLESS ST.VINCENT AND ALL ITS PEOPLE

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_16)

**Janet Stewart**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Vincentian living in the united states since 1965. Currently retired teacher and in the process of writing a book about my childhood growing up in St Vincent copled with the American experience.I was smitten by heartfelt gratitude and pride when I read your article. Would love to share my ideas with you. Thank You!

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_17)

**Janet Stewart**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Vincentian living in the united states since 1965. Currently retired teacher and in the process of writing a book about my childhood growing up in St Vincent copled with the American experience.I was smitten by heartfelt gratitude and pride when I read your article. Would love to share my ideas with you. Thank You!

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_18)

**Fellicia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am beyond amazed. I am vincentian myself and I didnt realize how much of my country means to me. To be honest,Reading this was an experience,I learned things that I never even knew. Thankyou for this site. It meant allot to me. Now whnen people ask about my cultureI 'll have lots to say and to talk about. I hope allot of people come visit our country so we can get a allot of tourism. It's a caribbean experience.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_19)

**S.Lewis**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm Vincentian by heritage, living in England. I found this article specific to our culture and ways, but what I found most warming was that my parents after relocating to England kept the Vincentian traditions sooo much alive in my growing up. Now looking back, I am truly proud to have such a rich heritage, full of variety an love.  
Thank you to the author of this article, you described our value an belief system with precision an eloquence, you captured St. Vincent in essence.  
Excellent!!!

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_20)

**Alwyn Westfield**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article is very informative. However, I will like to add that the Converted religion had little to do with African slaves. The religion was started by the Caribs in the 17th Century who integrated Christianity into their religious practices. St Vincent had slavery for just over thirty years. Africans were Animists and their religious practices were akin to [Shango](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Shango.html). It is true that with the spread of Converted to the other islands, some African slaves and free men and women integrated Converted practices into their Shango resulting in Orasia Baptist which later evolved into Spiritual Baptists. If Converted was an African construct, it would have started in the larger islands which had large slave population especially for a longer time period. As a Converted with Carib Ancestry from Du Valle there are many stories handed down.

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_21)

**akeba bernard**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is a amazing history on st Vincent, and i love it

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_22)

**Ashley Cambridge-Sutton**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm a proud Canadian-Vincentian!Great article on ST.Vincent And The Grenadines.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_23)

**sarine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very good piece on my homeland. Some updating needed though. There are quite a few Vincentian authors in my opinion.

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_24)

**yanique palmer**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi am a Jamaican doing my research on this country and .this site is not found informative to me. am here doing my research on the language spoken by this country and how history has influenced the language situation. there are info's on the language spoken and no info on how history has influenced it. this has not helped me in no way at all

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_25)

**kaylie**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I do appreciate the insight shown here by the author of this article but there are a lot of details here that i look at as part of our history which is stated as happening in the present, the use of the past tense would have been more accurate.  
Needless to say i did learn a few things about the culture of my land of birth, I'm a young vincentian and didn't have the privilege of growing up with any of my grandparents so i missed out on some our traditions, thank you for enlightening me.

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_26)

**Liny.**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I personally taught that doing research would of been hard and wouldn't be able to do it without help, but after reading this i got to say i understood everything i had to understand about their culture, and i am impressed. Today i learned things i would of learned in months. thanks for making the information so clear. :D

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_27)

[**Natasha**](mailto:Natasha%20[dot]%20n%20[dot]%20cox%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Wow! I couldn't stop reading, how amazing is this page. It's given me lots of information to look further into. It seems there's not much going on in terms of the arts in St Vincent and this is where my interest lies so this is good to know there's a gap waiting for people like me to fill! Vincy here I come...who's with me?! ;-)

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_28)

**JacquesA**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Very information piece by this writer. I stumbled upon this website while researching into this country. I am interested in a community development instructor course by a U.S.-based Non-Governmental Organization which said part of the training would take place in St Vincent. After reading this article, I am convinced that I would be meeting very nice people there if I decide on this course by the One World Center organization.  
  
"For most Vincentians, the umbilicus or "navel string" is planted under a fruit-bearing tree shortly after birth, so that the child will have a healthy and productive life. The child is not given a name until about four weeks after birth" and "Children are raised by everyone in the household and in the extended family."  
  
This is EXACTLY our practice in West Africa where I originally came from [I am from [French-speaking](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/French_language.html) Benin, formerly Dahomey] before being a US citizen.

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_29)

**Antonia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Nice informative article that leaves the room for cultural interaction. The room for the add ons and the truth of the passing down of tales are not always simply inaccuracies but the evidence of intermarrying and procreating between a somewhat mixed culture.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_30)

**Renroy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am a Vincentian living in Montreal,Canada. The information provided in this column is almost precise.St.Vincent and the Grenadines will find it's position on the world map when our International Airport is completed. I pray to GOD that it will be ready by this Summer. Having such an airport in operation,will boost the economy of this beautiful island.l am talking about bigger hotels, a better taxi service, may be encouraging a few factories.Vincentians with money coming in to open business. Thank you to all Vincentians abroad for your total consideration in the development of St.Vincent and the  
Grenadines. GOD bless you.

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_31)

**Rose**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

After reading the article, I am impressed specially on the kind of people st. vincent and the grenadines has. Actually, what i am interested is to know their national costume for a kid. If anyone knows, please don't hesitate to email me. My son, was tasked to represent the place during the UN activity in his school. Hope you can help me guys! Thanks! (from Philippines)

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_32)

**JO**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey, great article. What were the spiritual practices before the British and Spanish brought Christianity to St. Vincent?  
  
Both of my parents are from St.Vincent. I was born in Canada. Trying to find out more about my history.  
  
Thanks

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_33)

**Russell Bailey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi my name Russell Bailey living in the uk after reading this article.It remind me of my days growing up in St vincen. thank you for reminding me how great our country is.Well done

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_34)

[**Emmanuel**](mailto:abolajioluwatoyinoe%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this site, ans i will always use it. the person that own this site help me today, what have been looking for since this days, i found it here and this make me happy.

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_35)

**Grace Alban**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for writing this. It's really helpful for my studies, but this was listed under cultural aspects of the country on many other websites, and I don't see any of that.

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_36)

**Leslie-Ann Millington**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hello, I am currently living in St. Vincent (born and raised). I came across this article looking for some important aspects of my country. While this piece written is very comprehensive and well out together, I think it may be misleading to someone reading it as of today (3rd May, 2018). It speaks well about our past and where we as Vincentians have a foundation to work with, but it also needs to be updated. We have long past some of the things mentioned here and I would like to see it being reflected. A lot of inaccuracies are noted as well but nevertheless, the effort is appreciated.

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_37)

**valerie horne**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i am Valerie Horne and am so impressed with the wealth of information that ihave just read. i was searching for some information in preparation for our Church independence celebration and it has helped me a great deal. we have such a rich history in St. Vincent. thaks to all who was able to put this together. great job!

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_38)

**Paige Durrant**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm vincentian and I am not familiar with us speaking creole. It is called broken English.

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_39)

[**Andrew Clarke**](mailto:Stvg63%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I am from lowmans Hill SVG and currently living in Vancouver Canada. I enjoyed reading about our blessed homeland . It was nice to read ,the encouraging comments of fellow Vincentians. God bless our homeland .

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html#Comments_40)

[**Dafflyn Campbell**](mailto:campbelldafflyn%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Fairly decent article but I do believe with wider research the facts would have been more sound. There are inadequacies that need to be corrected as there has been shift in culture and much of the information is historical facts. The St. Vincent written about in the article is not the one existing today.

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" [Saint Lucia](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Lucia.html)[Samoa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of Samoa

Samoa

Culture Name

Samoan

Orientation

***Identification.***Oral tradition holds that the Samoan archipelago was created by the god Tagaloa at the beginning of history. Until 1997, the western islands were known as Western Samoa or Samoa I Sisifo to distinguish them from the nearby group known as American Samoa or Amerika Samoa. The distinction was necessitated by the partitioning of the archipelago in 1899. All Samoans adhere to a set of core social values and practices known as *fa'a Samoa*and speak the Samoan language. The official name today is Samoa.

***Location and Geography.***Samoa includes nine inhabited islands on top of a [submarine](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Submarine.html) mountain range. The largest islands are Savai'i at 703 square miles (1820 square kilometers) and Upolu at 430 square miles (1114 square kilometers), on which the capital, Apia, is located. The capital and port developed around Apia Bay from an aggregation of thirteen villages.

***Demography.***The population is estimated at 172,000 for the year 2000, 94 percent of which is is ethnically Samoan. A small number of people of mixed descent are descendants of Samoans and European, Chinese, Melanesians, and other Polynesians who settled in the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***Samoan belongs to a group of [Austronesian languages](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Austronesian_languages.html) spoken throughout Polynesia. It has a chiefly or polite variant used in elite communication and a colloquial form used in daily communication. Samoan is the language of instruction in elementary schools and is used alongside English in secondary and tertiary education, government, commerce, religion, and the broadcast media. The language is a cherished symbol of cultural identity.

***Symbolism.***A representation of the Southern Cross appears on both the national flag and the emblem of state. The close link between Samoan society and Christianity is symbolized in the national motto "Samoa is founded on God" ( *Fa'avae ile Atua Samoa*) and in a highlighted cross on the national emblem. The sea and the coconut palm, both major food sources, also are shown on the emblem. An orator's staff and sinnet fly whisk and a multilegged wooden bowl in which the beverage [kava](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Kava.html) is prepared for chiefs are symbolic of the authority of tradition. A political movement, *O le Mau a Pule*, promoted independence in the first half of the [twentieth century](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/20th_century.html), calling for Samoa for Samoans ( *Samoa mo Samoa*) and engaging in confrontations with colonial powers over the right to self-government. For some, the struggles of the Mau, in particular the martyrdom of a national chief in a confrontation with New Zealand soldiers, are symbols of the nation's determination to reclaim sovereignty. Samoans celebrate the peaceful attainment of constitutional independence in 1962 on 1 June.

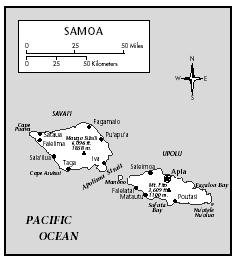
Best restaurants near me

The national anthem and a religious anthem, *Lota Nu'u ua ou Fanau ai*("My Village in Which I Was Born") are sung to celebrate national identity. Samoans refer to their country in these anthems as a gift from God and refer to themselves in formal speech as the children of Samoa, brothers and sisters, and the Samoan family.

History and Ethnic Relations

Family vacation packages

***Emergence of the Nation.***In the mid-nineteenth century, Germany, Britain, and the United States established consular presences and attempted to impose their authority. Mutual suspicion, disunity, and a lack of military resources meant that the powers were largely unsuccessful until they agreed



*Samoa*

to "rationalize" their Pacific interests at the turn of the century.

The western part of the archipelago came under German control, and the eastern part under American naval administration. The German administration was determined to impose its authority and tried to undermine the Samoan polity and replace its titular heads with the kaiser. These attempts provoked varying degrees of anger between 1900 and 1914, when a small New Zealand expeditionary force, acting on British orders, ended the German administration.

After World War I, New Zealand administered Western Samoa under a League of Nations mandate. It too was determined to establish authority and pursued a course similar to that of the Germans. It proved an inept administration, and its mishandling of the *S.S. Talune's*arrival, which resulted in the death of 25 percent of the population from influenza and its violent reaction to the Mau procession in 1929, left Samoans suspicious and disillusioned. These and other clumsy attempts to promote village and agricultural development strengthened Samoans' determination to reclaim their autonomy. Their calls found the ear of a sympathetic Labor government in New Zealand in the mid-1930s, but World War II intervened before progress was made.

After World War II, the United Nations made Samoa a trusteeship and gave New Zealand responsibility for preparing it for independence. A better trained and more sympathetic administration and a determined and well-educated group of Samoans led the country through a series of national consultations and constitutional conventions. That process produced a unique constitution that embodied elements of Samoan and British political traditions and led to a peaceful transition to independence on [1 January](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/January_1.html) 1962.

***National Identity.***The national and political cultures that characterize the nation are unambiguously Samoan. This is in large part a consequence of a constitutional provision that limited both suffrage and political representation to those who held chiefly titles and are widely regarded as protectors of culture and tradition. These arrangements continued until 1991, when the constitution was amended to permit universal suffrage. While representation is still limited to chiefs, the younger titleholders now being elected generally have broader experience and more formal education than their predecessors.

***Ethnic Relations.***Samoan society has been remarkably free of ethnic tension, largely as a result of the dominance of a single ethnic group and a history of intermarriage that has blurred ethnic boundaries. Samoans have established significant migrant communities in a number of countries, including New Zealand, Australia, and the United States, and smaller communities in other neighbors.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

The spatial arrangement of villages beyond the capital has changed little. Most villages lie on flat land beside the sea and are connected by a coastal road. Clusters of sleeping houses, their associated cooking houses, and structures for ablutions are arranged around a central common ( *malae*). Churches, pastors' homes, meeting houses and guest houses, and women's committee meeting houses also occupy prominent positions around the malae. Schools stand on land provided by villages and frequently on the malae.

The availability of migrant remittances has transformed the design and materials used in private homes and public buildings. Houses typically have large single rectangular spaces around which some furniture is spread and family portraits, certificates, and religious pictures are hung. Homes increasingly have indoor cooking and bathing facilities. The new architecture has reshaped social relations. Indigenous building materials are being replaced by sawn lumber framing and cladding, iron roofing, and concrete foundations. The coral lime cement once used in larger public buildings has been replaced by concrete and steel.

Family vacation packages

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Samoans eat a mixture of local and imported foods. Local staples include fish, lobster, crab, chicken, and pork; lettuce and cabbage; root vegetables such as *talo, ta'amu,*and yams; tree crops such as [breadfruit](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Breadfruit.html) and coconut; and local beverages such as coffee and cocoa. Imported foods include rice, canned meat and fish, butter, jam, honey, flour, sugar, bread, tea, and carbonated beverages.

Best restaurants near me

Many families drink beverages such as tea throughout the day but have a single main meal together in the evening. A range of restaurants, including a McDonald's, in the capital are frequented largely by tourists and the local elite.

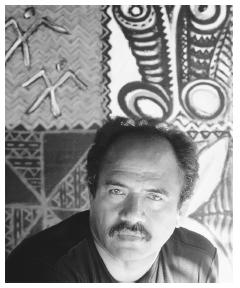
***Food Customs at Ceremonial Occasions.***Sharing of food is a central element of ceremonies and features in Sunday meals known as *toana'i*, the feasts that accompany weddings and funerals and the conferring of chiefly titles, and annual feasts such as White Sunday. Special meals are marked by a larger than usual amount of food, a greater range of delicacies, and formality. Food also features in ceremonial presentations and exchanges between families and villages. The presentation of cooked whole pigs is a central feature of such events, and twenty-liter drums of salted beef are increasingly popular. Kava ( *'ava*), a beverage made from the powdered root of *Piper methysticum,*made and shared in a ceremonially defined order at meetings of chiefs ( *matai*) and less formally among men after work.

Family vacation packages

***Basic Economy.***The agricultural and industrial sectors employ 70 percent of the workforce and account for 65 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP). The service sector employs 30 percent of those employed and accounts for 35 percent of the GDP. Much of this sector is associated with the tourist industry, which is limited by intense competition from other islands in the region and its dependence on economic conditions in source countries.

The economy ran large trade deficits in the 1990s. Products are exported to New Zealand, American Samoa, Australia, Germany and the United States, and imports, intermediate goods,

Best restaurants near me



*Samoan artist Fatu Feu'u attends the South Pacific Arts Festival.*

foods, and capital goods come from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, and the United States. The economy is highly dependent on remittances from expatriates in New Zealand, Australia, the United States, and American Samoa and aid from New Zealand, Australia, and Germany. These remittances are declining because overseas-born children of migrants have attenuated their connections with the nation, whose geopolitical significance has declined since the Cold War ended.

Best restaurants near me

***Land Tenure and Property.***Much agricultural production comes from the 87 percent of the land held under customary tenure and associated with villages. The control of this land is vested in elected chiefs (matai), who administer it for the families ( *aiga*) they head. The remaining 13 percent is land held by the crown and a small area of freehold residential land around the capital.

***Trade.***Samoa produces some primary commodities for export: hardwood timber, copra and coconut products, root vegetables, coffee, cocoa, and fish. Agricultural produce constitutes 90 percent of exports. The most promising export crop, taro, was effectively eliminated by leaf blight in 1993. A small industrial sector designed to provide [import substitution](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Import_substitution_industrialization.html) and exports processes primary commodities such as coconut cream and oil, animal feed, soap, biscuits, cigarettes, and beer. A multinational corporation has established a wiring harness assembly plant whose production is reexported; and a clothing assembly plant is planned.

Family vacation packages

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***Samoan society is meritocratic. Those with recognized ability have traditionally been elected to leadership of families. Aside from four nationally significant chiefly titles, the influence of most titles is confined to the families and villages with which they are associated. Title holders gained status and influence not only from accumulating resources but also from their ability to mobilize and redistribute them. These principles work against significant permanent disparities in wealth. The power of chiefs has been reduced, and the wealth returned by expatriates has flowed into all sectors of society, undermining traditional rank-wealth correlations. The public influence of women is becoming increasingly apparent. A commercial elite that has derived its power from the accumulation and investment of private wealth has become increasingly influential in politics.

Family vacation packages

Political Life

***Government.***The legislative branch of the government consists of a unicameral Legislative Assembly ( *O Le Fono a Faipule*) elected to five-year terms by universal suffrage. A twelve-member cabinet nominated by the prime minister is appointed by the head of state, Malietoa Tanumafili II, who has held that position since 1962. Forty-seven members are elected by Samoans in eleven electorates based on traditional political divisions. Two members at large represent general electors. Only holders of matai titles can be elected to the Fono.

Legislation is administered by a permanent public service that consists of people chosen on the basis of merit. The quality of public service has been questioned periodically since independence. Concern with the quality of governance has led the current government to engage in training programs aimed at institutional strengthening.

The judicial branch includes a Supreme Court, a court of appeals, and a lands and titles court. These agencies deal with matters that cannot be dealt with by village polities. Village polities ( *fono a matai*) are empowered by the Village Fono Act of 1990 to make and administer bylaws for the regulation of



*Upolu police officer in traditional dress.*

village activities and to punish those who break them.

***Social Problems and Control.***The role of village politics in the maintenance of order is important because the state has no army and a relatively small police force. This limits the ability of the state to enforce laws and shapes its relations with villages, which retain significant autonomy.

Samoans accept and trust these institutions but have found that they are ineffective in areas such as the pursuit of commercial debts. Recent cases have pointed to tension between collective rights recognized, emphasized, and enforced by village polities, and the individual rights conferred by the constitution in areas such as freedom of religion and speech.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The government is responsible for health, education, and welfare in cooperation with villages and churches. Health care and education are provided for a nominal cost. Families provide for their members' welfare. The state grants a small old-age pension, and the Catholic Church runs a senior citizens' home.

Family vacation packages



*People under the portico of the immigration office as traffic passes by in Apia. Ethnic tensions are virtually non-existent in Samoa.*

Nongovernmental Organizations and Other Associations

The most influential [nongovernmental organizations](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Non_governmental_organization.html) (NGOs) are the churches, in which 99 percent of Samoans participate actively and which actively comment on the government's legislative program and activity. A small number of NGOs work for the rights of women and the disabled, environmental conservation, and transparency in government. Professional associations exert some influence on the drafting of legislation. These organizations have a limited impact on the life of most residents.

Gender Roles and Statuses

The organization of traditional production was clearly gendered, and the parts of this mode of production that remain intact are still gendered. The constitution provides for equality of opportunity, and there are no entrenched legal, social, or religious obstacles to equality for women. There is some evidence of growing upward social mobility by women.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Family vacation packages

Samoan society is composed of extended families ( *aiga potopoto*), each of which is associated with land and a chiefly title. All Samoans inherit membership and land use rights in the *aiga*of their parents' parents. They may choose to live with one or more of *aiga*and develop strong ties with those in which they live. Choices are determined by matters such as the availability of resources and status of various groups and personal preference. Aiga potopoto include resident members who work the land, "serve" the chief, and exercise full rights of membership and nonresident members who live outside the group but have some rights in its activities. Resident members live in clusters of households within the village, share some facilities and equipment, and work on family-land controlled by the matai.

Family vacation packages

***Inheritance.***Rights to reside on and use land are granted to members of a kin group who request them, subject to availability. Rights lapse at death, and matai may then reassign them. There is a growing tendency to approve the transmission of rights to parcels of land from parents to children, protecting investments in development and constituting a form of de facto freehold tenure. Since neither lands nor titles can be formally transmitted without the consent of the kin group, the only property that can be assigned is personal property.

Many residents die intestate and with little personal property. With increasing personal wealth, provision for the formal disposition of wealth may assume greater importance. This is not a foreign concept, since matai have traditionally made their wishes known before death in a form of will known as a *mavaega*. The Public Trust Office and legal practitioners handle the administration of estates.

Socialization

***Child Rearing and Education.***Younger people are expected to respect their elders and comply with their demands. Justification for this principle is found in Samoan tradition and Christian scripture. The only exception exists in early childhood, when infants are protected and indulged by parents, grandparents, and older siblings. After around age five, children are expected to take an active, if limited, part in the family economy. From then until marriage young people are expected to comply unquestioningly with their parents' and elders' wishes.

Family vacation packages

Great importance is attached to the family's role in socialization. A "good" child is alert and intelligent and shows deference, politeness, and obedience to elders and respect for Samoan custom ( *aganu'u fa'a samoa*) and Christian principles and practices. The belief that the potential for learning these qualities is partly genetic and partly social and is defined initially within the family is grounded in both Samoan and Christian thought.

Formal education is provided in secular and religious institutions. There are elementary, intermediate, and secondary secular schools run by the government or churches and church-linked classes that provide religious instruction. There is great respect and desire for higher education, and a significant part of the education budget is committed to supporting the National University of Samoa, the nursing school, the teachers training college, the trades training institute, and overseas training.

Family vacation packages

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***Samoa is overwhelmingly Christian. The major denominations—Congregationalist, Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Latter-Day Saints—have been joined recently by smaller ones such as the SDA and charismatic [Pentecostal](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Pentecostalism.html) groups such as Assembly of God. Clergy and leaders are prepared at theological training institutions at home and abroad. Small Baha'i and Muslim groups have formed in recent years.

Medicine and Health Care

Parallel systems of introduced and indigenous knowledge and practice coexist. Certain conditions are believed to be "Samoan illnesses" ( *ma'i samoa*) that are explained and treated by indigenous practitioners and others to be "European illnesses" ( *ma'i papalagi*), which are best understood and treated by those trained in the Western biomedical tradition.

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—C LUNY M ACPHERSON

**Also read article about**[**Samoa**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Samoa.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_1)

**Moana Slade**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I just want to thank you for making this site so easy for me to learn about my culture and where i come from. Some things though i would like to ask you to add. Something on the tradition of tattooing, and the language. I would very much appreiciate it...  
  
Thanks

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_2)

**Edwina Nielsen**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like to thank you for having more information on this page,as it really had the most exaggerate notes for my research.well thanks again!!!

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_3)

**meegan walker**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i would like to say thanks but there are a few things that are missing like traditions of tattooing but it has really helped my project at school.

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_4)

**emma**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

just like to say thanks so much for all the good info you have to offer me it was a great help for me to learn more about where i was born.  
  
so thank you xx

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_5)

**Fatima Casserley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its really interesting finding about all the sayings often heard said by the elders but never fully understtood by us the younger generation. The site has actually helped a lot giving more meaning to the phrases with so much history behind the words. Thanks for that!  
  
p.s although I do agree with the others about the tatooing, very important but well done on the given information.

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_6)

**Kaitlyn**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this info is really helpful I'm glad there is a website that I can get info from. It helped with my project on Margaret Mead.

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_7)

**Toli Reupena**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanksfor the information, very informing and helpful for my assignment. Although im full samoan  
\  
but thanks again  
  
Toli

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_8)

[**Dianne**](mailto:whisperstone6%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for posting this information. I am working on my family ancestry and have learned that my grandmother was born in Samoa and I have connected to some of the extended family living there. Your site has helped me to better understand their customs and way of life as I live in Canada. Thanks so much again!

Family vacation packages

Dianne

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_9)

[**ruta televave**](mailto:ruta%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey there i just wanted to say thank you so much for having this site it helped me know more about myself and what my culture t radition is. i hope that everyone that comes on this site agrees with me. i now know alot about samoans then i did before and that means alot!  
  
thank you soo much  
heaps of LOVE to all of them that did this site.

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_10)

[**Austin Pittack**](mailto:AustinpPittack%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Tattooing was Very painful and they used little tools and they poked them with it from the waist down. This was for mainly chiefs of the villages. If you have any questions about samoa my whole family is samoan... Email me at ~AustinPittack@yahoo.com~ Samoan is mainly in my blood. Ive been studying because of my report at school. You will find alot on wikipedia.org or Samoa.co.uk These are great websites that will help you on finding out about your culture and will help on projects of yours.

Family vacation packages

~Austin~

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_11)

[**Silivale Faimata**](mailto:sydneyfaimata%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Okay , i didn`t realy grow up knowing my cultural side. And i`ve only been in SAMOA once. So what im saying is that i NOW know alot about the fa`a samoa way of life ; Now i need to speak and learn more samoan words ! But yeh thank you for making this website (:  
  
If you made changes to this website then please email me at - Sydneyfaimata@hotmail.com ; and the one thing that i would want this website is to have is foto`s of samoan people.

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_12)

[**Vaioleti Johnson**](mailto:faumuina_gurlie%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Its good how people make these kindd of websites!!  
Its better && easier for the Samoans or other cultures too  
learn about the Samoan culture:)Im glad iFound this website\*  
  
-685 Bby  
"Cheeehooo"

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_13)

[**Jeremy Zimmerman**](mailto:jeremyz1mmerman%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Does the Samoa culture have any traditional/unique ways of caring for their infants, things that they do with their infants, or any rituals, etc, etc (for both male and female). For example in the American culture it is traditionaly custom for the parents to prepare a detailed bedroom for their baby with all kinds of "goodies" and sometimes an overboard of items in the babies room (if this analysis helps). Please acknowledge as soon as possible, thanks.

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_14)

[**third gender**](mailto:yocanadianyo%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was going through the article, but the article doesn't talk about Fa'afafine (the third gender) in Samoan culture and how it is diversely accepted by everyone in Samoa. The interesting thing is these people don't call themselves gay, but rather it is an insult to call them gay because these people (Fa'afafine) mate with straight men. They get married with straight men and they feel it offensive if one Fa'afafine have sex with another (I think it is totally forbidden). This culture seem to be very interesting and soon I will go there for further study with my professor.

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_15)

[**Roxanne Goznales**](mailto:a%20[dot]%20gonzalesx%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I just wanna say that ur web site and facts have been very helpful, Im doing a paper on the life of a samoan and U have provided me with all the information i needed thank you for my good grade... lol

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_16)

[**REGINA ANNA POLLY GREY**](mailto:GREY%20[dot]%20REGINA%20[at]%20YAHOO%20[dot]%20COM)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

WHAT A THOUGHT! THIS WEBSITE IS A GREAT HELP TO ALL THOSE SEEKING ASSISTANT OF SOME SORT ESP THE HERITAGE SIDE. I'M SEARCHING FOR ANY INFORMATION ON THE GREY FAMILY...ESP THE OLD MAN [ELIJAH](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Elijah.html) HENRY GREY. I KNOW HE CAME DOWN FROM AMERICA AND HAD 3 WIFES IN SAMOA. I AM ONE OF THE DECENDANTS. MY GRANDMOTHER IS FA'AMITA ANA. ONE OF MY AUNTIES MARRIED ULUGIA SI'I VAI, HOPE I GOT THE SPELLING CORRECT. ONE OF MY ANTIES CAME TO FIJI WITH MY DAD WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG FELLOW. PLEASE CONTACT ME OF ANY DETAILS. I AM ALSO ON GREY FAMILY CONNECT- MYHERITAGE.COM

Family vacation packages

THANKS

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_17)

[**Kaitlyn**](mailto:kaitlyn%20[at]%20rr%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

love this website. Just this page though cause im samoan and i love to learn about my culture to live on the traditions

[**18**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_18)

[**Tianna**](mailto:tianna%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This article really helped me. I am researching Samoa for school, and this article really helped me.

[**19**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_19)

[**ANCITHA SEMOSO**](mailto:asemoso%20[at]%20student%20[dot]%20dwu%20[dot]%20ac%20[dot]%20pg)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I just want to thank you who provided this site.It is really an important site to me now as iam current studing cultures from different aspects of life. Thankz  
Now iam really satisfied withmy assignment just because of this site.Please always update the information for the students case to do thier assignments and projects.  
  
ONCE AGAIN THANKYOU VERY MUCH.

[**20**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_20)

**Lilsamoa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love samoa it's a beautiful country just one question.  
  
Why did Samoans leave samoa and went to Australia?  
  
Please i love to know about the Samoa Migration to Australia and learn more  
about Samoa how things changed every year.

[**21**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_21)

[**Angela Marie Sposato**](mailto:angeetswmfcm%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm researching on Samoa for an intergrated topic at school and I'd like to thank the publisher so much for helping me complete my research. This writing piece literally has everything on what I needed to find out under the topic 'Culture', thankyou so much. (: xox

[**22**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_22)

[**Letti Tofilau Leauanae**](mailto:tofilauf%20[at]%20horowhenua%20[dot]%20school%20[dot]%20nz)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

so nice to hear about Samoa and how is was known. God bless Samoa.

[**23**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_23)

[**chiffon**](mailto:sexybayarea23%20[at]%20yaoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would love to thank the site because it shows a lot about my culture and its history about samoans

[**24**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_24)

[**Julie**](mailto:julz%20[dash]%20zak%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hi, I have a question in regards to the head piece called a tuina. Can you please tell where in samoa it originated from?

[**25**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_25)

[**Hope**](mailto:Mareta_togia%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

AWESOME! thanks for the help for my assignment. Get information, even though im tongan. THANKS FOR THE HELP

[**26**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_26)

[**hayley**](mailto:hayley%20[at]%20hotmail%20[dot]%20co%20[dot]%20nz)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i love this information ,and i like to learn about samoan culture and language

[**27**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_27)

**naomi brown**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thankyou for making my essay easy to find where to go.. God bless,.

[**28**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_28)

**maisau lavasii**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

firstly, i would like to say thank you for making this good information to help our students to remind thier own value and traditional as their treasure...and to learn more about samoan culture...thankz again...

[**29**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_29)

**Krisin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is awesome! Thank you so much! I have now completed my references for my assignment. Fa'afetai tele lava.

[**30**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_30)

**gina kelly**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for putting this site up really has helped me wiht my samoan asssignment! :)

[**31**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_31)

**tony**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

nice stuff u got there people of my culture.  
thanks for ur good samoan iformation.

[**32**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_32)

**joe**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

greaat to hear more abowt the samoan culture, even though im tongan iwould like to findout more about what samoan culture is :)

[**33**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_33)

[**Frank**](mailto:Michaelmyers3131%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I would like someone who knows Samoan tribal tattoos. I am not sumoan but I would love to a tattoo done but don't just want to get a tattoo just because it looks cool, but I also want to honor the culture. And want a tattoo with meaning. Thank you

[**34**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_34)

**Carol**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This WEBSITE is so COOL because it reminds me of my country and it's so nice because some info... about my country that i didn't know are all on this website... so thanks very much... u really helped meh a lot because we had to do this assignment on the islands that youre from and i found this so thanks A LOT... YOU GUYS ARE THE BEST!!! OH and I REALLY REALLY WANT TO GO BACK TO My BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY SAMOA>>> Samoa, you're the best-est country and you always will be in my heart even if I'm living in NZ...Love YOUS... GIVE My Love TO ALL OF THE SAMOANS OUT THERE IN NZ and SAMOA>>> Thanks!!!

[**35**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_35)

**eltah :)**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This has been a very useful site and it's a pleasure to read and and have learned alot from it..thanx for creating this site x :)

[**36**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_36)

**Seiuli Faita**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a very good source of basic information for our Samoan children who were born and grew up outside of Samoa and as well as anyone who wishes to learn about our beautiful Samoan Culture. Many thanks to the author. Faafetai tele lava...

[**37**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_37)

**Tom Cruise**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANKS FOR ALL THIS INFO ABOUT MAH ISLAND THIS INFORMATION IS REALLY HELPING OUR GROUP WITH OUR PROJECT THAT WE ARE WORKING ON

[**38**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_38)

**Khalid**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I love the samoan people and i am from afghanistan they are brave like us most beautiful people and culture.

[**39**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_39)

**timoteo**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANKS FOR ALL THE SAMOAN CULTURE INFORMATION AND I AM A SAMOAN TOO AND I KNOW THESE ARE TRUE CAUSE I AM FRM SAMOA AND I KNOW WHAT THEY ARE NOT TELLING LIES ABOUT OUR SAMOAN PRIDE.I LOVE SITES THAT HAS SAMOAN INFORMATION.  
  
THANKYOU.  
TIMOTEO TRAVIS VAITULUI

[**40**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_40)

**Keni Rimoni**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is one of the best short version of the cultural awareness I came across that is obsuletly fantastic, I am in debt for this as I am writing my project on Multiculturalism of offenses, God bless.

[**41**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_41)

**Mariah Sialesa**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is great info thankz for makin it. It is so helpful for me, especially due going to write my report on Samoa for my english class!!

[**42**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_42)

**demus**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is a great way to show us the youth our history and ancestors. but i have a question. is there any way to show how women in the past show a great value for empowering females in the Samoa history

[**43**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_43)

**Shane**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

HI  
I married with a samoan girl, we been married for 10 years we have on daughter, my wifes parents came to our house very frequently and stay months, now they would like to move with us, which make me uncomfortable, my wife says its culture,my parents can come and live as long as they want, I am not samona backround, I don't know what to do,  
Shane

[**44**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_44)

**Grace**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi i'm doing a social studies projecr and need to know the following questions:  
1.Â What aspects of your chosen culture have been brought to New Zealand?  
2.Â Choose three aspects of your chosen culture that have changed in New Zealand. How have these three aspects of culture changed in New Zealand?  
3.How has the Samoan lifestyle changed in Samoa over the years?  
THANKS :)

[**45**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_45)

**Savannah**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey! i am doing a social studies assignment and i need a few answers..  
1. what are three aspects of samoan culture that has changed in New Zealand. How have they changed ?

[**46**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_46)

**jess**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

hey, im doing a project on samoa for school i cant find any imformation on what samoan culture what brought to new zealand and how has it been changed. if you could help me on this it would be very much appreciated or if any body else knows anything could you please post it  
thanks!

[**47**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_47)

**Kahealani**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks for all the info. I'm 75% Samoan and 25% Hawaiian and this has really clarified some things about my culture. I haven't grown up and lived in Samoa but I'm still very proud of where I come from!!

[**48**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_48)

**Geoffry**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

THANKS FOR THIS SITE REALLY HELPS ME KNOW MY CULTURE EVEN THROUGH M 50% SAMOAN AND 50% TONGAN THANKS  
I'M GAY  
GEOFFRY AIAFI

[**49**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_49)

**dunameis simanu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

eureka! have been searching almost frantically for material for an overdue social studies assignment - then - bingo! brilliant, most grateful.

[**50**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_50)

[**litiana**](mailto:silisomalitiana%20[at]%20rocketmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank for this site really helped my cousin to completed her social assignment, which she has being bothering me lately

[**51**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_51)

**taoipu pauli robertson**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this is a great way to show other cultural about samoa way of life thank you god bless

[**52**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_52)

**Suiva'aia Te'o**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Information on Samoa is very much appreciated. thank you very much.

[**53**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_53)

**tracey grey**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I LIKE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE FIRST GREY FAMILY TO SETTLE IN SAMOA

Family vacation packages

[**54**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_54)

**Susan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi I like to learn about the cultural significance of the Red Hibiscus Flower the women wear. I see them wearing other color hibiscus flowers do they each have a story to tell or are they just different varieties for women? Thank you

[**55**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_55)

**Kurt**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hi my nana was from vailima her father was a johnston and her mother was born a betham, jus wanting to know any history about these two family's , cheers :)

Family vacation packages

[**56**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_56)

**Carol**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is a great site that covered much of what people have questions about. I wanted to ask if you were able to to forward additional information about child rearing in the Samoan culture (specifically the belief of using corporal or physical punishment). Any information would be appreciated.  
  
Thank you for such an also site.

[**57**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_57)

**Tony**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for all the info, I finally get to learn, in depth, about my culture as I'm doing my high school research paper. Thanks again!

[**58**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_58)

**Haili**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for posting this research it really helped not only get too know my culture but help me in cklass project

[**59**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_59)

**shalley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This site is very helpful to me.. My essay information found a great answer... I love it..  
Thanks again..

[**60**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_60)

**Nia**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for this awesome site and it was really easy to find my answers and it very helpful to make me learn more about my half culture because i am half Tongan and half Samoan

[**61**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_61)

**Loreta Lusila Tautunu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for publishing the history of Samoa on the Internet. It is wonderful indeed for not just the Samoans but also for everybody to know and learn the uniqueness of the Samoan Culture. "SAMOA IS FOUNDED ON GOD". May God bless and protect the people of Samoa. I'm very proud to be a Samoan!  
Keep up the good work!

[**62**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_62)

**nana brown**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

i learn a lot about Samoa and the culture that i barely know nothing about and will like to visit soon in person ,nice website

[**63**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_63)

**choucoolboy**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Samoa is the best. I especially love the piula cave pool. i also love tafatafa beach since it very shallow

[**64**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_64)

**T.A Magalei**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for taking the time to research and find ALOT of information & history on this culture. Well done.

[**65**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_65)

**Anadiva Maiava**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The information given had portrayed some of the aspects of Samoan culture, therefore a lot of these values are hidden and they are must be added to the information.

[**66**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_66)

**Alex**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This info is very interesting and helpful for those seeking information about this country.

[**67**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_67)

**sunshine**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

The historic information is valuable to our people. Thank you for sharing this useful information. :)

[**68**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_68)

**Lisaan**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm researching on Samoa for an intergrated topic at school and I'd like to thank the publisher so much for helping me complete my research. This writing piece literally has everything on what I needed to find out under the topic 'Culture'

[**69**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_69)

**ally**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I wanted to say thank you for helping me understand my boyfriends culture more! The more I learn he more I love it!

[**70**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_70)

**Anne**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you so much for all this information , love it :)

[**71**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_71)

**Shirnette**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Now that Moana is the hottest movie out, I was forced to do some research after questions were posed in an online black mom Facebook group that I'm a part of..I am very intrigued by the info I came across and would love to visit Samoa and the other Polynesian Islands one day...not much is heard of them (except for Hawaii & we know why) living in Canada or even when i was groeinv ip in Jamaica, so I'm very thirsty for that "in person" experience...my brother has visited Australia and think he visited Samoa too but for sure he met Samoans and had good things to say.

[**72**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_72)

**DeborahIsHea**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is brilliant! I hope to learn more about the country and the lifestyle in Samoa! It's perfect...

[**73**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_73)

[**Tracey**](mailto:aceygrey%20[dot]%2024%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I'm from Fiji and i looking for information on my family surname Grey. That came to samoa Elijah Grey i really have nothing on my family history would reall love to know about my background and where i'm from all my search have brought up nothing so i hope this site will help me

Family vacation packages

[**74**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_74)

**Victoria**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

This is amazing,it explains SAMOA in a great way, now I'm using this note worthy information about SAMOA for my assignment for school ðŸ«  
. I never knew my beloved country has history

[**75**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_75)

[**Sweetness**](mailto:proxyd9%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thank you for sharing this beautiful history. Im South African and i just love researching about other cultures. I would love to learn the language though and have samoan friends. I think its important that, everyone should learn about every culture of the world, as every culture is unique in their own way.

[**76**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_76)

**Manar Mahfouz**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this site has alotof infomation it has helped me alot and i hope to see ots more infomation being added onto this site thanks for all of this infomation

[**77**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_77)

**Siniva Leleimalefaga**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Great work with relavant information that can support the issue. I know some of our SAMOAN myths/legends but this have gave me the courage to find out more about our culture. However, who exactly put these work together.

[**78**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_78)

**Ioritana Leulu**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Good article and with the article it helped me with my social studies project  
  
PS: Keep up the great work

[**79**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_79)

**Lemoana Falesii**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Grateful for the info it helps me to know better about my beloved country Samoa

[**80**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_80)

[**Revival**](mailto:revivalelenamene%20[at]%20gmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this website was really helpful, in terms of helping me with my assignment

[**81**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html#Comments_81)

**indiana.wilkins**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

this really helped me with my school project . thank you so much

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Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

✍ Send comment

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" [Saint Vincent and the Grenadines](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Saint-Vincent-and-the-Grenadines.html)[San Marino](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html)

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1. [Countries and Their Cultures](https://www.everyculture.com/index.html)

1. [No-Sa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/index.html)

1. Culture of San Marino

San Marino

Culture Name

Sammarinese

Alternative Name

La Serenissima Repubblica di San Marino (The Most Serene Republic of San Marino)

Orientation

***Identification.***San Marino takes its name from its founder, Marinus, who according to legend founded the republic in 301 C.E. San Marino is comprised of native Sammarinese and Italian citizens. Although Italian-speaking and heavily influenced by the surrounding Italian culture, the Sammarinese have maintained their individuality through the centuries, have a strong sense of identity, and are proud of their unique culture.

***Location and Geography.***San Marino, one of the smallest republics in the world, is located in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy, south of the city of [Rimini](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Rimini.html) on the northern part of the Adriatic coast. Approximately 24 square miles (61 square kilometers) in size, San Marino is completely landlocked. Situated in the central part of the Apennine mountains, San Marino is dominated by the three-peaked Mount Titano, which is 2,437 feet (743 meters) high. There are several streams and small rivers, including the Ausa, Marano, and the San Marino. The terrain is rugged but the climate is Mediterranean with mild to cool winters and warm, sunny summers. The capital is located in the main town, also called San Marino. Other important towns include Serravalle, Borgo Maggiore, and Domagnano.

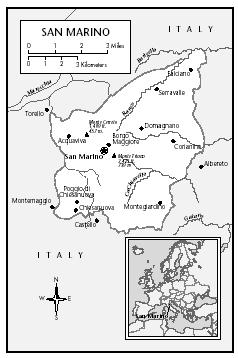
***Demography.***A 1997 survey put the population of San Marino at 24,714 of which 14 percent are were fourteen years old and younger, 68 percent were between fifteen and sixty-four years old, and 18 percent were sixty-five years old and over. The population is divided ethnically between Sammarinese and Italians. San Marino is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with an average of more than 860 people per square mile (332 per square kilometers). The republic is approximately 5.5 miles (9 kilometers) across and 8 miles (13 kilometers) long. It is estimated that sixteen thousand Sammarinese live in other countries.

***Linguistic Affiliation.***The official number of languages spoken in San Marino is two: a Sammarinese [dialect](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Dialect.html) and standard Italian. Approximately 83 percent of the population speak Sammarinese, which is considered a variation of the Emiliano-Romagnolo dialect found in the surrounding Italian region. Standard Italian is the language of everyday use, although typical Sammarinese phrases and expressions are used regularly.

***Symbolism.***The Sammarinese flag consists of two equal bands of white (above) and light blue (below) with the national coat of arms placed in the center. The coat of arms features a shield with three towers on three peaks flanked by a wreath, with a crown above and a scroll below bearing the word Libertas (Liberty). The towers represent the three fortified towers on Mount Titano which have been strategic in the defense of the republic throughout its history. The national holiday is 3 September, the Anniversary of the Foundation of the Republic.

History and Ethnic Relations

***Emergence of the Nation.***San Marino was founded in 301 C.E. by a Christian stonemason, Marinus, who fled the island of Arbe off the Dalmation coast to escape the anti-Christian persecution of the Roman Emperor Diocletian. Taking refuge on Mount Titano, Marinus founded a small community of Christians. The area had been inhabited since prehistoric times, although records date back only to the Middle Ages. In memory of Marinus, the area was named the Land of San Marino,



*San Marino*

then the Community of San Marino, and finally the Republic of San Marino. The state of San Marino maintained its independence despite frequent invasions by the rulers of Rimini, and in 1291 Pope Nicholas IV recognized San Marino's independence.

The territory of San Marino consisted only of Mount Titano until 1463 when the republic formed an alliance against Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, who was later defeated. As a reward, Pope Pius II gave San Marino the towns of Fiorentino, Montegiardino, and Serravalle. In the same year the town of Faetano voluntarily joined the young state. The nation has remained the same size ever since.

San Marino has been occupied by invaders only twice, both for short periods of time. In 1503 [Cesare Borgia](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Cesare_Borgia.html), known as Duca Valentino, occupied the country until his the death of his father Rodrigo Borgia, Pope Alexander VI, the same year. The political unrest following the Pope's death forced Cesare Borgia to withdraw his forces from San Marino. In 1739 Cardinal Alberoni, in an attempt to gain more political power, used military force to occupy San Marino but civil disobedience and clandestine communications with the current Pope, Clement XII, helped to ensure recognition of San Marino's rights and restoration of its independence. Since 1862 San Marino has had an official treaty of friendship, revised several times, with Italy.

***National Identity.***The Sammarinese are proud of their history and have a strong sense of unity due to San Marino's small size and unique place in the world.

***Ethnic Relations.***There is a large resident Italian population in the republic, and contact with the surrounding Italian regions have helped ensure close cultural and ethnic ties between the Sammarinese and the Italians. Although there is a free flow of people in and out of San Marino, it is extremely difficult to acquire citizenship. A person can become a citizen only by being born in the republic, and only if both parents are citizens; or by marrying a Sammarinese. Citizenship through [naturalization](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Naturalization.html) is rare. As a consequence, San Marino has a population that is still almost exclusively native Sammarinese.

Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space

San Marino is a mountainous nation consisting of small hill towns. Stone, brick, and tile are some of the principal building materials and like many Italian towns, the center of town is piazza which also serves a social function as a gathering place. The capital, the City of San Marino, is a fortified town as are many of the other towns of San Marino. Much of the original medieval fortifications remain, including three fortified towers located on the peaks of Mount Titano. These towers, called La Guaita, La Cesta, and Il Montale, are still linked by ramparts and walls constructed from the local sandstone. The oldest part of the capital dates from the early twelfth century. In the older sections of San Marino there are still many buildings dating from the [Renaissance](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Renaissance.html) period in the early 1400s.

Food and Economy

***Food in Daily Life.***Food and meals are an important part of life in San Marino. The [cuisine](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Cuisine.html) is Mediterranean, emphasizing fresh and locally grown produce, pasta, and meat. Although it is similar to that of the Italian Romagna region which borders San Marino, the cuisine of San Marino features its own typical dishes. Traditional recipes include *faggioli con le cotiche,*a dark bean soup flavored with bacon and traditionally prepared at Christmas; *pasta e cece,*a soup of chickpeas and noodles flavored with garlic and rosemary; and *nidi di rondine*(literally, "swallow's nest"), a dish of pasta with smoked ham, cheese, beef, and a tomato sauce, which is then covered with a white sauce and baked in the oven. Roast rabbit with fennel is also a popular Sammarinese dish. Other popular local dishes include *bustrengo,*a cake made with raisins; *cacciatello,*a mixture of milk and eggs; and *zuppa di ciliege,*cherries stewed in red wine and sugar and served on local bread. San Marino also produces high quality wines, the most famous of which are the *Sangiovese,*a strong red wine; and the *Biancale,*a dry white wine. There are many small family-owned restaurants, often providing outdoor seating in the summer, which play an important role in the lives of the Sammarinese, as meals are a daily part of family life and socializing.

Family vacation packages

***Basic Economy.***Tourism is one of the most important parts of San Marino's economy and many businesses cater to the tourist trade. The sale of collectible postage stamps and coins also constitutes a major part of the republic's revenue. Until the latter part of the twentieth century, farming, mining, and stone working formed the core of San Marino's economy. White sandstone was once abundant but most of the quarries are now closed. Sandstone is now extracted in limited quantities for decorative and artistic purposes rather than for construction. In addition to wine, the production and export of alcoholic spirits and liqueurs is a significant industry, along with other agricultural products such as wheat, grapes, corn, olives, cattle, pigs, horses, beef, cheese, and hides. Although San Marino still has a strong agricultural sector, it is dependent on imports from Italy in order to meet all of its needs.

San Marino's standard of living is high with an average per capita yearly income of about $32,000 (U.S.). San Marino's GDP is around $500 million (U.S.) annually with the rate of inflation at 2.2 percent. Unofficial estimates put the GDP growth rate at 8 percent.

***Land Tenure and Property.***Approximately 65 percent of San Marino is covered by farmland and pine forests with the rest consisting of parks, public spaces and buildings. Both private and public ownership of property exists in the republic.

***Commercial Activities.***The tourist sector generates more than 50 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of San Marino, with an average of 3.2 million tourists visiting the republic San Marino every year. Small businesses such as souvenir shops and restaurants depend heavily on tourism. Other important commercial activities include the sale of historic coins and postage stamps. In 1894 San Marino issued the first commemorative stamps which have been an important source of income for the republic ever since.

***Major Industries.***Important industries include banking and the manufacturing of clothing, electronics, paint, synthetic rubber, telecommunications equipment, and ceramics. Important export products include building stone, lime, wood, chestnuts, wheat, wine, baked goods, hides, and ceramics. San Marino's main trading partner is Italy, accounting for 85 percent of exports. Agricultural products and consumer goods are imported from Italy, eastern Europe, South America, China and Taiwan.

Best clothing retailers

***Trade.***Italy is San Marino's major trading partner. Trade statistics are included with those for Italy.

***Division of Labor.***According to a 1998 study, the workforce of San Marino was divided as follows: 4,254 (25 percent) worked in the broad public sector; 5,637 (34 percent) worked in industry; 3,140 (16.5 percent) worked in the commercial sector; 1,492 (9.1 percent) worked in construction; 505 (2.7 percent) worked in banking and [insurance](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Insurance.html); 355 (2.1 percent) worked in transportation and communications; 248 (1.6 percent) were involved in agriculture; 1,779 (9.3 percent) worked in a variety of businesses and services. The unemployment rate is around 2 percent. Recent figures place the unemployment rate at about 2.2 percent for women and at 1.8 percent for men.

Social Stratification

***Classes and Castes.***San Marino's small population and high standard of living have helped ensure a relatively balanced distribution of wealth. The government maintains a policy of full employment for all its citizens and works with the private sector to ensure that all Sammarinese who wish to work are employed. San Marino's small size, power-sharing government, high standard of living, and educated population have made it a country with very little social stratification.



*Uniformed guards in San Marino. The country is neutral and has no military nor any alliances with other countries.*

Political Life

***Government.***Created in the early Middle Ages, the original governing body was the Arengo, made up of the heads of each family. Today the Arengo is the electoral body, while the main governing body is the Great and General Council. In 1243, the first two captains regent were nominated by the council and this system has continued to this day. The council is composed of sixty members who are elected every five years under a proportional representation system. The duties of the Council consist of approving the budget and nominating the captains regent and heads of the executive.

Family vacation packages

Every six months, the council elects two captains regent to be heads of state for a six-month term. The regents are chosen from opposing parties in order to provide a balance of power. The investiture of the captains regent takes place on 1 April and 1 October every year. Once a regent's term is completed, citizens have three days to file any complaints about the regent's activities. If warranted, judicial proceedings against the ex-head of state may be initiated.

Executive power is held by the State Congress, which is composed of three secretaries and seven ministries. The Council of Twelve is elected by the Great and General Council for the duration of the legislature and serves as a jurisdictional body as well as a court of appeals. Two government officials represent the state in financial and patrimonial matters.

The judicial system of San Marino is entrusted to foreign executives for both historical and social reasons. The only Sammarinese judges are the justices of the peace, who handle only civil cases where sums do not exceed 25 million lire (around $16,000 [U.S.]).

***Leadership and Political Officials.***San Marino is a democratic republic with several political parties. The three main parties are the Democratic Christian Party of San Marino, the Socialist Party of San Marino, and the Progressive Democratic Party of San Marino; there are several other smaller parties. Because of San Marino's small size and population, it is difficult for any one party to gain a pure majority, and most of the time the government is ruled by a coalition. The current parties in power are the Democratic Christian Party and the Socialist Party.

***Social Problems and Control.***San Marino faces economic and administrative problems related to its status as a close financial and trading partner with Italy while at the same time remaining separated from the European Union. Another important issue facing the government is improving relations among the parliament, the cabinet, and the captains regent.

***Military Activity.***San Marino is officially neutral and does not have an army or any alliances with other nations. The last battle in which San Marino actively participated was in 1463. The republic has been invaded and occupied several times since then but has always maintained its position of neutrality. There is a symbolic military force of eighty men who participate in San Marino's ceremonial events and occasionally assist the police. In a time of crisis, however, the government can call all adult males to arms as happened during World War II when San Marino was directly involved in the war as the target of heavy bombing and as a haven for thousands of refugees.

Social Welfare and Change Programs

The Institute for Health and Social Security, a public organization that is independently managed, provides health care, social services, and social security. San Marino provides cradle-to-grave health care for all its citizens as well as retirement pensions.

Gender Roles and Statuses

***The Relative Status of Women and Men.***In San Marino today, women have most of the social and political rights that men have. Women received the right to vote in 1960 and the right to hold office in 1973. The first female captains regent were elected shortly thereafter. Nevertheless, slightly more men than women receive some form of higher education, and the unemployment rate is higher for women as well. These differences are in part due to the changing role of women in San Marino and the transition the republic has undergone in the late twentieth century, as its economy has moved away from agriculture and deemphasized industrialization.

Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Family vacation packages

***Domestic Unit.***In a small and unified country like San Marino, family plays an important role. Extended family and kin are an important part of the social structure of the republic. With the transition from an agricultural to a more industrialized economy following World War II, the nuclear family has replaced the extended family as the basic domestic unit. There are approximately eight marriages per one thousand and the divorce rate is relatively low. If they are no longer able to care for themselves, older family members usually live with their younger relatives. Children often continue to live at home with their parents well into adulthood, until higher education is completed or they start their own families.

Socialization

***Infant Care.***Public day care and nursery schools are available for children under the age of five.

***Child Rearing and Education.***The school system in San Marino is very similar to that in Italy and is obligatory until the age of sixteen. Children attend state-run primary and secondary schools, choosing a particular type of school when they reach the high school level.

***Higher Education.***There are no universities or colleges in San Marino and those students who decide to pursue higher education usually attend university in Italy where San Marino's high school diplomas are recognized.



Family vacation packages

*Formula One cars in the Imola Grand Prix.*

Etiquette

Standards of etiquette are similar to those in Italy. Due to the important tourist industry, the Sammarinese are accustomed to welcoming people from all over the world.

Religion

***Religious Beliefs.***The predominant religion, Roman Catholicism, is still regarded as the principal religion. Historically, the Sammarinese have been against the Vatican's political control over their republic but have embraced the pope's spiritual authority on religious matters. The importance of Catholicism in San Marino has led to the involvement of the church in many state occasions; many of San Marino's official ceremonies are held in the Basilica, the republic's main church, or in other churches. There are a total of nine Catholic parishes all of which comprise the diocese of San Marino.

***Religious Practitioners.***There is no official state religion but practitioners of Roman Catholicism predominate. There are no figures available for the number of non-Catholic practitioners.

***Rituals and Holy Places.***The Basilica dates from the fourteenth century and contains the remains of Saint Marino.

Medicine and Health Care

San Marino is able to provide low-cost health care for its citizens through clinics and a small hospital. Although the level of care is high, for certain types of health care the Sammarinese must turn to hospitals outside of the republic. The average life expectancy is placed at seventy-seven for men and eighty-five for women. The Sammarinese birthrate is around 11 births per 1,000 people, while the infant mortality is rate 3 out of every 1,000 births.

Secular Celebrations

There are five official national festivals in San Marino all of which celebrate important events in the republic's history: 5 February, the anniversary of the republic's liberation from the occupying forces of Cardinal Alberoni in 1740; [25 March](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/March_25.html) marks the day in 1906 when the Arengo implemented the democratic form of government that exists today; 1 April and 1 October, the two days when the captains regent take office; and 3 September, the feast day of the patron saint and founder of the republic, Saint Marino.

The Arts and Humanities

***Support for the Arts.***The Sammarinese proudly support and maintain several small museums as well as take an active interest in cultural activities including film, music, and literature.

***Graphic Arts.***San Marino's long history and extended periods of peace have endowed it with a substantial artistic legacy including paintings by several important Italian artists from the Renaissance and [Baroque](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Baroque.html) periods. There are also numerous sculptures placed throughout public spaces. Traditional crafts, such as stone carving and ceramics, have been able to survive in part from the tourist industry.

The State of the Physical and Social Sciences

San Marino's small population and its lack of a university means that it is not able to support academic research at the postsecondary level. Many Sammarinese, however, go on to pursue successful careers in academia and research outside the republic.

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—M. C AMERON A RNOLD

**Also read article about**[**San Marino**](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/San_Marino.html)**from Wikipedia**

User Contributions:

[**1**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_1)

**austin**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

do you guys have the ethnic clothes for san marino i have to do this for a big social studies project thats coming up for school.

Best clothing retailers

if i dont do this i will get an f on the project and you are my last resort

[**2**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_2)

**elle**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks to this article i have everything i need for my research project for geography. couldnt ask for more. Great Job!!!

[**3**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_3)

**Breanna**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Thanks a bunch for this info! I needed it for mi 9th grade geography prpgect and had no clue. But what is tha regilion with the most percentage? I could not find it!

[**4**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_4)

**neil**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey i want to know the economic problems that san marino faces.

[**5**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_5)

**cely**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

wat are some parts of san marino i gotta choose a part that i would go to ? it for school

[**6**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_6)

**Drew**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I can think of anything in this project I know im getting an A+

[**7**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_7)

[**Paul**](mailto:liquidpaulie%20[at]%20aol%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

CAN ANYONE HELP ME WITH THE LIFE EXPECTANCY AVERAGE IN SAN MARINO? WHY IS IT SO HIGH?

[**8**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_8)

[**jimmyn**](mailto:leejimmyn%20[at]%20yahoo%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

who was the very important person in San Marino don`t know who he/she is

[**9**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_9)

**Panda**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Jimmyn:  
I am not sure what you mean in regards to "the very important person. If you are looking for the founder of this tiny nation see History and Ethnic Relations. If you are looking for the leader and governing body see Political Life

[**10**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_10)

[**fakename**](mailto:fvalerie%20[at]%20rocketmail%20[dot]%20com)

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

need more info about religion food and much much more

[**11**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_11)

**mansi**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Hey i just wanted to know that what is the Human Interaction in San Marino. I have a project to do so that is why i need to know all the facts about san marino! I lopked on all websttes and i didn't find anything! So can u please tel me the human interaction of san marino?

[**12**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_12)

**brenden**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I think you need some pictures of their traditional clothing.

Best clothing retailers

[**13**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_13)

**Carol**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Does San Marino have a [genealogy](https://www.everyculture.com/knowledge/Genealogy.html) site I could look up for father's history and his family?  
  
Gracie

[**14**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_14)

**Petra**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

I was in san marino and i saw a lot of mythological sculptures selling as a souvenir. I cannot find anywhere why is that a souvenir. I cannot fing nothing about the legends at all... Can someody help?!

[**15**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_15)

**Anyonomys**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

can someone help with San Marino's export i need this for a big olympics project please help me i don't wanna get an f!

[**16**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_16)

**anthony**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

thanks for this it helped me with a big social studies project

[**17**](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/San-Marino.html#Comments_17)

**Adair Stanley**

[⚠](javascript:void(0);)

Ciao,  
My name is Adair and I live in Virginia, USA. I am in the 5th grade and am studying San Marino for a school project. My parents have visited on their honey moon. I would like to know what is the largest product produced in your country, what are your most important holidays, and what are the most common plants and animals found? If you can help me I would really appreciate it. Thank you. Adair, USA

Family vacation packages

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 Show my email publicly

Public Comment: (50-4000 characters)

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" [Samoa](https://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Samoa.html)

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