



PAKISTAN



Size: Slightly less than twice the size of California

Population: Sixth most populous nation with 193 million people.

Major religions: Overwhelmingly Muslim (Sunni and Shia), but also some Hindus and Christians

Currency: Pakistani rupees

Languages: Urdu is the official language but almost half the population speaks Punjabi. English is the preferred language of the elite and of government ministries.

Just over one-third of the people live in urban areas

A little more than half the population is literate.

More than half of workers are in the services industry.

More than 20% live below the poverty level.

Climate: Mostly hot dry desert, but arctic in the north. (Himalayas, including K2). It has four seasons and little rainfall: A cool, dry winter, hot and dry spring, summer rainy season and then retreating monsoon season. In Islamabad, averages range from 5°F in January and as hot as 104°F in June.

Clothing & Fashion: The Salwar Kameez is the national outfit of Pakistan. It is a long, loose tunic with baggy pants. Women may wear a dupatta, which is fabric wrapped around the body. Women also wear scarves to cover the head and neck in observance of Muslim standards of modesty. In cities, some people wear Western clothing.

Food: As in India, the food varies greatly by region. It is generally not as hot, but still uses many flavorful spices. Muslims do not eat pork, shellfish, or consume alcohol, so cuisine uses chicken, beef, fish, vegetables and dairy. Pakistani cuisine often incorporates less oil than Indian foods but still has a strong curry influence.