

Pakistan

Capital:	Islamabad
Religion:	97% of the population are Muslim (77% Sunni, 20% Shi'ite). The remaining 3% is Christian, Hindu, Parsee and Buddhist minorities.
Government:	Parliamentary democracy until 1998 when it was replaced by a military government..
Ethnic Groups:	Pakistan's ethnic composition is a complex and heterogeneous combination of indigenous elements. Nearly two thirds of the population are Punjabi. Other major ethnic groups include the Sindhi, Pashtan (Pathan), Baluch, and Muhajir. There are over 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan.
Language:	Urdu and English are the official languages, although in practice 64% of the population speak Punjabi, 12% Sindhi, 8% Pashto, 7% Urdu, 1% Baluchi and Brahvi.
Currency:	The rupee, divided into 100 paisa.

- Pakistan is located in the western reaches of the Indo-Gangetic Plain in the north west of the Indian subcontinent.
- The region now comprising Pakistan has been inhabited from Lower Paleolithic times. From around 3500 BC, an expansion of agricultural settlements began to take place, culminating in the Indus civilisation. The arrival from the west of semi-nomadic pastoral tribes known as Indo-Aryans represented a sharp contrast to the urban culture of the Indus. Gradually tribal identities made way for territorial ones and independent kingdoms of varying sizes.
- Pakistan was historically known as 'the land of the Indus', named for the Indus river, which originates in the Himalaya mountains and flows through the country to empty into the Arabian Sea.
- The name Pakistan was first used in 1933, however the origin of the name Pakistan is not absolutely certain. Legend states that a group of expatriate students studying at Cambridge created the name as a sort of acronym. The initial letters of Punjab, Afghania, Kashmir, and Sind were combined with ending of Baluchistan to form 'Pakistan'. These are the names of regions of modern Pakistan.
- As often happens in Islamic nations during times of strife, Pakistan has sought redemption through religion. In May 1991, the National Assembly declared that the Koran – the holy book of Islam – was the supreme law of Pakistan. All aspects of Pakistani life are now subject to Islamic law.



Business and Social Etiquette

- Punctuality: Pakistanis are not time conscious, but they expect foreign visitors to be prompt.
- Men usually shake hands with other men. Most Pakistani business men will shake hands with a woman. Pakistani women do not normally shake hands with other women.
- Always present your business cards.
- Pakistani business people are formal, reserved, and deliberate in business negotiations.
- Pakistanis are a serious, unsmiling people. Jokes have no place in Pakistani business affairs.
- Business is conducted at a more leisurely pace than in the United States, but a 'down to business' attitude is also characteristic.
- Be sure always to accept the tea you will be offered during an office visit. To refuse is considered rude.
- If you are invited to a Pakistani's home for a meal, expect to be served very late – perhaps as late as 11pm. Guests are expected to leave immediately upon completion of the meal. Most Pakistani's have servants. It is polite to hand each servant a small tip before you leave.
- You are not obliged to bring a gift when you are invited to a meal at a Pakistani's home. If you choose to do so, however, chocolates or flowers are good choices. Alcohol is prohibited to Muslims.
- Pakistanis normally eat with their hands, but when they entertain guests, they usually provide forks and spoons. If you do eat with your hands, use only the right hand (left hand is considered unclean).
- Avoid discussing local politics, religion, Israel and Jews, and Pakistan's relationship with its neighbour (especially India).

