

QATAR

Country Study

FACTFILE

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Capital:	Doha (Al Dawha in Arabic)
Population:	3 million (approx.) (2020)
Official Language:	Arabic
Area:	11,571 Km ²
Currency:	Qatari Rial: 1 Riyal = 100Fils
Religion:	Islam
Government:	Absolute Monarchy (Al Thani family)
Time Zone:	GMT + 3hrs

QATAR

LOCATION

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The state of Qatar lies in the Middle East and is located in the Asian continent. It is a peninsula located in the Persian Gulf. It only shares one short land border with its neighbour Saudi Arabia. The border is only 87Km/54 miles long. At over 11,000Km² it is one of the smallest countries in Asia by area.



GEOGRAPHY

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Qatar is a peninsula, meaning that it is surrounded on three sides by water. It shares only one border, that with its neighbour Saudi Arabia.

FLAG

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The Qatar flag is a banner of two bands of white and maroon in the ratio 11:28. The white band is nearest the flagpole and has nine points. The flag was adopted before Independence from Britain in 1971.

COAT OF ARMS

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The Qatar coat of arms depicts images of historic Qatari symbols – two crossed swords known as scimitars, palm trees, the sea and the traditional Qatari boat known as a dhow.

CITIES

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The population of Qatar mainly reside in urban and coastal areas. Less than 1% of the population lives in rural areas.

Doha, the capital city, lies on the East coast. It is the largest city and contains the greatest population. Other main cities in Qatar are Ar Rayyan, Umm Salal Muhammad and Al Wakrah

CAPITAL

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Doha is the capital of Qatar. With a population of 2.4 million (2018), it has more people than the rest of the country combined.



HISTORY

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Qatar has evolved over the centuries from a Bedouin nomadic past. It was mainly a country based on fishing and pearl-diving. In the 18th and 19th centuries it was ruled by a succession of Sheikhs. Around the time of World War I, Qatar became a British protectorate in 1916. The country gained independence from Britain in 1971. The country has been ruled by the Al Thani family for about 150 years.

GOVERNMENT

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By Ahmad Thamer Al Kuwari - تميم بن حمد بن خليفة آل ثاني,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=92741>
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Qatar is an absolute monarchy. It is an Emirate, meaning that it is run by an Emir. The current Emir of Qatar is Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Born in 1980, he has been the current Emir of Qatar since 2013, when his father abdicated the throne.

PEOPLE

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Only about 12% of the Qatari population were actually born in Qatar. People from neighbouring countries as well as Pakistanis, Iranians, Nepalis and Filipinos live in Qatar. People in Qatar are amongst the richest in the world. As Qatar is a Muslim country, people tend to dress modestly and visitors to the country are also asked to do likewise.

DRESS

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Qatari dress tends to be traditional and conservative. Men usually dress in a long flowing white shirt as well as a head scarf held in place with a cord.

DRESS

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Many Qatari women wear a traditional long black cloak (although worn over western clothing) along with the head veil called a hijab. Many others simply wear the veil.



LIVING IN QATAR

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Qatar is a mainly Muslim country. Its working week differs from that in western countries. The Qatari working week runs from Sunday to Thursday and shops tend to close on Fridays and Saturdays. Shops usually open in the mornings until about noon. They then close in the middle of the day and open again in the late afternoon.

CLIMATE


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Qatar has a dry desert climate. Temperatures can reach up to 40°C in the height of summer.



NATURAL HAZARDS

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Qatar's natural hazards consist mainly of sand storms, dust storms and haze.

LAND

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Qatar is a desert country that is mostly flat. The landscape is mostly barren and dry.

RELIGION

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Islam is the official religion of Qatar. Followers of Islam are called Muslims. Muslims make up the majority of people in Qatar:

- Muslims 68%
- Christians 14%
- Hindus 14%
- Buddhists 3%

Sharia Law is followed in Qatar. This is a religious law which partly follows Islamic traditions.

MOSQUE

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A Muslim place of worship is called a Mosque. This is the Imam Abdul Wahab Mosque, also known as the Qatar State Mosque in the capital Doha.



EDUCATION

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Formal schooling in Qatar first began in 1956. Education is free for all in Qatar between the ages of 6 and 16. Primary education for pupils aged 6-12 years is compulsory. Although state education is free, there are many private schools in Qatar, catering for the large ex-pat population in the country.

AGRICULTURE

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Because there is a limited supply of water, there is not much agriculture activity in Qatar. Date palm plantations are part of the limited agriculture activity in the country.

NATIONAL DAY

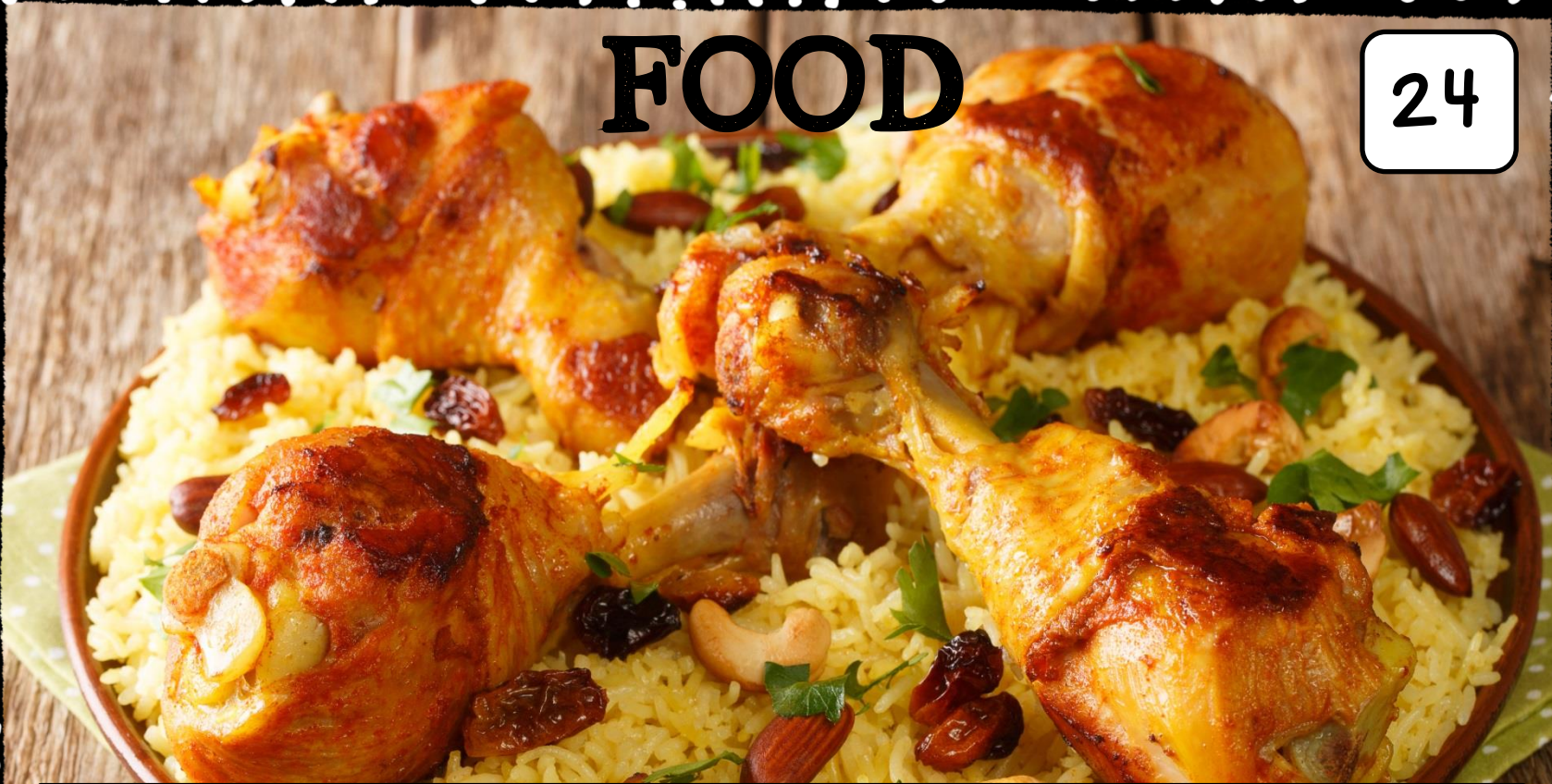
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December 18th is celebrated every year as Qatar National Day. It marks the unification of Qatar in 1878. The day was first established in 2007. It is also known as "Founder's Day".



FOOD

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Qatari food is influenced by Indian, African, Iranian and Mediterranean cuisine. This traditional dish called Majboos is made up of spiced rice and chicken. It is also known as Kabsa.

ECONOMY

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Qatar is a wealthy country due to rich mineral resources like oil and natural gas. Qatar has the third largest natural gas reserves in the world, after Russia and Iran.

NATIONAL ANIMAL

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The Arabian Oryx is the National Animal of Qatar. With long, spear-like horns, it is a member of the antelope species and is native to the harsh desert environments of the Arabian peninsula.

NATIONAL AIRLINE

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The national airline of Qatar is Qatar Airways. It is state owned and is one of the world's largest airlines. It flies to 173 countries all over the world.

Qatar Facts

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- 14% of Qatari are millionaires (in dollars)
- Only 25% of the population are women
- In 1999, women were allowed to stand for and vote in municipal elections for the first time
- Arabic is the main language but English is the second most spoken language
- There are no railroads in Qatar
- The most popular sports in Qatar are soccer, handball, tennis, horse racing, camel racing

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