

LIBYA

Libya officially the **Great Socialist People' Libyan Arab**, is a country located in North Africa. Bordering the Mediterranean Sea to the north, Libya lies between Egypt to the east, Sudan to the southeast, Chad and Niger to the south, and Algeria and Tunisia to the west.

With an area of almost 1.8 million square kilometers (700,000 sq mi), 90% of which is desert, Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa by area, and the 17th largest in the world. The capital, Tripoli, is home to 1.7 million of Libya's 5.7 million people. The three traditional parts of the country are Tripolitania, the Fezzan, and Cyrenaica.

History

Ancient Libya

Archaeological evidence indicates that from as early as the 8,000 BC, the coastal plain of Ancient Libya was inhabited by a Neolithic people, the Berbers, who were skilled in the domestication of cattle and the cultivation of crops. Later, the area known in modern times as Libya also was occupied by a series of other peoples, with the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Vandals, and Byzantines ruling all or part of the area.

Phoenicians

The Phoenicians were the first to establish trading posts in Libya, when the merchants of Tyre (in present-day Lebanon) developed commercial relations with the Berber tribes and made treaties with them to ensure their cooperation in the exploitation of raw materials

Under Islam

Libya was conquered by Uqba ibn Nafi in 644 and fully conquered in 655, forming part of the Ummayyad Caliphate. This was superseded by the Abbasids in 750, but in practice Libya enjoyed considerable local autonomy under the Aghlabid dynasty. Arab soldiers, spreading their new religion of Islam,

United Kingdom of Libya

On November 21, 1949, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution stating that Libya should become independent before January 1, 1952. Idris represented Libya in the subsequent UN negotiations. On December 24, 1951, Libya declared its independence as the United Kingdom of Libya, a constitutional and hereditary monarchy under King Idris.

Geography

Libya extends over 1,759,540 square kilometers (679,182 sq. mi), making it the 17th largest nation in the world by size. Libya is somewhat smaller than Indonesia, and roughly the size of the US state of Alaska. It is bound to the north by the Mediterranean Sea, the west by Tunisia and Algeria, the southwest by Niger, the south by Chad and Sudan and to the east by Egypt. At 1770 kilometers (1100 miles), Libya's coastline is the longest of any African country bordering the Mediterranean. The portion of the Mediterranean Sea north of Libya is often called the Libyan Sea. The climate is mostly dry and desert like in nature. However, the northern regions enjoy a milder Mediterranean climate.

Natural hazards come in the form of hot, dry, dust-laden sirocco (known in Libya as the *gibli*). This is a southern wind blowing from one to four days in spring and autumn. There are also dust storms and sandstorms. Oases can also be found scattered throughout Libya, the most important of which are Ghadames and Kufra

Climate

Libya is at its best in November and from February to April. Summer (June to September) is generally very hot with average temperatures on the coast around 30°C, often accompanied by high humidity. Don't think of going into the desert from mid-May until October, when temperatures reach a sweltering 55°C. Desert nights can drop below freezing.

Population: 6,310,434

Libya has a small population residing in a large land area. Population density is about 50 persons per km² (80/sq. mi.) in the two northern regions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, but falls to less than one person per km² (1.6/sq. mi.) elsewhere. Ninety percent of the people live in less than 10% of the area, primarily along the coast. About 88% of the population is urban, mostly concentrated in the two largest cities, Tripoli and Benghazi. 50% of the population is estimated to be under age 15.

Currency in Libya: Libyan dinar (LYD)

Getting there and around

Libya has both International and domestic Airlines. Main cities like Tripoli, Benghazi are served by most major European, Arab and Libyan airlines (Airbus aircraft). There are daily flights to the major regional airports such as Heathrow, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Rome, Cairo and multiple flights per week to Milan, Manchester, Vienna, Alexandria, etc.

Libya has good roads linking the Country to other countries, and cities to cities. For guests travelling overland, there are bus and "shared taxi from different towns to others. Some self-drive car rental services are available in the large cities but the rates are typically high and the cars are unreliable. Cars for hire are available including 4x4 Toyota land rovers and jeeps for traveling through the desert.

Libya has no international train connections and no significant domestic train infrastructure.

More information

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