

Mediterranean Sea

Inland sea separating Europe from north Africa, with Asia to the east; extreme length 3,860 km/2,400 mi; area 2,966,000 sq km/1,145,000 sq mi. It is linked to the Atlantic Ocean (at the Strait of Gibraltar), Red Sea and Indian Ocean (by the Suez Canal), and the Black Sea (at the Dardanelles and Sea of Marmara). The main subdivisions are the Adriatic, Aegean, Ionian, and Tyrrhenian seas; its coastline extends 46,000 km/28,580 mi, running through 22 countries. It is highly polluted.

Role in history

Known as the cradle of civilization, the Mediterranean was opened as a highway for commerce by merchants trading from Phoenicia. Over succeeding centuries Carthage, Greece, Sicily, and Rome were rivals competing for dominance of its shores and trade. It was later dominated by the Byzantine Empire and the Arabs; between the 11th and 14th centuries, Barcelona and the Italian city trading states, such as Venice and Genoa, dominated the Mediterranean. Control of its islands, coasts, and trade routes was vital during both World Wars, leading to important campaigns. Since World War II the region has been of great strategic importance to the USA and Western European countries (NATO).

Mediterranean sea

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For the mediterranean sea between [Europe](#) and [Africa](#), see the [Mediterranean Sea](#).

A **mediterranean sea**, in [oceanography](#), is a mostly enclosed sea that has limited exchange of deep water with outer [oceans](#) and where the water circulation is dominated by [salinity](#) and temperature differences rather than winds.

There are two types of mediterranean sea. A concentration basin has a higher salinity than the outer ocean due to evaporation, and its water exchange consists of inflow of the fresher oceanic water in the upper layer and outflow of the saltier mediterranean water in the lower layer of the connecting [channel](#).

A dilution basin has a lower salinity due to freshwater gains such as rainfall and rivers, and its water exchange consists of outflow of the fresher mediterranean water in the upper layer and inflow of the saltier oceanic water in the lower layer of the channel. Renewal of deep water may not be sufficient to supply [oxygen](#) to the bottom.

[\[edit\]](#)

List of mediterranean seas

The mediterranean seas of the [Atlantic Ocean](#):

- The [Mediterranean Sea](#) (or *the Eurafrican Mediterranean Sea* or *the European Mediterranean Sea*): including the [Black Sea](#), the [Sea of Azov](#), and the [Sea of Marmara](#).
- The [Arctic Ocean](#) (or *the Arctic Mediterranean Sea*)
- The American Mediterranean Sea: the combination of the [Gulf of Mexico](#) and the [Caribbean Sea](#).
- [Baffin Bay](#)
- The [Baltic Sea](#)

The mediterranean seas of the [Indian Ocean](#):

- The [Persian Gulf](#)
- The [Red Sea](#)

The mediterranean sea between the Indian and [Pacific Oceans](#):

- The Australasian Mediterranean Sea: the sea enclosed by the [Sunda Islands](#) and the [Philippines](#), including the [Banda Sea](#), the [Sulu Sea](#), the [Sulawesi Sea](#), the [Java Sea](#), etc.

The Red Sea and the Persian Gulf are concentration basins. The Eurafrican Mediterranean Sea is also a concentration basin as a whole, but the Black Sea and the [Adriatic Sea](#) are dilution basins due to the [Danube](#), [Don](#), and [Dnieper](#) Rivers and the [Po River](#) respectively. Other mediterranean seas are dilution basins.

[Hudson Bay](#) is so shallow it functions like a huge [estuary](#). Having shallow channels and deep basins, the [Sea of Japan](#) could form a mediterranean sea, but the strong currents from the Pacific prevent it from having an independent water circulation.

Gibraltar

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For other uses, see
[Gibraltar](#)
(*disambiguation*).




Gibraltar is an [overseas territory](#) of the [United Kingdom](#). It is located in southwestern [Europe](#) adjoining the southern coast of [Spain](#), a strategic location on the [Strait of Gibraltar](#) that links the North [Atlantic Ocean](#) and [Mediterranean Sea](#), also placing it between Europe and [Africa](#). The [British Armed Forces](#) had a major presence on the territory, and although the forces presence now is much reduced, there are many reminders of their previous importance.

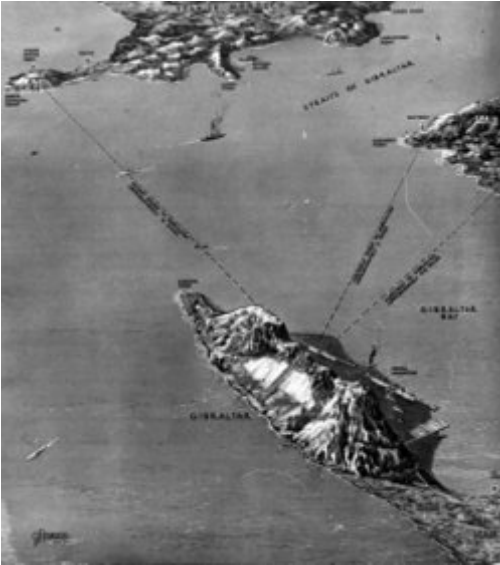
The issue of sovereignty over Gibraltar is a major issue of contention in Anglo-Spanish relations. Spain often requests the return of sovereignty over Gibraltar. A majority of 98.97% of the population voted in a [referendum](#) in [November, 2002](#) not to share sovereignty.

Gibraltar is a part of the [European Union](#), although some aspects of European law and convention, such as the Customs Union & Common Agricultural Policy, do not apply here.

The name of the rock comes from the [Arabic](#) name of *Jebel Tarik* (جبل طارق) meaning Tariq's mountain. It refers to the Berber general [Tariq ibn-Ziyad](#) who conquered Spain in [711](#). Earlier it was [Calpe](#), one of the [Columns of Hercules](#). Today, Gibraltar is also known colloquially as 'Gib' or 'the Rock'.

	(In detail)	(Full size)
	<i>Motto: Nulli Expugnabilis Hosti</i> (<i>Latin: Conquered By No Enemy</i>)	
		
Languages	English (official), an English-influenced Spanish dialect called Yanito is also spoken	
Capital	(Gibraltar)	
Coordinates	36°07' N 5°21' W	
Head of state	Queen Elizabeth II	
Governor and Commander-in-Chief	Sir Francis Richards	
Chief Minister	Peter Caruana	
Area - Total - % water	not ranked (192 if) 6.5 km² -	
Population - Total (2003 E) - Density	not ranked (190 if) 27,776 4270/km²	
Currency	Gibraltar Pound (ISO 4217 : GIP)	
Time zone - in summer	CET (UTC+1) CEST (UTC+2)	
Anthem	Gibraltar Anthem	
National day	10 September	
National colours	red and white	
Internet TLD	.gi	
Calling code	350 ¹	
	1. 9567 from Spain	

Geography



1939 map



The Rock of Gibraltar as seen from ground level, 2003



Present-day Gibraltar

The territory covers 6.543 square kilometres (2.53 square miles). It shares a 1.2 kilometre land border with [Spain](#) and has 12 kilometres of shoreline. There are two coasts (*sides*) of Gibraltar - the [East Side](#) which contains the settlements of [Sandy Bay](#) and [Catalan Bay](#) and the [West Side](#) where the vast majority of the population lives.

The climate is [Mediterranean](#) with mild winters and warm summers. Its terrain is a narrow coastal lowland bordering the 426-metre-high [Rock of Gibraltar](#). It has negligible natural resources and limited natural freshwater resources, until recently using large

concrete or natural rock water catchments to collect rain water. It now has a [desalination](#) plant soon to be replaced by a [reverse osmosis](#) plant (currently operational) built into the rock itself.

Gibraltar is one of the most densely populated territories in the world, with approximately 4,245 people per km² (10,979 per sq mile). The growing demand for space is being increasingly met by land reclamation, which comprises approximately one tenth of the territory's total area.

The Rock itself is made of [limestone](#) and is 426 metres (1,396 feet) high. It contains many miles of roads, most of which are closed to the public. Most of its area is covered by a nature reserve, which is home to around 250 [Barbary Apes](#), the only semi-wild [monkeys](#) in Europe. Superstition holds that if ever the Apes leave so will the British, so they are well looked after by the government (a situation rather analogous to the [ravens](#) of the [Tower of London](#)).