



# Karachi

*the city of opportunities. . .*

- Nasim Asmi

“One day she will be the Queen of the East”, said Charles Napier a hundred year ago about Karachi. It was then only a small village. Today Karachi is the vastest commercial and industrial center with its population estimated to be about 15 million. It is the 20th largest city of the world for its metropolitan population. This beautiful and modern city is called “City of Lights” for its liveliness and the “City of Quaid” as it’s the birth place of Quaid-e-Azam, the founder of Pakistan and his tomb is also here.

Karachi, the city of lights, a financial hub of Pakistan and responsible for generating 70% of the revenue of Pakistan’s economy is a main seaport and largest city of Pakistan. Karachi’s overflowing population, advancement in education and technology standards than any other city in Pakistan, being a coastal city with some really amazing tourist spots, the food and

shopping centers etc are some of its important characteristics. Karachi is located on the coast and as a result has a relatively mild climate. Humidity levels usually remain high throughout the year due to the city’s proximity to the sea. The city enjoys mild winters and hot summers. Since summer temperatures are quite high (the end of April through the end of August are approximately 35 to 40

degrees Celsius), the winter months (November through March) are the best time to visit Karachi. Karachi is located in southern Pakistan in the north of Arabian Sea and forms a chain of warm water beaches that are rich in natural beauty. Some of the truly beautiful and the famous ones are Tourtol, Gaddani, French Beach, Sumyani, Mount cave, Sandspeed, and Hawks bay. The beaches are beautiful and you can enjoy swimming here or spend the night at a beach resort. Karachi harbour has always been considered as a safe harbour and is called the Gateway of Asia.

Karachi is a modern westernized city and although there are several tourist spots, it has a fast paced lifestyle. Nowhere else in Pakistan you see such night life, shopping experience and fine dining experience. The sunny beaches, deep sea fishing, horse racing and golf give you ample scope for entertainment. The traditional mode of entertainment for the night life in Karachi lies in eating and hostelling, and almost every busy restaurant is open till late hours. Al-Hajj Bundoo Khan’s is one of the oldest restaurants in Karachi. If someone visits Karachi and don’t eat at Bundoo Khan then his visit is incomplete. During festivals such as

Eid, the city is fully illuminated at night and shops are open round the clock, but hordes of people swarm the markets, resulting in nightmarish traffic and mob-like scenes. Independence Day on 14 August is also a night-long celebration with fireworks, singing, dancing and much more.

The everyday lifestyle of Karachi is quite different from other cities in Pakistan. It is the mixture of many cultures and somewhat has western influence. Being a major international business hub many cultures are exposed and it attracts a great diversity in culture which causes a unique cultural identity of its own type. From the historical perspective Karachi has a great collection of architecture depicting Indian, British and Muslim cultural heritage. Quaid Mausoleum and Museum, at the center of the city is the landmark of Karachi, Mohatta palace & Museum of regional history, at Clifton, Pakistan Air Force Museum at Karsaz are some of the historical places one must visit. National Museum of Pakistan, collections at this museum focus on the cultural history of Pakistan. Items on display include archeological

artifacts, Islamic Art, and historical documents. Frere Hall, which is one of the few well-preserved buildings from the days of the British Raj that still exists in Karachi, it was built in honour of Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere (1815-1884), who was known for promoting economic development in Karachi. Apart from this Hindu Gymkhana, is one of the first Mughal Revival buildings in the city, Supreme Court, formerly called Prince of Wales museum, Empress Market, Saint Andrews Church and Saint Patrick's Cathedral are the most notable places in Karachi. A huge majority of the city is covered by residential areas that comprises of modern communities to towns and slums. The new modern buildings include the Habib Bank tower, MCB tower and some hotels like Avari, Pearl continental hotel and Marriott. Apart from this there

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are several mosques which are mention worthy because of their unique characteristics such as the Tooba Mosque in Defence which has the largest dome in the world.

Karachi is considered as a land of opportunity. No man in Karachi sleeps hungry. It is the city that affably accommodates every sundry. Karachi has produced out class cricketers like Hanif Muhammad (little master), Javed Miandad, Zaheer Abbas, not only in the field of cricket but many Olympians from Karachi has gained remarkable recognition for Pakistan internationally. Islahuddin, Mumtaz Haider, Hanif Khan are some of the mention-worthy names considered to be hockey giants. Of all that, it is unfair to mention the name of squash crown Jahangir Khan who is widely known worldwide for his game.

The infrastructure has developed greatly during last 5 years. Bridges, flyovers, public parks, underpasses have contributed a lot in the improvement of the infrastructure of the city. The development of Karachi can be known by the initiative Karachi Port trust took by building the world's second largest Fountain in the sea in front of Clifton beach. This fountain shoots up sea water over 600 feet and lit with mega white lights which makes it visible throughout the sea shore on Clifton Beach and Sea View. This is a breath taking view in night. As part of these changes, the Karachites are indebted to the young and dedicated Mustafa Kamal, most forward thinking mayors and city Nazim, Karachi, who has spearheaded the modern infrastructure and played a vital role in making Karachi look as we see it today- a highly urbanized and developed city. ■

