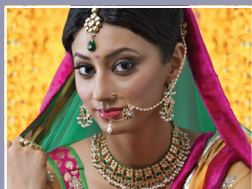




## THE WORLD AWAITS

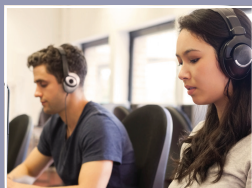
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COUNTRY CULTURE



HISTORY



LANGUAGE



GLOBAL TRAVEL



EDUCATION

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#### Spoken Languages

Home to nearly 300 living languages, China's linguistic diversity is reflected in its official languages: Mandarin, Cantonese (in Hong Kong and Macau), Mongolian (in Mongolia), Tibetan (in Tibet), Uyghur, Zhuang, English (in Hong Kong), and Portuguese (in Macau). Standard Mandarin, based on the Beijing dialect, acts as the lingua franca in Mandarin-speaking areas and some regions, though other languages fulfill that role elsewhere. Major regional languages include varieties of Wu, Yue, and Min.

The hundreds of spoken languages in China belong to language families as diverse as Sino-Tibetan, Hmong-Mien, Tai-Kadai, Austroasiatic, Austronesian, Altaic, and Indo-European.

Mandarin Cantonese Mongolian Tibetan

#### Mandarin / 普通话

你好 (Hello)

**Mandarin Quick Facts**

- Origin: China
- Native Speakers: 955-960 million
- Second-language Speakers: 390-400 million
- Official Language: China, Singapore, Taiwan
- Recognized Language: Indonesia, Malaysia
- Language Family: Sino-Tibetan
  - Sinic
  - Chinese
  - Mandarin

#### Evolution and History

About 2500 years ago Old Chinese evolved into Classical Chinese, which became the standard language for formal writing until the 20th century (analogous to the role of Latin in Europe). This, together with China's tradition of imperial rule, worked in favor of linguistic unity despite wide regional variation in the spoken language. In 1279 Kublai Khan established Beijing as his new capital and the Beijing dialect gradually rose to prominence and became known in English as "Mandarin," finally becoming the official language of China in 1909.

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#### National Cuisine

##### Overview

Although Mali is a poor country where meat and fish are eaten sparingly, the country's cuisine is rich and varied. Food in the South is similar to that of its West African neighbors, and North African dishes are popular in the Saharan region. Specifically, Malian cuisine in the South is similar to that of Burkina Faso and based on rice, a porridge of rice, millet, sorghum, or beans with a sauce of vegetables, meat, or fish. In the North, couscous and herb tea are popular, and the Songhay and Touareg people make thick doughy pancakes served with wild greens.




##### Classic Malian Dishes

###### Appetizers

**Fruit Gimlet** - A medley of dried fruit.

**M'baazi** - M'baazi means "beans," and this dish consists of dried peas or beans boiled in salted water, onions, peppers, oil, coconut milk, and tomatoes.

**Kuku Paaka** - A rich and spicy stew of chicken, eggs, and potatoes cooked in coconut.



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#### Women in Business

##### General View

Costa Rican women still have a way to go before they can break out of the male-centric cultural perceptions of women in their society, but the long history of democracy in the country has made it one of the more progressive Latin American countries in terms of women's rights.

Women represent over 36 percent of the labor force and, according to surveys, occupy 45 percent of professional or technical positions and one third of legislative, senior official, and managerial positions. A growing number of women are making their presence felt in business and government, and there is a perceptible movement to tackle businessmen's issues and problems.



##### Legal Rights

The 1949 Costa Rican constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens, including the right to vote, to own and inherit property, and to engage in any profession. Although women play a significant role in agriculture, men are considered the "family heads" and hold the legal ownership of land. Twenty-five years of land reforms in Costa Rica have benefited only 12 percent of women.

Common-law marriages are widely practiced. In rural areas, this practice has led to widespread abandonment to the point where women head 34 percent of all rural households.

Despite constitutional provisions granting the right to equal pay for both genders, women still receive 23.6 percent less pay on average than men.



##### Women in Professions

Apart from their traditional role of homemakers, Costa Rican women have always participated as workers in the agricultural sector, particularly in banana, cacao, and coffee plantations. They are also engaged in the making and selling of handicrafts for the tourist industry. Many women have also established themselves in small-scale industries.



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#### Historical Timeline

##### Prehistory

**7000 BCE** Early nomadic peoples begin to abandon their Paleolithic cave settlements and form farming settlements in the area.

**6500 BCE** Catalhöyük, one of the world's earliest cities, is founded. This city demonstrates some of the earliest examples of irrigation, domestication of pigs and sheep, and development of pottery.



##### Ancient History

**1800 BCE** The Hittites found their capital city, Hattusa, and develop distinctive artwork and extensive historical archives written in cuneiform on clay tablets.

**1450 BCE** By this time, the Hittite Empire has risen to dominance in the region.


**1290 BCE** The Hittite Empire conquers Pharaoh Ramesses II of Egypt.

**1250 BCE** The Hittite Empire is destroyed by the "sea peoples," loosely associated bands of marauding seafaring tribes.

**800 BCE** Ionia, a settlement consisting of a league of 12 Greek cities, is established in western Anatolia.

**700 BCE** The state of Lydia is founded.

**600-547 BCE** The reign of Croesus, the most famous of Lydia's rulers and also its last. Croesus is known for the legendary wealth; the historical Croesus was the first known to mint gold and silver coins.





**546 BCE** Croesus is defeated by Cyrus, the Emperor of Persia, and the Persian Empire takes control of Anatolia.

**334 BCE** Alexander the Great conquers the Persian armies throughout Anatolia, establishing strong Greek cultural and trade influence in the area.

**132 BCE** King Antioch III of Pergamum dies, leaving the city to the Empire of Rome. At this time, Pergamum is the most prominent of the cities founded in Anatolia after Alexander's invasion.


**129 BCE** The Romans use Pergamum as a base to take over the rest of the region, eventually annexing it as the province of Asia.

**330-452 CE** After decades of political unrest in which successive emperors attempt to divide the Roman Empire into Eastern and Western administrations, the Emperor Constantine reclaims control of both the Eastern and Western Empires and establishes a new capital city in Byzantium, renamed Constantinople. The Byzantine Empire rises in influence over the next few centuries as the Roman Empire declines and eventually collapses.

##### Medieval Era

**1064** The Seljuk Turks, led by Sultan Alp Arslan, invade Armenia, marking the beginning of the Seljuk Empire.



Culture and Society

Language



**WORLD TRADE PRESS**  
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History

Food and Recipes



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