

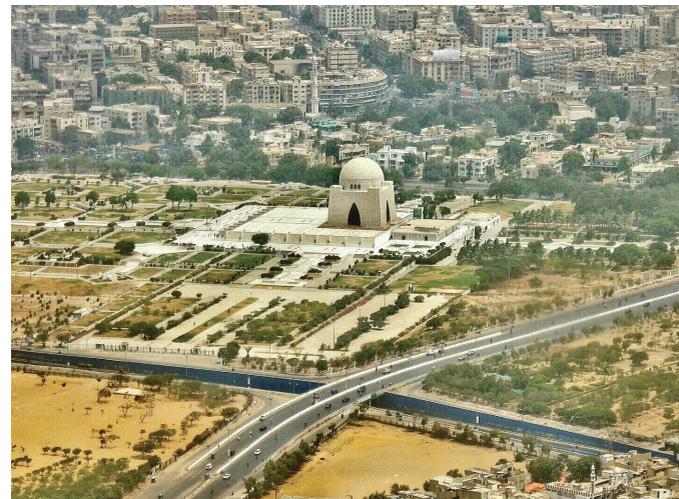


Karachi is a sprawling metropolis considered to be the financial nerve center of Pakistan. The city is an attractive blend of the old and new with the narrow lanes of old city areas reflecting the virility of the past and its wide roads showing its current prosperity. Karachi is blessed with a host of attractive propositions adding luster to pleasant living. Its sunny beaches, deep-sea fishing, yachting, golf and all year round horse-racing offer appropriate avenues for different kinds of lifestyles. The city is rich in culinary delights offering a variety of Pakistani, oriental and western cuisines. Its well stocked markets and bazaars offer an endless variety of exciting shopping including indigenous handicrafts particularly rugs and carpets of rare designs and beauty.

Karachi is not a very old habitation and it was only in 18th century that it started taking shape. Up till then it was a sleepy fishing village known as Kolachi-jogoth. It owes its prominence to the natural cut harbor it has access to. At the inception of Pakistan it was chosen as the capital of the nascent state that added to its importance and growth. When the seat of the government was shifted to Islamabad, Karachi developed into a large city and an important centre of trade and industry.

Karachi houses the birthplace of the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah known as Wazir Mansion, a balconied, three-storied structure located in Kharadar, one of the oldest residential areas of the city. The house has been declared as a protected national monument. Karachi also has the distinction of being the final resting place of the great leader. Quaid-e-Azam's Mausoleum is frequented by crowds coming to pay homage to the departed soul. This white marble impressive edifice with its curved Moorish arches and

copper grills rests on an elevated 54 sq. meters platform. The cool inner sanctum reflects the green of a four-tiered crystal chandelier. Quaid-e-Azam's Mausoleum is a prominent and impressive landmark of Karachi. Nearby are



the graves of the Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan and Quaid's sister, Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah.

Karachi is full of places of interest that bear historical connotations. The prestigious Bagh-e-Jinnah erstwhile known as Frere Hall is surrounded by lush green gardens and was used as Town Hall where, during colonial days, concerts and social events were held regularly. This two-storied Venetian Gothic building now



houses the Liaquat Municipal Library on the ground floor and an art gallery on the first floor. Named after one of Pakistan's renowned artists, Sadiqain, the gallery displays



a permanent collection of the artist's work. Sadiqain spent last years of his life painting a huge mural on the ceiling of the gallery but sadly did not live to complete it.

Another site that is reminiscent of historical value is Empress Market designed in the domestic Gothic style a tall clock tower rising from its midst. The market contains shops that sell meat, fish, poultry, vegetables and other groceries. Merewether Tower is another historical building built in 1867 as the landmark of Karachi's main business centre and stands 35 meters high and carries a four-faced clock. Sindh High Court, built in the Renaissance style could be spotted from a distance owing to its excellent sandstone structure revealing a combination of local and Roman styles of architecture and is embellished with cupolas, balconies and columns. Karachi is made fanciful due to its access to the Arabian Sea. Its sprawling sea front is of tremendous attraction that adds flavor to the city. Located on the far corners of the south of the city is the Clifton Beach, popular seaside venue that also contains an amusement park with a bowling alley, and an aquarium. Karachi is very rich in sea beaches. Its golden un-crowded beaches stretch for miles. The more accessible of them, Sandspit, Paradise Point and Hawkes Bay serve as very attractive propositions to visit and enjoy. Sea surfing is practiced widely. Beach huts are dotted along the shore and some could be hired. In summer months it is a treat to watch out for jelly-fish. On moonlit nights during the months of September and October giant green turtles lumber ashore

to lay eggs in the sand. The French Beach, an isolated immensely attractive stretch of beach is located half way between Hawkes Bay and Paradise Point. Its rocky beach and clear waters are ideal for snorkeling and scuba-diving.

Bunder boating in Karachi is a pleasant experience. A catch of crabs and fish is cooked and served aboard the boat by the crew. Bunder boats are available at Kemari and if required, the crew provides the bait as well as tackle and other fishing gear. Facilities for deep-sea fishing are available. On a moonlit night it is a treat to sail up the sheltered harbor from Kemari to Sandspit. Yachting continues in Karachi all year round and it is a wonderful sight to see the multi-colored sails of the yachts in the harbor contrasting with blues of the sea and the sky.

Owing to its large commercial setup, Karachi is a shopping paradise. Its traditional gold market, the Sarafa Bazaar is a typical oriental market in the city's old quarters selling gold and silver. Among the many colorful shopping areas offering a wide variety of local goods is the Zainab Market where cotton dresses and handicrafts are available. Shops in the Saddar Co-operative Market have a wide collection of handicrafts made from onyx, wood and brass. Leather goods and ready-made clothes usually have fixed prices but sell at a fraction of what they would cost overseas. Bohri Bazaar is a typical oriental market where endless variety of goods is available. On the other side of the city are located modern shopping centers prominent among them being Clifton, Zaib-un-Nisa Street,



Abdullah Haroon Road and Mohammad Ali Jinnah Road. The old traditional bazaars are in Juna Market, Kharadar, Mithadar and Joria Bazaar which are worth visiting.

Karachi also has its patron saint interred in the Mausoleum of Abdullah Shah Ghazi, the most revered of the sufi saints. This green colored building has been given a new look recently. Located 16 km north of Karachi is the shrine of Saint Mangho Pir standing below a mosque built on a rocky hillock. There are numerous legends connected with the saint and the crocodiles inhabiting a shallow pool near it. Devotees of the saint often make offerings of sacrificial meat to them. Pir Mangho, according to one



version, came to Sindh from Bokhara in the 13th century. Soon after, he miraculously caused thermal springs to gush from a rock and date palms to shoot out off the ground. The saint, who died at the age of 150 years, lived in a cave for 40 years from where he spread the message of Islam.

Karachi has a rich presence of museums and art galleries reflecting the artistic ventures of its residents. The most elegantly preserved museum is Quaid-e-Azam House (Flag Staff House), a building that was purchased by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on the eve of independence that was later on declared a national heritage containing his memorabilia. In the late 1920's, Shivratn Mohatta, a businessman from Marwar commissioned the architect Ahmed Hussein Agha to design a Rajput palace in the prestigious locale of Clifton that was named

Mohatta Palace. After 1947, the building was used by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then remained under use of Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah, sister of Quaid-e-Azam. In 1995, the Culture Department of Sindh purchased and



restored the Palace and converted it into a museum. The building was sandblasted back to its original color. The roof, doors and windows were carefully conserved as were the stunning frescoes on the ceilings. The museum opened its doors to the public on September 15th 1999.

National Museum of Pakistan contains an important collection of items relating to Pakistan's ancient heritage. Well arranged galleries display Indus Civilization artifacts, Gandhara sculptures, Islamic art, miniature paintings, ancient coins and manuscripts documenting Pakistan's political history. There is also an interesting ethnological gallery. Maritime Naval Museum depicts the history of naval development in



Pakistan. PAF Museum is organized to preserve the history of Pakistan Air Force. The Fayazee Rehamin Art Gallery and Reference Library of Fine Art (Aiwan-e-Rifat) is a favorite haven for art lovers and students.

Karachi offers excellent opportunities for recreation and relaxation. Inside the gates of Karachi Zoological Gardens are hidden a wide variety of exotic animals. Its tranquil setting takes one to another world. Karachi has a host of clubs prominent among them are Karachi Gymkhana, Sindh Club, Muslim Gymkhana,



Golf Club, Boat Club and Arabian Sea Golf Club situated in the outskirts of the city.

Moreover the city also offers a host of other recreation clubs such as Creek Club, Marina Club and Defence Authority Club.

Karachi offers a rich and wide variety of foods particularly freshly available seafood that is procured in abundance. A large quantity of seafood, particularly prawns, is sent from Karachi towards upcountry. Karachi also exports seafood on quite a large scale.

Data courtesy PTDC

KARACHI

