



A Taste of Culture: Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month



During this month, we honor the achievements, resilience, and cultural heritage of Asian Americans, who encompass a wide range of ethnicities including Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and many more. We also celebrate the diverse cultures and traditions of Pacific Islanders, such as Hawaiians, Samoans, Tongans, and Fijians, among others.

The history of AAPI communities in the United States is marked by both triumphs and challenges. From early waves of immigration in the 19th century to the struggles for civil rights and the significant contributions made in various fields, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have made indelible marks on American society.

Fun Fact about Each Country:



Afghanistan: Afghanistan is home to the Bamiyan Valley, where the famous Buddhas of Bamiyan once stood. These colossal statues, carved into the cliffs, were unfortunately destroyed in 2001, but their remnants remain a testament to the country's rich cultural heritage.



Armenia: Armenia is home to the world's oldest known winery. The ruins of Areni-1 cave, dating back over 6,000 years, were discovered to contain ancient wine production equipment, indicating the early origins of viticulture in the region.



Bangladesh: Bangladesh has the world's largest river delta, formed by the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers. This fertile delta is home to the UNESCO World Heritage Site known as the Sundarbans, a vast mangrove forest and sanctuary for the endangered Bengal tiger.



Bhutan: Bhutan is the only country in the world that measures its success through Gross National Happiness (GNH), focusing on the well-being and happiness of its citizens rather than solely economic indicators.



Brunei: Brunei Darussalam means "abode of peace," which is mostly true given the country's higher standard of living and longer life expectancy (average is 75.93 years as of 2020) than many neighbors in Southeast Asia.



Cambodia: The Tonle Sap Lake provides sustenance to nearly half of Cambodia's crops and is a major source for fishing. The lake is that large parts regenerate during the wet season when the monsoon rain falls and floods the central area between Siem Reap and Phnom Penh.



China: Tea has been used and consumed for thousands of years in China. It was often utilized as medicine when it was first used in the 10th century BC. Since then, the customs and use of tea has flourished and evolved.



Chuukese: Chuuk Lagoon, located in Chuuk State, is home to one of the world's largest underwater shipwreck collections, attracting divers from around the globe.



Fiji: Fijians greet each other with a friendly "Bula," which means "hello" in the Fijian language, reflecting their welcoming nature.



Guam: Guam is home to the Chamorro people, who have a unique ancient writing system called "Chamorro Script," which is still studied and practiced by a small number of individuals.



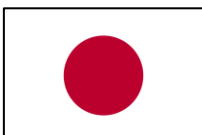
Hawaii: Hawaii is the only state in the United States that is completely made up of islands. It consists of a total of 137 islands, including the popular ones like Maui, Oahu, Kauai, and the Big Island.



India: India is home to the largest postal network in the world. India Post, the country's postal service, has over 150,000 post offices, providing essential services to its massive population and connecting even the most remote areas.



Indonesia: Indonesia is home to over 700 different languages and dialects. Bahasa Indonesia being the official language of Indonesia. The Papua Province alone, boasts over 270 spoken dialects.



Japan: Over 80% of land in Japan is mountainous. This hilly terrain includes over 100 active volcanoes making up roughly 10% of all active volcanoes in the world — the landscape makes for excellent skiing and wandering.



Kazakhstan: Baikonur Cosmodrome, located in Kazakhstan, is the world's first and largest operational space launch facility. It has been the primary launch site for Russian and international space missions since the early days of the space race.



Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyzstan is home to Lake Issyk-Kul, one of the largest alpine lakes in the world. Despite being surrounded by mountains, the lake never freezes completely, earning it the name "Warm Lake" in the local language.



Laos: The oldest modern human fossil in the world was found in a cave in North Laos. Word on the street suggests it's 46,000 years old.



Malaysia: Malaysia's Strait of Malacca may be home to the world's richest uncovered treasure trove. The Portuguese ship Flora de la mar (Flower of the sea) was returning home loaded with what was then the largest treasure collected by the Portuguese navy when it sank in December 1511.



Maldives: The Maldives is the lowest-lying country in the world, with an average ground level elevation of just 1.5 meters (4 feet 11 inches) above sea level.



Marshall Islands: The United States conducted nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands from 1946 to 1958, leading to the creation of the famous Bikini Atoll, which is now a popular diving destination.



Mongolia: Mongolia home to the world's largest equestrian statue, the Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue. This towering monument stands at 40 meters (131 feet) tall and pays tribute to the legendary Mongol Empire founder, Genghis Khan.



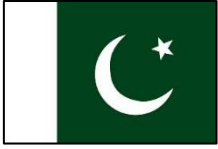
Myanmar: Roughly 135 ethnic groups make up the people of Myanmar with upwards of 60 of languages spoken by these diverse peoples.



Nepal: Nepal is home to the birthplace of Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. Lumbini, located in southern Nepal, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a pilgrimage destination for Buddhists from around the world.



Okinawan: The Shiokawa or 'Salt River' of Okinawa's Motobu Peninsula is the shortest river in Japan at 300 meters in length, and one of just a few salt water rivers in the world. Fed by the ocean itself, the river is short but wide in some places, and home to variety of ocean plants, creating a unique inland ecosystem.



Pakistan: Pakistan is home to K2, the second-highest mountain in the world. Known as the "Savage Mountain," K2 is renowned for its challenging and treacherous climbing conditions, making it a dream destination for mountaineers.



Palau: Palau has declared an entire marine sanctuary, encompassing an area roughly the size of Spain, making it one of the largest protected areas in the world.



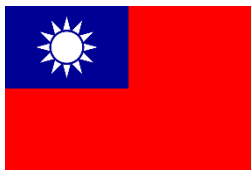
Papua New Guinea: Papua is one of the most linguistically diverse nations on Earth, with over 850 languages spoken. This linguistic diversity reflects the country's rich cultural heritage.



Philippines: The island Camiguin, located in the Philippines, is 14 miles long and 8.5 miles wide, but it's the only island on the planet with more volcanoes than towns.



Pohnpei: Pohnpei, also known as the "Island of Rain," is a picturesque island in the Federated States of Micronesia. It is home to the ancient city of Nan Madol, a UNESCO World Heritage Site built entirely on artificial islets and known as the "Venice of the Pacific."



Republic of China (Taiwan): Taiwan has been ruled by China, Japan and briefly Holland. During Japanese rule, Taiwan became the wealthy, modernised place it is today. There are plenty of places you can visit Japanese hill towns, tea houses and hot springs used by the colonial rulers. While these places are quaint and charming, historians tell us that the Japanese were cruel rulers and forced local women to be their concubines.



Samoa: Samoa is one of the first countries in the world to greet each new day. Due to its position near the International Date Line, it is among the earliest places to see the sunrise.



Singapore: Singapore is one of the 20 smallest countries in the world. The main island is 42 kilometers long and 23 kilometers wide and has a total land area of just 683 square kilometers.



Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka is home to the world's oldest living tree, the Sri Maha Bodhi, which is over 2,200 years old. It is believed to have grown from a sapling brought from India by Emperor Ashoka's daughter.



South Korea: South Korea has one of the strongest economies in Eastern Asia. Most of its wealth comes from manufacturing and service industries, such as banking. It exports ships, cars, computers, and other electronic items.



Tajikistan: Tajikistan is a mountainous country located in Central Asia. Tajikistan is home to the Pamir Mountains, often referred to as the "Roof of the World." This region boasts some of the highest peaks and breathtaking landscapes, making it a paradise for mountaineers and nature enthusiasts.



Thailand: Bangkok, Thailand is called the Venice of the East because there are 83 canals. As many as 10,000 boats full of fruits, vegetables, and fish crowd the canals and create a floating market.



Tibet: Tibet is considered one of the most secluded regions on earth. Due to its mountainous and astounding geographical features, Tibet is the least populated province in China. With the mighty Himalayas a prominent feature in Tibet's landscape, the average mountain of this region stands above 20,000ft tall, making Tibet one of the most secluded regions on earth.



Timorese: Located within the Coral Triangle, a marine area in the western Pacific Ocean, is home to 600 different species of reef-building corals. The waters sustain six of the world's seven marine turtle species and over 2,000 species of reef fish.



Turkmenistan: Turkmenistan is home to the Darvaza Gas Crater, also known as the "Door to Hell." This natural gas field has been burning continuously for several decades, creating a mesmerizing and otherworldly spectacle.



Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan is home to Samarkand, one of the oldest inhabited cities in Central Asia. Samarkand's Registan Square, with its majestic madrasas and intricate tilework, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a marvel to behold.



Vietnam: As a communist country, Vietnam has no official religion. But people are free to worship if they want to, and many follow what's called the "Three Teachings" of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism.

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