

## Exploring Jodhpur - Past, Present and Fascinating Trivia

Hey aspirants! We're back with another blog on the blog series '**Know Your City**'. The city you're going to learn about is '**Jodhpur**'. So, without a further delay, let's start exploring the city.

Nestled in the heart of Rajasthan, **Jodhpur**, the second-largest city in the state, captivates visitors with its rich history and vibrant culture. It once reigned as the capital of the Kingdom of Marwar, now an integral part of Rajasthan. The city's allure lies in its architectural wonders, such as palaces, imposing forts, and ornate temples, all set against the backdrop of the enchanting Thar Desert. What sets Jodhpur apart is its distinctive "**Blue City**" moniker, embraced not only by locals but resonating across India. This charming city also serves as the administrative hub for the Jodhpur district and division, adding a contemporary touch to its storied past.

Before looking at the different aspects, one must know the city symbols of the particular city. The city symbols of **Jodhpur** are:

Jodhpur	
State	Rajasthan
Official Language	Hindi, English
City Bird	Great Indian Bustard
City Animal	Bullock
City Tree	Khejri
City Flower	Rohida
MLA	Manisha Panwar
MP	Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
Mayor	Kunti Deora Parihar Vanita Seth
Collector and DM	Himanshu Gupta

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[Source: Holidify]

So now, let's move on to the first aspect of the blog i.e. **History of Jodhpur.**

## History of Jodhpur

Jodhpur's historical journey, from a princely kingdom to a vibrant modern city, stands as a testament to its resilience and enduring charm.

- **Foundation and Marwar Kingdom (1459):** In 1459, the city of Jodhpur found its roots when Rao Jodha, a valiant Rajput chief from the Rathore clan, established it. Jodha's visionary conquests expanded the territory, subduing the Delhi Sultanate and laying the foundation for Marwar, a kingdom that would resonate through history. Initially, the capital was at Mandore, Jodha's hometown, but Jodhpur soon assumed this role due to its strategic location along the Delhi-Gujarat trade route. It thrived on a flourishing trade in opium, copper, silk, sandalwood, dates, and more.
- **Mughal Influence and Turmoil (16th-18th Century):** In 1581, the Mughal Emperor Akbar annexed Marwar after the death of Rao Chandrasen Rathore. This marked the kingdom as a Mughal vassal, offering allegiance while enjoying internal autonomy. The period introduced Jodhpur to new art and architectural styles and opened doors for local tradesmen across northern India. The rule saw turmoil, including a brief Mughal sequestration in 1679 and a subsequent struggle that lasted 30 years, only to end with the decline of the Mughal Empire.
- **Marathas and British Alliances (18th Century):** As the Mughals faded, the Marathas stepped in as regional overlords, and Marwar's stability waned. Wars and treaties for half a century left the state depleted, leading to an alliance with the British. In 1857, Rathore nobles led a rebellion in Pali, but it was quashed by the British Army.
- **British Raj and Prosperity (19th Century):** During the British Raj, Jodhpur boasted the largest land area in Rajputana, covering 93,424 square kilometres, with a population of 4,73,759 in 1901. The state's revenue soared to £3,529,000, and its merchants, the Marwaris, rose to prominence in the Indian trade.
- **Independence and Inclusion (1947):** Jodhpur's journey took a decisive turn in 1947 when India gained independence. The state integrated into the Indian Union, with Jodhpur emerging as the second-largest city in Rajasthan. Initially hesitant to join India, the effective persuasion of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel eventually sealed the union, solidifying Jodhpur's place within the Indian Republic after the State Reorganisation Act in 1956.



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[Source: Holidify]

Jodhpur's history weaves a captivating tale of conquest, cultural exchange, and adaptation, making it a city steeped in heritage and resilience.

## Here's a timeline of major events in the history of Jodhpur:

- **1459:** Rao Jodha founded Jodhpur, establishing the Marwar kingdom.
- **1581:** The Mughal Emperor Akbar annexed Marwar after the death of Rao Chandrasen Rathore.
- **1707:** Aurangzeb's death leads to the restoration of Maharaja Ajit Singh by Veer Durgadas Rathore.
- **1755:** The Marathas replaced the Mughals as rulers of the region, ending a 50-year period of wars and treaties.
- **1857:** A revolt by Rathore nobles in Pali, led by Thakur Kushal Singh of Auwa, is defeated by the British Army.
- **1947:** India gains independence, and Jodhpur merges into the Indian Union.
- **1956:** The State Reorganisation Act includes Jodhpur within the state of Rajasthan.
- **1901:** During the British Raj, Jodhpur has a land area of 93,424 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 44,73,759.
- **1581-1707:** Marwar enjoys internal autonomy under Mughal suzerainty, experiencing new art and architectural styles.
- **1755:** Maharaja Vijay Singh Ji leads a successful effort to eliminate Maratha leader Jai Appa Scindia.
- **1707-1755:** A period of intrigue and struggle within the Jodhpur court as the Mughal Empire declines and the Marathas rise to power.

This timeline encapsulates the remarkable historical journey of Jodhpur, from its foundation by Rao Jodha to its emergence as a significant modern city in Rajasthan.

Let's move on to the next aspect of this blog i.e. **Geographical aspects.**

## Geographical Aspects of Jodhpur

Jodhpur's geographical characteristics, including its arid climate, demographic diversity, and strategic location, contribute to its unique identity as a vibrant and dynamic city in Rajasthan.

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### Geographical features:

The city's geography is characterised by the vast expanse of the Thar Desert, also known as the Great Indian Desert. The stark landscape of the desert surrounds Jodhpur, offering a unique setting for the city.

- **Location:** Jodhpur is strategically situated about 250 km from the border with Pakistan, making it a crucial city in western Rajasthan.
- **Rivers:** The Jojari River, a tributary of the Luni River, flows through the urban area of Jodhpur. A Riverfront project is in planning for this river, promising to enhance the city's water resources.

### Physiographic Aspects:

The stark, arid beauty of Jodhpur's physiographic features sets it apart as a city of historical and geographical significance.

- **Climate:** Jodhpur experiences a hot arid climate, with a high potential evapotranspiration. Average annual rainfall is around 362 mm, primarily falling from June to September, but with significant fluctuations.
- **Temperature:** Summers are scorching, with high temperatures exceeding 40°C in April, May, and June. The highest recorded temperature in Jodhpur was a sweltering 48.8°C on May 20, 2016.
- **Rainfall:** Jodhpur experiences a hot arid climate, with limited rainfall averaging around 362 mm, primarily occurring from June to September.

### Demographic Snapshots:

The city's demographic landscape is poised for a remarkable 33.04% growth over the next decade, reaching over 3.1 million by 2031.

- **Population:** According to the 2011 Census, Jodhpur had a population of 1,033,918. With the inclusion of surrounding villages, the population is now estimated at 2,330,000 and is expected to grow by 33.04% over the next decade.
- **Population Density:** The urban/metropolitan area of Jodhpur houses 1,137,815 people, with a sex ratio of 538,483 females to 599,332 males.
- **Literacy Rate:** The city boasts an average literacy rate of 80.56%, with 88.42% for males and 73.93% for females.
- **Sex Ratio:** The population consists of approximately 52.62% males and 47.38% females.
- **Air Quality Index (AQI):** The AQI in Jodhpur is subject to seasonal variation, with dust storms affecting air quality. Monitoring air quality is essential for residents' well-being.

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[Source: Viator]

## Soil and Vegetation:

Jodhpur's soil is mainly arid and sandy, a characteristic of desert regions.

- Vegetation is sparse due to the arid conditions, with drought-resistant plants and thorny shrubs adapted to the desert environment.
- The arid climate and soil conditions limit natural vegetation in the region. You'll find hardy desert flora like thorny shrubs, acacia trees, and some drought-resistant grasses.
- However, agriculture is sustained through irrigation, and various crops like millet, wheat, and pulses are cultivated in the surrounding areas. Jodhpur's unique ecosystem showcases the resilience of life in arid environments.

Jodhpur boasts a wealth of iconic landmarks. The Mehrangarh Fort, towering 410 feet above the city, is a symbol of grandeur and history. Its expansive museum houses an incredible collection of artefacts. Umaid Bhawan Palace, an opulent royal residence, is renowned for its grandeur and currently serves as a luxury hotel. Jaswant Thada, a marble mausoleum, offers serene reflection. Clock Tower and Sardar Market provide a vibrant glimpse of daily life. These landmarks, steeped in culture and history, add to Jodhpur's captivating allure.

Now let's move on to the **political aspects of Jodhpur**.

## Political Aspects of Jodhpur

Until 2020, Jodhpur was under the governance of a single municipal body, Jodhpur Nagar Nigam, led by a mayor. However, in 2019, the Rajasthan government initiated a transformation for more effective administration. This restructuring led to the formation of two municipal corporations in Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Kota.



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- **Division into Wards:** For administrative purposes, Jodhpur city is subdivided into wards, each responsible for electing members of the corporation council, who serve five-year terms. These members, known as councillors or "parshads" in Hindi, represent their respective wards.
- **Composition of the Corporation:** The municipal corporation includes directly elected members and ex-officio members. The city's political landscape encompasses one member of parliament, three members of the legislative assembly (Sardarpura, Soorsagar, and City), and three nominated members. Currently, Jodhpur operates with two civic bodies, Jodhpur North and Jodhpur South, each under the leadership of a mayor. Each of these municipal corporations comprises 80 wards, resulting in a total of 160 wards within the city.
- **Role of Jodhpur Development Authority (JDA):** The Jodhpur Development Authority (JDA) plays a crucial role in executing and supervising development plans and schemes for the urban region. It contributes significantly to the city's growth and transformation, ensuring it keeps pace with the evolving needs of its populace.

This political reconfiguration reflects a proactive approach to better governance and urban development in Jodhpur, allowing for more focused and efficient administration of the city's diverse needs.



[Source: The Economic Times]

Now let's discuss the **culture of Jodhpur**.

## Culture of Jodhpur

The city's deep cultural roots create an enchanting tapestry that captivates all who visit.



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- **Language:** Jodhpur's rich culture is steeped in tradition and diversity. The locals affectionately refer to the city as "Jodhana." Hindi and Marwari are the primary languages spoken.
- **People:** The city's inhabitants, known as Jodhpuris, embody a warm and welcoming spirit.
- **Attire:** Traditional attire plays a significant role in the city's cultural identity. People often don vibrant turbans, known as "pagris," and vibrant, hand-embroidered clothing, reflecting the desert's vibrancy.
- **Cuisine:** Jodhpur is a culinary delight, famed for dishes like Mirchi Bada, Rabri Ghewar, and Mawa Kachori. Dal-Baati-Churma, Makhaniya Lassi, and Ker Sangri are local specialties. The city's markets teem with delightful culinary experiences.
- **Handicrafts:** Jodhpur is renowned for its intricate handicrafts, from exquisite textiles to exquisite jewellery.
- **Temples:** The city's temples, including the magnificent Maha mandir, are architectural wonders adorned with murals and inscriptions.
- **Literature:** The city's cultural heritage finds expression in literature and religion.
- **Religion:** It celebrates a fusion of Rajasthani traditions, and Hinduism is the predominant faith.
- **Festivals:** Jodhpur hosts vibrant festivals, with the Marwari Festival being a highlight.
- **Music and Dance:** Music and dance, including the graceful Ghoomar, resonate in the streets.



[Source: Avis India]

Now let's talk about the next aspect i.e. **Environment in Jodhpur.**

## Environment in Jodhpur

Jodhpur, despite its arid desert surroundings, has made remarkable strides in nurturing its environment. Urban biodiversity thrives here, with several species of flora and fauna adapting to the harsh Thar Desert climate.

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- **Urban Biodiversity:** Jodhpur, though situated in the arid Thar Desert, harbours a unique urban biodiversity. The city's flora and fauna have adapted to the challenging desert environment. The arid landscapes are dotted with hardy desert shrubs, thorny acacia trees, and resilient grasses, showcasing nature's ability to thrive in adversity.
- **Green Cover:** Jodhpur's green cover is a testament to its commitment to environmental sustainability. The city boasts a network of parks and gardens, including Mandore Garden, Kaylana Lake and Garden, and Rao Jodha Desert Rock Park, which serve as vital green lungs amid the urban sprawl.
- **Fauna:** Despite the harsh desert conditions, Jodhpur is home to a variety of wildlife. The Machia Biological Park and the Ratanada Ganesh Temple offer opportunities for wildlife enthusiasts to observe leopards, deer, and other species native to the region.
- **Environmental Challenges:** Jodhpur faces challenges typical of desert cities, including water scarcity and sustainable resource management. The city's rapid urbanization poses a challenge to its delicate ecosystem.



[Source: Expedia]

As Jodhpur continues to evolve, the city strives to balance urban development with environmental preservation, showcasing the resilience of nature in a desert city's heart.

Let's talk about the **economic aspects** of the city Jodhpur.

## Economy of Jodhpur

Jodhpur's dynamic economy reflects a synergy of traditional crafts, modern industries, and a vibrant educational sector, positioning it as a major economic force in Rajasthan.



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- **Industrial Hub:** Jodhpur is a thriving economic centre, contributing approximately 4 billion dollars to Rajasthan's economy. The city is home to diverse industries, including handicrafts, which play a pivotal role in India's 200-million-dollar handicraft industry. It's known for producing intricate textiles, jewellery, and furniture.
- **Education & Skill Development:** Jodhpur boasts the largest standardized test training industry in western Rajasthan, with top coaching institutes for competitive exams like IIT-JEE, NEET-UG, and Civil Service Exams, imparting valuable skills and education to aspirants.
- **Petroleum Hub:** A significant development is the collaboration between Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and the Rajasthan government, working on a refinery project in nearby Pachpadra. With a capacity of nine MMTPA, this 'Jewel of the Desert' refinery is set to come online in January 2024, opening new avenues for employment and industries.
- **DMIC Project Impact:** Jodhpur is poised for a remarkable transformation through the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Project, with Marwar Junction serving as a key freight loading point. This ambitious project aims to boost manufacturing and industrial growth, creating an economic surge in the region.

Jodhpur's economy reflects a balance between traditional craftsmanship and modern industry, making it a thriving and diverse economic landscape.

Now let's delve into a few **Interesting Facts about Jodhpur**.

## Some Interesting Facts about Jodhpur

Jodhpur's blend of history, culture, and unique quirks makes it a city full of surprises.

- **Home to the Best Mustache:** The city hosts the annual World Beard and Mustache Championships, celebrating extravagant facial hair.
- **Drought once every 4 years:** As per local legends, it is said that after a hermit named Cheeria Nathji, who used to live on the hill where the fort is built, was forced to move by Rao Jodha, he cursed the entire kingdom with water scarcity. Since then, once every 3-4 years, the city and its surrounding region have been facing drought.
- **Sun city:** Jodhpur is often referred to as the "Sun City" due to its sunny weather throughout the year.





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[Source: jodhpuronline.in]

In conclusion, Jodhpur, the "Blue City" of Rajasthan, stands as a captivating mosaic of history, culture, and resilience. With a rich historical journey from its princely roots, the city has adapted and grown to become a modern hub without losing its cultural identity. Its geographical features, demography poised for remarkable growth, and commitment to preserving urban biodiversity make it a city of unique contrasts.

Jodhpur's vibrant economy, blending traditional craftsmanship and modern industries, reflects its dynamic spirit. And amidst it all, Jodhpur surprises with its charming quirks and cultural delights. This city is a living testament to the enduring spirit that has made it a jewel in the heart of Rajasthan.

