ASIA

North Asia

(The People’s Republic of) China

Contributed by YangYi Cao, Haotian Wang, Yang Zhang, Hongshan Liu, Li Guan, Yingtong Xie, Haisu Wang, Yangming Li, and Jian Zhang

Capital: Beijing

Population: 1.3 billion

Religion(s): Taoism; Buddhism; Christianity; Catholicism; Atheism

Political Leader(s): Chairman/President Hu Jingtao; Xi Jingping; Premier Wen Jiabao; Wu Bangguo

Language(s): Mandarin Chinese; Cantonese; Other regional dialects depending on the city

“Hello” in Mandarin Chinese: 你好 (“ni hao”)

“Goodbye” in Mandarin Chinese: 再见 (“zai jian”)

(The People’s Republic of) China (Cont.)

“Delicious” in Mandarin Chinese: 好吃 (“fei chang hao chi”) or 美味 (“mei wei”)

Food(s) and Drink(s): Dumplings (jiaozi); All kinds of dimsum; Spring rolls; Rice dumplings (zong zi); Fried rice; Rice cakes; Congee; Peking duck; Green tea; Moon cakes; Soy milk; Fermented and distilled alcoholic beverages; Hot pot; Steamed buns; Pork with soy sauce; Flower teas; Ginger tea; Hunton; Red pork; Steamed fish; Black plum juice; White wine; Yuanxiao; Twice-cooked pork (hui guo rou); Ma po tofu; Beijing duck and Shandong pancakes in Northern China; Small steamed buns, Beef soup, Tangyuan, and Baozi in Southern China; Noodles

Traditional Music: Chinese (i.e. Beijing, Sichuan) opera; Instrumental (i.e. bamboo flute, guzheng, erhu [a two-stringed bowed instrument with a lower register than jinghu], dizi, pipa, yangqin); Kuaiban (快板); Revolutionary songs (all government workers are required to sing these songs on important Communist-party related days); Folk music; Ancient bell and drum music; The Moon Over a Fountain; Mountain Stream; Saima (instructed by Erhu); Jasmine
Briefing Your Country

(The People’s Republic of) China (Cont.)

Sport(s): Table tennis (i.e. Ping-pong); Badminton; Volleyball; Chess; Soccer; Swimming; Tai chi; Basketball; Martial arts; Kung fu; Football

Celebrities: Yao Ming; Jay Chou; Daniel Wu; Fan Bingbing; Jet Li; Liu Xiang; Jackie Chan; Li Na; Ma Yun; Lang Lang; Bruce Lee; Xun Lu; Zhong Guan; Qin Shi Huang; Confucius; Genghis Khan; Mao Zedong; Pandas; Ziyi Zhang

Hong Kong

Contributed by Hin Li

Capital: Beijing

Population: 7 million

Religion(s): Buddhism; Catholicism; Christianity

Political Leader(s): Donald Tsang

Language(s): Cantonese

“Hello” in Cantonese: 你好 (“ni hao”)

Hong Kong (Cont.)

“Goodbye” in Cantonese: 拜拜 (“bye bye”)

“Delicious” in Cantonese: 好味 (“ho mei”)

Food(s) and Drink(s): Dim sum

Traditional Music: Canton pop

Sport(s): Football and Basketball

Celebrities: Andy Lau; Jackie Chan; Bruce Lee

Japan

Contributed by Daisuke Minami

Capital: Tokyo

Population: 130 million

Religion(s): Shinto and Buddhism

Political Leader(s): Kan Naoto; Yukio Hatoyama; Ichiro Ozawa; Sadakazu Tanigaki

Language(s): Japanese
Japan (Cont.)

“Hello” in Japanese: We do not really have a word similar to “hello” in Japanese. We use “o-ha-yo-u-go-za-i-ma-su” (おはようございます) for morning, “kon-ni-chi-wa” (こんにちは) for noon, and “kon-ban-wa” for evening (こんばんは). (I often hear foreign people using “kon-ni-chi-wa” as “hello”, but I think it does not sound right if used in morning or evening.) You can use “yo” (よ) or “oh” (お) anytime as “hi”, although they sound very informal.

“Goodbye” in Japanese: For “goodbye”, we say “sa-yo-na-la” (さよなら). (I would prefer using L instead of R in Japanese, though it is formally R, since we do not have the pronunciation of R in Japanese.)

“Delicious” in Japanese: “O-i-shi-I” (おいしい) or “U-ma-I” (うまい)

Food(s) and Drink(s): Miso soup; Soba; Udon; Natto; Umeboshi; Green tea (i.e. ryokucha, maccha); Sake

Traditional Music: Noun and Minyou

Sport(s): Sumo-wrestling; Baseball; Soccer

Celebrities: Comedian and movie director Takeshi Kitano; Baseball players Ichiro Suzuki and Shigeo Nagashima; Novelist Haruki Murakami; Singer Akiko Wada

South Korea (Republic of Korea)

Contributed by Jin Haeng Lee and Hyun Uk Jeong

Capital: Seoul

Population: 49 million

Religion(s): Christianity; Protestantism; Buddhism

Political Leader(s): President Myung Bak Lee

Language(s): Korean

“Hello” in Korean: “An-nyung”

“Goodbye” in Korean: “An-nyung”

“Delicious” in Korean: “Mat-it-da” or “Mat jot ta”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Kimchi; Bulgoggi (marinated barbecued beef); Dduk; Shik-hye

Traditional Music: A-Li-Rang
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**South Korea (Republic of Korea) (Cont.)**

**Sport(s):** Soccer and Baseball

**Celebrities:** Rain; Yun Ah Kim; Ki Moon Ban; Tae Hwan Park

**Taiwan**

*Contributed by Jeniffer Yuan*

**Capital:** Taipei

**Population:** 23 million

**Religion(s):** Taoism and Buddhism

**Political Leader(s):**
- Current President Ma Ying-jeou
- Former President (’00 – ’08) Chen Shui-bian
- Su Tseng-chang
- Lien Chan

**Language(s):** Mandarin Chinese

“Hello” in Mandarin Chinese: “Ni hao”

“Goodbye” in Mandarin Chinese: “Zai jian”

**“Delicious” in Mandarin Chinese:** “Hao chi”

**Sport(s):** Baseball and Badminton

**Celebrities:** Jay Chou and Jolin Tsai

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**South Asia**

**India**

*Contributed by Shivangi Pattanaik and Amita Ramachandra*

**Capital:** New Delhi

**Population:** 1.2 billion

**Religion(s):** Hinduism; Islam; Christianity

**Political Leader(s):**
- Manmohan Singh
- Rahul Gandh
- Prathibha Patil

**Language(s):** Hindi, although each state has its own language (including variations within states)

“Hello” in Hindi: “Namaskaram”
India (Cont.)

“Goodbye” in Hindi: “Vaanga”

“Delicious” in Hindi: “Ruchi” or “Nalle swad indu”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Rice; Chapatis (Rotis); Curries vary across the country; Dosa; Palm wine; Idl; Idyappam; Puttu

Traditional Music: Carnatic tradition in Southern India and Hindustani tradition in Northern India

Sport(s): Cricket and Hockey

Celebrities: Aishwarya Rai; Amitabh Bachan; Abhishek Bachchan

Philippines (Cont.)

Political Leader(s): Benigno S. Aquino III

Language(s): Filipino and English

“Hello” in Filipino: “Kumusta”

“Goodbye” in Filipino: “Bye”

“Delicious” in Filipino: “Sarap”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Lechon; Adobo; Sinigang; Tapa; Pancit; Lumpia; Halo-halo; Sago’t gulaman

Sport(s): Basketball; Volleyball; Badminton

Celebrities: Lea Salonga; Manny Pacquiao; Charice Pempengco

Singapore

Contributed by Zhe Yu Lee

Capital: Singapore

Population: 5 million
Singapore (Cont.)

Religion(s): Buddhism; Islam; Christianity

Political Leader(s): Lee Kuan Yew; Lee Hsien Loong; Sylvia Lim; Chen Shaw Mao; Low Thia Khiang

Language(s): English; Mandarin Chinese; Malay; Tamil

Food(s) and Drink(s): Chicken; Rice; Skewered meats; Fishball noodles

Sport(s): Soccer; Badminton; Table Tennis

Thailand (Cont.)

Language(s): Thai

“Hello” in Thai: “Sa-wad-dee” (+ “ka” for girls and + “krub” for boys)

“Delicious” in Thai: “A-roi” (+ “mak” for “very”)

Food(s) and Drink(s): Manprik; Long rua; Lemongrass juice

Traditional Music: Thai classical music with Thai instruments

Sport(s): Soccer; Badminton; Volleyball

Celebrities: Tony Jaa

Vietnam

Contributed by Cuong Le

Capital: Hanoi

Population: 90 million

Religion(s): None (but Buddha plays an important role in people’s beliefs)

Language(s): Vietnamese

“Hello” in Vietnamese: “Chao”
Vietnam (Cont.)

“Goodbye” in Vietnamese: “Tam biet” (or “Chao”)

“Delicious” in Vietnamese: “Ngon”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Pho; Rice cakes; Nem

Traditional Music: Nhac tru

Sport(s): Soccer

Celebrities: Dam Vinh hung and My Tam

West Asia

Pakistan

Contributed by Asad Zaidi

Capital: Islamabad

Population: 175 million

Religion(s): Islam

Political Leader(s): Asif Ali Zardari; Yousuf Raza Gilani; Maulana Fazal-ur-Rahman; Imran Khan; Nawaz Sharif; Shahbaz Sharif

Pakistan (Cont.)

Language(s): Urdu; Punjabi; Sindhi; Pashto; Balochi; English (although very few people are fluent in English, in a typical sentence, up to half of the words may be in English)

“Hello” in Urdu: “Assalaam alaikum” (Response to this greeting is: “Walaikum as-salaam”)

“Goodbye” in Urdu: “Khuda hafiz”

“Delicious” in Urdu: “Zaiqaydaar” (although not commonly used)

Food(s) and Drink(s): Tandoori chicken; Chicken tikka; Rogan gosht; Saag; Nihari; Biryani; Sarson da saag; Daal makhani; Bhujia; Qeema; Sajji; Chargha; Daal chawal; Qorma; Koftay; Lassi; Sherbat; Rooh afza

Traditional Music: Classical; Ghazal; Qawwali; Sufi; Folk; Filmi; Sufi rock; Bhangra

Sport(s): Cricket; Football (i.e. American soccer); Gilli danda; Field hockey; Polo; Squash

Celebrities: Former cricket captain and current politician Imran Khan; Singer Ali Azmat; Singer Atif Aslam; Video jockey and actress Mahira Khan; Model Aamina Haq; Comedian Faisal Qureshi; Standup comedian Sami Shah; Photographer Tapu Javeri; Singer Hadiqa Kiyani; Actor Shan; Talk show host Ayesha Tammy Haq
**AMERICA**

**North America**

**Canada**

*Contributed by YangYi Cao*

**Capital:** Ottawa

**Population:** 3.4 million

**Religion(s):** Protestantism and Catholicism

**Political Leader(s):** Stephen Harper; David Johnston; Queen Elizabeth II (in theory)

**Language(s):** English and French

**“Hello” in French:** “Bonjour” or “Salut”

**“Goodbye” in French:** “Au revoir”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Timbits; Butter tarts; Poutine; Canadian back bacon; Tourtiere; Beaver tail (not real beaver tail); Maple syrup

**Sport(s):** Ice hockey; Ice skating; Curling; Lacrosse; Rugby; Basketball; Baseball

**Celebrities:** Justin Bieber; Avril Lavigne; Celine Dion; Rachel McAdams; Mike Myers; Nelly Furtado; Wayne Gretzky

**Jamaica**

*Contributed by Damion Prendergast*

**Capital:** Kingston

**Population:** 2.8 million

**Religion(s):** Christianity

**Political Leader(s):** Prime Minister Bruce Golding

**Language(s):** English and English Creole (Patois)
Jamaica (Cont.)

“Hello” in English Creole: “’Ello”

“Goodbye” in English Creole: “Lata”

“Delicious” in English Creole: “Nyam good”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Ackee and saltsih; Rice and peas; Lemonade; Rum; Coconut water

Traditional Music: Reggae and Dancehall

Sport(s): Football (i.e. American soccer); Netball; Cricket; Track and field; Tennis; Basketball; Field hockey

Celebrities: Bob Marley; Vybz Kartel; Beenie Man; Sean Paul; Beres Hammond; Movado; Damian “Jr. Gong” Marley

Mexico (Cont.)

Religion(s): Catholicism

Political Leader(s): Felipe Calderon Hinojosa

Language(s): Spanish; Nahuatl; Zapoteca; Mixteca; more than 60 minority languages

“Hello” in Spanish: “Hola”

“Goodbye” in Spanish: “Adios”

“Delicious” in Spanish: “Delicioso”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Mole; Tequila; Quesadillas; Agua de frutas; Mondongo; Jamaica water

Traditional Music: Ranchero music; Mariachi; Son Jarocho; Jarabe Tapatio

Sport(s): Soccer and boxing

Celebrities: Frida Kahlo; Octavio Paz; Vicente Fernandez; Andrea de la Parra; Diego Rivera; Gael Garcia

Mexico

Contributed by
Hector Santiago
Bautista Aniceto

Capital: Mexico City

Population: 107 million
Trinidad and Tobago

Contributed by Leia Cozier

Capital: Port of Spain

Population: 1.3 million

Religion(s): Roman Catholicism; Hinduism; Islam; Christianity

Political Leader(s): Kamla Bissesar

Language(s): English (official); Caribbeean Hindustani (dialect of Hindi); French; Spanish; Chinese

Food(s) and Drink(s): Curry chicken and potato in a roti; Pelau shark and baked saltfish; Stewed chicken with pigeon peas and callaloo

Traditional Music: Calypso; Steelband; Soca; Rapso; Chutney (fusion styles)

Sport(s): Cricket; Football; Golf; Hockey

Celebrities: Singer Nicki Minaj; Actor Geoffrey Holder; Actor Lorraine Toussaint

South America

Brazil

Contributed by Jeniffer Yuan

Capital: Brasilia

Population: 190 million

Religion(s): Roman Catholicism

Political Leader(s):
Current President Dilma Vana Rousseff and Former President (’03 – ’11) Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

Language(s): Portuguese

“Hello” in Portuguese: “Olá”

“Goodbye” in Portuguese: “Oi”

“Delicious” in Portuguese: “Delicioso/a” or “Gostoso/a”

Sport(s): Football (i.e. American soccer)

Celebrities: Ivete Sangalo and Gisele Bündchen
Paraguay

Contributed by Jose Caballero Ciciolli

Capital: Asunción

 Continent: South America

 Population: 6.5 million

 Religion(s): Catholicism

 Political Leader(s): President Fernando Lugo

 Language(s): Spanish and Guarani

 “Hello” in Spanish: “Hola”

 “Goodbye” in Spanish: “Chau”

 “Delicious” in Spanish: “Delicioso”

 “Hello” in Guarani: “Maitei”

 “Goodbye” in Guarani: “Jajoecha peve”

 “Delicious” in Guarani: “Heterei”

 Food(s) and Drink(s): Terere (mate); Asado; Mbeju; Sopa Paraguaya

 Traditional Music: Polca Paraguaya and Guarania

Paraguay (Cont.)

Sport(s): Soccer

Celebrities: Cindy Taylor; Leryn Franco; Jose Luis Chilavert; Berta Rojas
AFRICA

Ghana

*Contributed by Yasmin Evans-Totoe*

**Capital:** Accra

**Population:** 23 million

**Religion(s):** Christianity

**Political Leader(s):** John Atta Mills

**Language(s):** Akan (Twi, Fante…) Ga and Ewe

“Hello” in Ewe: “Ete sen?”

“Goodbye” in Ewe: “Bye”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Fufu; Banku and tilapia; Jollof rice; Kelewele (spicy fried plantain); Shito (black pepper); various stews and soups

Ghana (Cont.)

**Traditional Music:** Drum ensembles with accompanying instruments, such as flutes, and hilife

**Sport(s):** Football

**Celebrities:** UN Secretary General Kofi Annan; First President of Ghana Dr. Kwame Nkrumah; Chelsea footballer Michael Essien; Author Ama Ata Aidoo; Boxer Azumah Nelson; Band Osibisa

Kenya

*Contributed by John Onyango Sankara*

**Capital:** Nairobi

**Population:** 39 million

**Religion(s):** Christianity; Islam; Indigenous religions
Kenya (Cont.)

**Political Leader(s):** Mwai Kibaki; Raila Odinga; Uhuru Kenyatta; William Ruto; Musalia Mudavadi; Charity Ngilu; Martha Karua

**Language(s):** Swahili; Indigenous languages; English

“Hello” in Swahili: “Jambo”

“Goodbye” in Swahili: “Tuonane”

“Delicious” in Swahili: “Tamu sana” or “Ladha”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Githeri; Chapati; Samaki

**Traditional Music:** Ohangla; Rhumba; Mugiithi

**Sport(s):** Football; Athletics; Rugby; Basketball

**Celebrities:** Eric Wainaina; Suzanne Owiyo; Paul Tergat; Tegla Lorupe

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Madagascar

**Contributed by Antsia Randriamihaja**

**Capital:** Antananarivo

**Population:** 19 million

**Religion(s):** Christianity

**Language(s):** Malagasy and French

“Hello” in Malagasy: “Manao ahoana”

“Goodbye” in Malagasy: “Veloma”

“Delicious” in Malagasy: “Matsiro”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Rice and Rice juice

**Traditional Music:** Hira gasy

**Sport(s):** Soccer

**Celebrities:** Professor Rakoto Ratsimamanga (who has already passed away)
Mauritius

Contributed by
Rhyan Foo Kune

Capital: Port Louis

Population: 1.2 million

Religion(s): Hinduism; Christianity; Islam; Buddhism

Political Leader(s): Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam

Language(s): French; Creole; English (official)

“Hello” in Creole: “Allo”

“Goodbye” in Creole: “Salam”

“Delicious” in Creole: “Mari bon”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Rice and curry

Traditional Music: Sega

Sport(s): Football

Celebrities: Kaya

Morocco

Contributed by
Myriem Benkirane

Capital: Rabat

Population: 31 million

Religion(s): Islam

Political Leader(s): King Mohammed VI

Language(s): Arabic and French

“Hello” in Moroccan Dialect: “Salamalikoum”

“Goodbye” in Moroccan Dialect: “Biss’lama”

“Hello” in French: “Bonjour”

“Goodbye” in French: “Au revoir”

“Delicious” in French: “Delicieux”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Couscous; Tajines; Tea

Sport(s): Football

Celebrities: Singer Abdelhadi Belkhayat and Comic Gad Elmaleh
**South Sudan**

*Contributed by Joy Minalla, Daniel*

**Capital:** Juba  
**Population:** 8.3 million (disputed)  
**Religion(s):** Christianity; Islam; Traditional religions  
**Political Leader(s):** President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Vice President Riek Machar  
**Language(s):** Arabic and English  

"Hello" in Arabic: "Salaam aleikum"  
"Goodbye" in Arabic: "Widhaahan"  
"Delicious" in Arabic: "Ledhif"

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Kissra; Asseeda; Fulmasir; Tabaldi; Aradaib; Karkadai or Kerekede (hibiscus tea); Merisa; Guddaim

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**South Sudan (Cont.)**

**Traditional Music:** Diverse folk music that reflects the diverse cultures represented by the 100 plus ethnic groups in the region  
**Sport(s):** Wrestling; Mock battles; Soccer; General athletics  
**Celebrities:** Chicago Bulls basketball player Luol Deng; Tallest basketball player in Guinness Book of World Records Manute Bol; Syracuse Orange basketball player Kueth Duany

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**Swaziland**

*Contributed by Ioannis Sophocleous and Siyabonga Ndwandwe*

**Capital:** Mbabane  
**Population:** 1.2 million  
**Religion(s):** Christianity  
**Political Leader(s):** King Mswati III  
**Language(s):** Siswati and English

"Hello" in Siswati: "Unjani" or "Sawubona"  
"Goodbye" in Siswati: "Usalakahle"
Swaziland (Cont.)

“Delicious” in Siswati: “Nca” (slang term) or “Kwehla esiphundvu”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Porridge; Chicken intestines; Spinach; Traditional brew; Mahewu; Emasi; Umcombotsi; Sintjangabomu

Traditional Music: Gospel music and Makhoyane Siginci Bholoja

Sport(s): Soccer; Cricket; Netball; Sibhaca

Celebrities: Musicians KrTC, Psycholution, and Innovate

Tanzania

Contributed by Agnes Navuri Biswalo and Francis B. Gwandu

Capital: Dodoma

Population: 43 million

Religion(s): Christianity; Islam; Indigenous beliefs

Political Leader(s): President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete and Prime Minister Mzengo Pinda

Language(s): Kiswahili (Swahili) and English

“Hello” in Kiswahili: “Habari” or “Mambo” (which is responded to with “Poa” or “Shwari”)

Tanzania (Cont.)

“Goodbye” in Kiswahili: “Kwaheri”

“Delicious” in Kiswahili: “Tamu”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Ugali (made of corn flour and eaten along with stew, meat, fish, or any other [preferably salty] sauce); Makande; Ndizi; Zakupikwa

Traditional Music: Modern Bongo Flava; Taarab (has Islamic roots); Ngoma Za Asili (with varying choreography from tribe-to-tribe)

Sport(s): Football (i.e. American soccer); Netball; Volleyball; Basketball; Marathons

Celebrities: Freddie Mercury and Deputy Secretary General of the UN Asha Rose Migiro
EUROPE

Albania

Contributed by Lorela Paco and Iris Vrioni

Capital: Tirana
Population: 3.6 million
Religion(s): Islam and Christianity
Political Leader(s):
Prime Minister Sali Berisha; President Bamir Topi; Leader of the Opposition Edi Rama
Language(s): Albanian

“Hello” in Albanian: “Pershendetje”

“Goodbye” in Albanian: “Mirupafshim”

“Delicious” in Albanian: “Shume e shijshme”

Albania (Cont.)

Food(s) and Drink(s): Different types of meat dishes, particularly lamb; different types of pie; very widespread vegetable use in southern Albania; Olive oil; Spices; Lemon; Fish in coastal cities; Wine; Rakia; Cognac Skenderbej; Byrek; Raki

Traditional Music: Folk

Sport(s): Football; Weightlifting; Basketball

Celebrities: Mother Theresa; Robert de Niro (Albanian origin); Writer Ismail Kadare; Soprano Inva Mula; Singer Ana Oxa; Sandra Bullock (Albanian origin); James Belushi; Medicine Nobelist Ferid Murati (Albanian origin); Actress Eliza Dushku; Ex-Chief Executor of CIA George Tenet; World Champion Tailboxer Azem Maksutaj; Chess World Champion Erald Dervishi; World-Famous Architect of Semmering Railway Karl Gega; Actor Aleksander Moisiu; European Champion Boxer Luan Krasniqi; Present World Champion Weightlifter Daniel Godelli
Bulgaria

**Contributed by Mihaela Barokova**

**Capital:** Sofia

**Population:** 7 million

**Religion(s):** Orthodox Christianity

**Political Leader(s):** Georgi Pyrvanov; Boiko Borisov; Sergei Stanishev

**Language(s):** Bulgarian

“Hello” in Bulgarian: “Zdravei”

“Goodbye” in Bulgarian: “Chao”

“Delicious” in Bulgarian: “Vkusno”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Musaka; Sarmi; Shopska salata; Kufte; Kebapche; Tripe soup; Alran; Rakia; Wine

**Traditional Music:** Folk

Bulgaria (Cont.)

**Sport(s):** Football

**Celebrities:** Dimitar Berbatov; Hristo Stoichkov; Kotoosho; Albena Denkova; Maxim Staviiski; Stefka Kostadinova; Cveti Pironkova; Kristalina Georgieva

Croatia

**Contributed by Valentino Grbavac**

**Capital:** Zagreb

**Population:** 4.3 million

**Religion(s):** Roman Catholicism

**Political Leader(s):** President Ivo Josipović and Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor

**Language(s):** Croatian

“Hello” in Croatian: “Zdravo”
Briefing Your Country

Croatia (Cont.)

“Goodbye” in Croatian: “Do videnja”

“Delicious” in Croatian: “Ukusno”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Sarma (cabbage rolled around minced meat and rice); Dalmatinski pršut (dalmatian double-smoked prosciutto); Janjetina ispod peke (lamb); Rakija (40% spirit)

Traditional Music: Folk music (i.e. Ganga, Klapa [a cappella singing], and Tamburaši)

Sport(s): Football; Handball; Water polo; Basketball

Celebrities: Goran Višnjić and Rade Šerbedžija

Denmark (Cont.)

Political Leader(s): Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen and Queen (and Head of State) Margerethe II

Language(s): Danish

“Hello” in Danish: “Hej”

“Goodbye” in Danish: “Hej hej” or “Farvel”

“Delicious” in Danish: “Udsøgt,” “Delikat,” “Lækker,” “Herlig,” or “Liflig”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Meatballs; Cabbage Stew; Potatoes (i.e. boiled, mashed, fried, deep-fried, distilled into the spirit “Akvavit”/“Aquavit,” and every other way you can possibly prepare a potato); Pickled beetroots; Pork liver paté; Herring (i.e. fried, salted, marinated, smoked); Red sausages from a “pølsevogn” (sausage wagon); Remoulade (sauce used for French fries, breaded fish fillets, roast beef sandwiches, and hot dogs); “Gammel Dansk” (“Old Danish”), a bitter liquid drunk at breakfast during special occasions like wedding anniversaries or birthdays

Traditional Music: Folk with fiddle, accordion, and guitar

Sport(s): Football (i.e. American soccer); Handball; Sailing; Rowing; Horseback riding; Tennis; Badminton

Contributed by Simon Sanggaard

Capital: Copenhagen

Population: 5.5 million

Religion(s): Evangelical Lutheranism; Christianity; Islam; Agnosticism; Atheism

Denmark

Capital: Copenhagen

Population: 5.5 million

Religion(s): Evangelical Lutheranism; Christianity; Islam; Agnosticism; Atheism

Contributed by Simon Sanggaard
Denmark (Cont.)

Celebrities: The Royal Family; Viggo Mortenson; René Dif from the band Aqua; Mads Mikkelsen (actor who played Le Chiffre in *Casino Royale*); Lars Ulrich (drummer in the band Metallica); Nikolaj Coster Waldau (actor in the TV-series *Game of Thrones* and the movies *Wimbledon*, *Black Hawk Down*, and *Kingdom of Heaven*); Anders Trentemøller (electronic music producer)

France

*Contributed by Camille Neale*

Capital: Paris

Population: 6.6 million

Religion(s): Roman Catholicism

Political Leader(s): Nicolas Sarkozy

Language(s): French

France (Cont.)

“Hello” in French: “Bonjour”

“Goodbye” in French: “Au revoir”

“Delicious” in French: “Delicieux”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Cassoulet; Quiche; Cheeses; Wine; Foie gras

Traditional Music: French classical; Opera-ballet; Opera bouffon; Opera comique

Sport(s): Football; Rugby; Tennis; Cycling

Celebrities: Marion Cotillard; Vanessa Paradis; Brigitte Bardot; David Guetta; Vincent Cassel

Italy

*Contributed by Riccardo Maddalozzo*

Capital: Rome

Population: 60.5 million
Italy (Cont.)

Religion(s): 90% Roman Catholics; some Islam; Protestant and Orthodox minorities; 5% no religion

Political Leader(s): Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi; President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano; Chair of the Opposition Pierluigi Bersani

Language(s): Italian, with Bilingualism (French and German) in Aosta Valley and South Tirol

“Hello” in Italian: “Ciao”

“Goodbye” in Italian: “Arriverdeci”

“Delicious” in Italian: “Delizioso”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Pizza; Pasta; Bread; White and red wines

Traditional Music: Varies greatly throughout the country

Sport(s): Soccer; Swimming; Skiing

Celebrities: Valentino Rossi; Rodolfo Valentino; Laura Pausini; Marco Materazzi

Germany

Contributed by Clemens Pilgram

Capital: Berlin

Population: 82 million

Religion(s): Christianity (Catholicism and Lutheranism) and Islam

Political Leader(s): Angela Merkel; Christian Wulff; Philipp Rösler

Language(s): German

“Hello” in German: “Guten tag” or “Hallo”

“Goodbye” in German: “Auf wiederssehen” or “Tschüss!”

“Delicious” in German: “Lecker” or “Köstlich”
Germany (Cont.)

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Differs a lot regionally, but beers (and their weaker form, Radler), sausages (of all different kinds), and breads are popular everywhere

**Traditional Music:** There are too many regional differences to go into detail, but a lot of what is now considered “classical music” comes from Germany

**Sport(s):** Football (i.e. American soccer)

**Celebrities:** Karl Benz; Marlene Dietrich; Boris Becker; The Scorpions; Dieter Bohlen

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Lithuania (Lietuva) (Cont.)

**Political Leader(s):** President Dalia Grybauskaite; Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius; Secretary of the Parliament Irena Degutiene

**Language(s):** Lithuanian (+90%); Polish; Russian

“Hello” in Lithuanian: “Labas iki”

“Goodbye” in Lithuanian: “Viso gero” or “Ate”

“Delicious” in Lithuanian: “Skanus”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Cepelinai (mashed potato balls with meat inside); Potato dumplings; Potato pancakes; Curd cakes; many kinds of beer; Kvass (a fermented beverage made from black bread)

**Traditional Music:** Folk and Polka

**Sport(s):** Basketball and Pentathlon

**Celebrities:** Basketball players Arvydas Sabonis, Zydrunas Ilgauskas, Arvydas Macijauskas, and Sarunas Jasikevicius; Weightlifter Zydrunas Savickas; Disc-thrower Virgilijus Alekna; Ex-President Valdas Adamkus

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**Lithuania (Lietuva)**

*Contributed by Benas Klastaitis and Modestas Filipavicius*

**Capital:** Vilnius

**Population:** 3 million

**Religion(s):** Catholicism and Christian Orthodoxy
Poland

Contributed by Wojciech Michno

Capital: Cracow

Population: 38 million

Religion(s): Roman Catholicism

Political Leader(s): President Bronisław Komorowski and Prime Minister Donald Tusk from the Government Parliamentary Republic

Language(s): Polish

“Hello” in Polish: “Czesc”

“Goodbye” in Polish: “Dzień dobry”

“Delicious” in Polish: “Wysmienite”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Bigos; Pierogi; Vodka; Kielbasa; Barszcz; Żurek; Flacze (tripe soup); Gołąbki; Oscypek; Kotlet schabowy; various potato dishes; Zapiekanka (a fast food sandwich); Pączki; Faworki; Gingerbread; Babka

Poland (Cont.)

Traditional Music: Mazurka; Polonaise; Krakowiak

Sport(s): Soccer; Track and field; Basketball; Boxing; Ski jumping; Fencing; Handball; Ice hockey; Swimming; Volleyball; Weightlifting

Celebrities: Fryderyk Chopin; Adam Mickiewicz; Maria Skłodowska (aka Marie Curie)

Portugal (Portuguese Republic)

Contributed by Barbara Alexandra Borges Ribeiro

Capital: Lisbon

Population: 10.5 million

Religion(s): Roman Catholicism (85%)

Political Leader(s): Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho and President Aníbal Cavaco Silva
Portugal (Portuguese Republic) (Cont.)

Language(s): Portuguese

“Hello” in Portuguese: “Olá”

“Goodbye” in Portuguese: “Tchau”

“Delicious” in Portuguese: “Delicioso”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Bacalhau (cod fish); Enchidos; Rice pudding with cinnamon; Caramel custard; Portwine; Aguardente; Vinho de Dão

Traditional Music: Fado; Azorean folk music; Trás-os-Montes

Sport(s): Football

Celebrities: Cristiano Ronaldo; EU President José Manuel Barroso; Writer José Saramago; Earth circumnavigator Ferdinand Magellan

(The Republic of) Serbia (Cont.)

Religion(s): Orthodoxy

Political Leader(s): Boris Tadic and Tomislav Nikolic

Language(s): Serbian

“Hello” in Serbian: “Zdravo”

“Goodbye” in Serbian: “Do vidjenja”

“Delicious” in Serbian: “Izvanredno”

Food(s) and Drink(s): Pljeskavica; Gibanica; Rakija

Traditional Music: Ajde Jano; Vidovdan; Jecam znjela Kosovka devojka; Zapevala sojka ptica; Sva Srbija na Kosovo leti; Gusta mi magla padnala; Svilen konac; Na Uskrs sam se rodila

Sport(s): Basketball; Water polo; Volleyball; Handball; Tennis; Football

Celebrities: Novak Djoković; Nikola Tesla; Mihailo Pupin; Dejan Bodiroga; Vlade Divac; Nemanja Vidić; Predrag Stojaković; Dejan Stanković

(The Republic of) Serbia

Contributed by Marko Martinovic

Capital: Belgrade

Population: 7.5 million
Spain
Contributed by Sara Parcero Leites
Capital: Madrid
Population: 46 million
Religion(s): Catholicism
Political Leader(s): Left-Wing Member President Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero and Right Wing
Language(s): Spanish; Galician; Catalan; Vasc
“Hello” in Spanish: “Hola”
“Goodbye” in Spanish: “Adios”
“Delicious” in Spanish: “Delicioso”
Food(s) and Drink(s): Paella; Spanish omelet; Fish; Seafood; Wine; Sangria (red wine, fruit, and sugar); Galician liquors (licor café and crema de orujo) in northwestern Spain (Galicia)

Spain (Cont.)
Traditional Music: Celtic music with pipes in northwestern Spain and flamenco music in southern Spain (varies in the rest of the country)
Sport(s): Soccer; Volleyball; Basketball; Tennis; Formula 1; Moto GP
Celebrities: Antonio Banderas; Penelope Cruz; Paz Vega; Javier Bardem; Julio and Enrique Iglesias; Alejandro Sanz; Pedro Almodovar

Sweden
Contributed by Kunal Chauhan and Emma Cederlund
Capital: Stockholm
Population: 9.3 million
Religion(s): Atheism and Christianity (Evangelical Lutheranism)
Sweden (Cont.)

**Political Leader(s):** Fredrik Reinfeldt (the social democratic party has been the leading party of Sweden for many years, although recently the moderate party has gained more support and is now ruling the Swedish Parliament)

**Language(s):** Swedish; English; Sami (language of native inhabitants); Finnish, Romani, and Yiddish (minority languages)

“**Hello**” in Swedish: “Hej”

“**Goodbye**” in Swedish: “Hejdå”

“**Delicious**” in Swedish: “Utsökt” or “Läckert”

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Meatballs; Herring; Potato; Aquavit; Snaps

**Traditional Music:** ABBA and folk music made by bow instruments and accordion (although this music is mostly played during seasonal celebrations, such as Midsummer)

**Sport(s):** Soccer; Ice hockey; Skiing; Golf; Tennis; Swimming

**Celebrities:** ABBA; Zlatan Ibrahimovic; Carola; Robin Söderling; Annika Sörenstam; Carl von Linneus; Dag Hammarskjöld; Alexander Skarsgård; Malin Åkerman

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**AUSTRALASIA & OCEANIA**

**Australia**

*Contributed by Camille Neale*

**Capital:** Canberra

**Population:** 2.3 million

**Religion(s):** Christianity and Roman Catholicism

**Political Leader(s):** Julia Gillard

**Language(s):** English

**Food(s) and Drink(s):** Meat pie; Sausage rolls; Lamingtons; Wine

**Sport(s):** AFL; Rugby; Cricket; Netball

**Celebrities:** Nicole Kidman; Geoffrey Rush; Mel Gibson; Naomi Watts