

Gibraltar



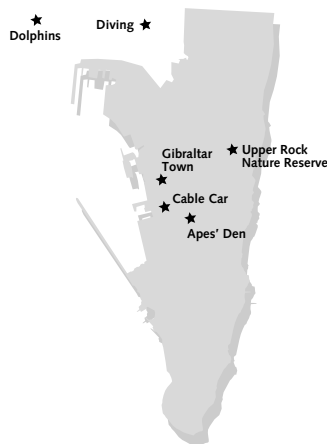
When travelling by road to the British colony of Gibraltar, you can see this geological giant from afar but there are no road signs until the last minute. Seems bizarre, but this is a reminder that Spain still wants the 'Rock'. Gibraltar has been sought after since time immemorial for its strategic position guarding the entrance to the Mediterranean. It is one of the two Pillars of Hercules, split from the other, Jebel Musa in Morocco, that marked the edge of the ancient world of the Greeks and Romans.

This vast limestone ridge, 5km long and up to 1.6km wide, rises to 426m, with sheer cliffs on its northern and eastern sides. Along its lower western reaches clings a town of 30,000 inhabitants who are a mesmerising cultural melange of British, Jewish, Genoese, North African, Portuguese, Spanish, Maltese and Indian. Together these engaging people have created a thriving economy.

Gibraltar offers the visitor a terrific agenda. Get into its natural world and discover its animals, plants and caves, and the sea around them, which is home to dolphins and is visited by other creatures of the deep. Visit the military installations and mull over their old-fashioned names. Seek out the hidden nooks of quaint Gibraltar Town with its red letter boxes and phone booths. A pint at one of its quirky pubs is a fitting finale.

HIGHLIGHTS

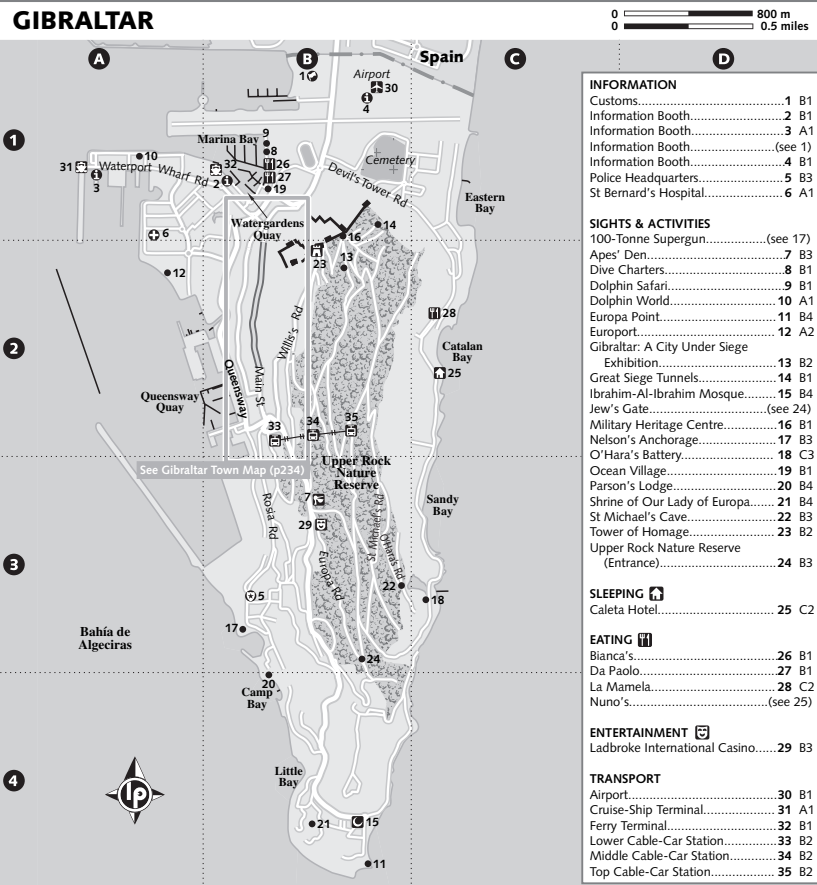
- Enjoy refreshments and a Mediterranean ambience in a quasi-English setting at one of the cafés on Grand Casemates Sq in **Gibraltar Town** (p237)
- Whizz up to the top of the Rock in the **cable car** (p233) for smashing views of the Strait of Gibraltar, Morocco and the Bahía de Algeciras
- Get acquainted with Gibraltar's most unusual inhabitants at the **Apes' Den** (p233)
- Marvel at British ingenuity as you explore one of the best defence systems in the world in the **Upper Rock Nature Reserve** (p233)
- Seek out **dolphins** (p236) and whales in the Bahía de Algeciras
- **Dive** (p236) to the depths and discover the Rock's shipwrecks and fascinating marine life



■ POPULATION: 29,000

■ GIBRALTAR AV DAILY HIGH:
JAN/AUG 15°C/24°C

■ ALTITUDE RANGE: 0M–426M



INFORMATION	
Customs.....	1 B1
Information Booth.....	2 B1
Information Booth.....	3 A1
Information Booth.....	4 B1
Police Headquarters.....	5 B3
St Bernard's Hospital.....	6 A1
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	
100-Tonne Supergun.....	(see 17)
Apes' Den.....	7 B3
Dive Charters.....	8 B1
Dolphin Safari.....	9 B1
Dolphin World.....	10 A1
Europa Point.....	11 B4
Europa Point.....	12 A2
Gibraltar: A City Under Siege	
Exhibition.....	13 B2
Great Siege Tunnels.....	14 B1
Ibrahim-Al-Ibrahim Mosque.....	15 B4
Jew's Gate.....	(see 24)
Military Heritage Centre.....	16 B1
Nelson's Anchorage.....	17 B3
O'Hara's Battery.....	18 C3
Ocean Village.....	19 B1
Parson's Lodge.....	20 B4
Shrine of Our Lady of Europa.....	21 B4
St Michael's Cave.....	22 B3
Tower of Homage.....	23 B2
Upper Rock Nature Reserve	
(Entrance).....	24 B3
SLEEPING	
Caleta Hotel.....	25 C2
EATING	
Bianca's.....	26 B1
Da Paolo.....	27 B1
La Mamel.....	28 C2
Nuno's.....	(see 25)
ENTERTAINMENT	
Ladbroke International Casino.....	29 B3
TRANSPORT	
Airport.....	30 B1
Cruise-Ship Terminal.....	31 A1
Ferry Terminal.....	32 B1
Lower Cable-Car Station.....	33 B2
Middle Cable-Car Station.....	34 B2
Top Cable-Car Station.....	35 B2

HISTORY

Almost every square metre of Gibraltar can tell a tale as far back as the days of the last Neanderthals, as skulls discovered in 1848 and 1928 testify. The skull discovered in 1848 was that of a female; a find that predated the discovery of a male skull in Germany's Neander Valley by eight years. (The latter discovery inspired the anthropological term 'Neanderthal man', although 'Gibraltar woman' surely had the fairer claim.)

In historic times, Gibraltar's strategic position has made it an irresistible proposition to everyone from the Phoenicians on. Both the Phoenicians and the ancient Greeks left traces here, but Gibraltar really entered the history books in AD 711 when

Tariq ibn Ziyad, the Muslim governor of Tangier, made it the initial bridgehead for the Islamic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula, landing with an army of some 10,000 men. The name Gibraltar is derived from Jebel Tariq (Tariq's Mountain).

The Almohad Muslims founded a town here in 1159 and were usurped by the Castilians in 1462. Then in 1704 an Anglo-Dutch fleet captured Gibraltar during the War of the Spanish Succession. Spain ceded the Rock of Gibraltar to Britain by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, but didn't give up military attempts to regain it until the failure of the Great Siege of 1779–83. In the aftermath of the capture of the Rock, most of the resident Spanish population fled and

GIBRALTAR'S FUTURE

The immediate future looks fairly rosy on the Rock. The economy is thriving, new talks have begun with Britain over modernising the colonial relationship, and relations with Spain continue to improve, though the thorny issue of sovereignty lies unresolved.

Over the last two years, Gibraltar's economy has continued to perform well, with around 8% annual growth in real terms. There are now 16,000 jobs in Gibraltar's economy mainly concerned with shipping, tourism and financial services. It is a real working port with over 9000 ships passing through annually. Investment on the Rock continues apace with a huge luxury, residential and commercial waterfront development on the western side of the Rock, Ocean Village, well under way, and a recently sealed deal with the same company to take over Marina Bay and update and regenerate the whole area. The idea is to create a world-class marina to rival Sotogrande and Puerto Banús (along the coast in Spain), to improve the visual appeal of the Rock, to provide luxury housing and to stimulate economic growth. A new Monaco in the making!

With regards to Old Blighty, discussions are taking place to modernise Gibraltar's constitution so that Gibraltar will remain British but in a noncolonial relationship. On a practical level, Britain's Ministry of Defence has handed over 40% of its land on Gibraltar to the Gibraltar government, thus releasing land for new homes and businesses.

And so to the big issue, relations with Spain. Shortly after the new Socialist government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero came to power in Spain in early 2004, Spain and Britain agreed to put Gibraltar on the back burner for a while. But the August 2004 tricentennial celebrations in Gibraltar upset the apple cart. During the celebrations, Gibraltar was given a 21-gun warship salute by the British HMAS *Grafton*, and both the British defence minister, Geoff Hoon (representative of a government backing the Iraq invasion), and Princess Anne (representative of British royalty and thus the 'occupier') were guests, all seen by the Spanish government as provocative. Things have thankfully moved on since then.

In December 2005, the governments of the UK, Spain and Gibraltar set up a new, trilateral process of dialogue where all decisions or agreements reached must be agreed by all three participants. The three sides have met several times, and real progress has been made. Valuable decisions reached include Spain's removal of restrictions on cruise ships sailing directly between Gibraltar and Spanish ports, and also the removal of the ban on Gibraltar-bound civilian air flights diverting, if at all necessary, to nearby Spanish airports. Further subjects discussed include the possibility of expanded use of Gibraltar's airfield, and a normalisation of telephonic communications between Gibraltar and Spain.

However, tricky topics remain. Britain has strategic military installations on Gibraltar including radar systems and a submarine station. The Ministry of Defence 'owns' and operates Gibraltar airport and more land around the Rock. Spain still wants outright sovereignty of Gibraltar, and Gibraltarians want self-determination and to retain British citizenship. Joint sovereignty, for the moment, doesn't seem to be the way ahead.

Few foresee a change in the status quo. However, the tripartite talks are thrashing out some of the practical problems that have hitherto created huge tensions between the three parties involved.

settled in what is now called the Campo de Gibraltar, the area around the Bahía de Algeciras (or the Bay of Gibraltar), incorporating towns such as San Roque, Algeciras and La Línea de la Concepción.

The British brought in Genoese ship repairers in the 18th century. Subsequently, Britain developed Gibraltar into an important naval base, and during WWII it became a base for allied landings in North Africa. The British garrison

was withdrawn in the early 1990s but the British navy continues to use Gibraltar's facilities. The constant shipping services and the free-port status only strengthened the relationship between the local population and Britain and continues to attract investment today.

In 1969 Francisco Franco closed the Spain-Gibraltar border (infuriated by a referendum in which the Gibraltarians voted by 12,138 to 44 to remain under British sover-

eignty). The result was the complete severing of cross-border relationships and the seemingly irrevocable polarisation of attitudes and sentiments in Gibraltar and Spain. The same year a new constitution committed Britain to respecting Gibraltarians' wishes over sovereignty, and gave Gibraltar domestic self-government and its own parliament, the House of Assembly. In 1985, just prior to Spain joining the EC (now the EU) in 1986, the border was opened after 16 long years, bringing a breath of fresh air to the Rock.

Today, tourism, the port and financial services are the mainstays of Gibraltar's economy. Of Gibraltar's civilian population, about 77% are classed as Gibraltarians, 14% as British and 9% as other nationalities. A substantial percentage of those of other nationalities are Moroccans, many of whom are on short-term work contracts.

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

For six years, Gibraltar has been governed by the centre-right Gibraltar Social Democrat Party, led by Peter Caruana. The main opposition is the Gibraltar Socialist Labour Party, led by Joe Bossano. Caruana willingly talks with Spain about Gibraltar's future, but fiercely opposes any concessions over sovereignty.

Over the years, when Spain has wanted to exert pressure on Gibraltar, it has employed methods such as extra-thorough customs and immigration procedures, which cause hours-long delays at the border. Spain has proposed a period of joint British-Spanish sovereignty leading to Gibraltar eventually becoming the 18th Spanish region, with greater autonomy than any of the others.

Successive British governments have refused to give way over Gibraltar's sovereignty, but in March 2002 Spain and Britain came to a broad agreement about sharing sovereignty. The agreement was backed by the 15 member states of the EU but Gibraltar was not represented – and the Rock reacted angrily to this European support for a deal over Gibraltar, allegedly set up by Britain's prime minister Tony Blair and his Spanish counterpart José María Aznar, who were great chums at the time.

In response, an estimated 20,000 Gibraltarians took to the streets on 18 March 2002 in a peaceful but passionate demonstration of their commitment to retaining British

nationality. On 7 November 2002, the Gibraltar government held a referendum asking its people whether Britain should share sovereignty with Spain over Gibraltar. Gibraltarians rejected the idea resoundingly. Both Britain and Spain said they would not recognise the referendum, but the British government reiterated its position that it would not relinquish Gibraltar's status against local wishes.

As Gibraltar celebrated 300 years of British rule in 2004 it was obvious that most Gibraltarians no longer viewed Britain as the mother country. Although they still adore British traditions, they also adore their own particular way of life.

LANGUAGE

Gibraltarians speak English, Spanish and a curiously accented, singsong mix of the two, slipping back and forth from one to the other, often in midsentence. Signs are in English.

ORIENTATION

To reach Gibraltar by land you must pass through the Spanish frontier town of La Línea de la Concepción (p226). Just south of the border, the road crosses the runway of Gibraltar airport, which stretches east to west across the neck of the peninsula. The town and harbours of Gibraltar lie along the Rock's less-steep western side, facing the Bahía

VISAS & DOCUMENTS

To enter Gibraltar you need a passport or, for those EU nationalities that possess them, an identity card. Passport holders from Australia, Canada, the EU, Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa and the USA are among those who do not need visas for Gibraltar. For further information contact Gibraltar's **Immigration Department** (Map p234; ☎ 51725; Joshua Hassan House, Secretary's Lane). There is another office in the **Police Headquarters** (Map p229; ☎ 46411; rgpimm@gibgibtelecom.net; New Mole House, Rosia Rd).

Those who have a UK Multiple Visa (valid for one year or more) are eligible to enter Gibraltar without needing a second visa. For those intending to return or travel to Spain after visiting Gibraltar, a valid Schengen visa is essential to ensure re-entry to Spain.