

Punjab -the gateway to serenity



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Pakistan is a multicultural society when you visit its urban centers especially Karachi but in the rural areas, it is certainly influenced by one culture and that is the culture of Pakistan first and then the province in which the village is situated. The province of Punjab, one of the largest provinces, has the richest village life and for a first time visitor to Pakistan, it is best to start with Punjab to learn more about village life. People in villages speak the native language of the province and not Urdu, which is the native language of Pakistan.

While people understand Urdu, they would prefer to communicate in the regional language. They are very hospitable and what makes them endearing to a visitor is their spontaneity and unaffected behavior. They welcome guests with open arms but are very rigid about their own moral and social codes. Since most of them follow the Islamic religion, they prefer the moral code that comes with being a Muslim. There are no large or small restaurants in the villages. If there is anything even remotely close to a restaurant that's what they call a hotel where they serve food on wooden seats or charpoi (a bed made of jute).

Women are expected to dress modestly and most girls are married off very young. Men are not the sole breadwinners and women are allowed to work in the fields with the men. In fact more women choose to work than stay at home. Schools are few and quality of education is low. These schools are run by the state but children still manage to gain required primary education from these schools. Village life in Pakistan is rich and there are many cottage industries that provide most of the handicrafts that are even exported to western countries.