

☰☰☰ Topic Page: [Baṣrah \(Iraq\)](#)

Definition: **Basra (or Busra or Basrah)** from *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Governorate of Iraq; area 19,070 sq km/7,363 sq mi; population (2003 est) 1,761,900. Basra was formerly a Turkish vilayet (administrative division) of Mesopotamia. The main products are wool, grain, and dates.



Image from: [Iraq in Philip's Encyclopedia](#)

Summary Article: **Basra**
From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(bŭs'rə), Arabic *al Basrah*, city (1987 pop. 406,296), SE Iraq, on the Shatt al Arab. Basra is Iraq's second largest city and principal port. Its commercially advantageous location, near oil fields and 75 mi (121 km) from the Persian Gulf, has made it prosperous, and oil is refined in the city. Petroleum products, grains, wool, and dates are exported. Basra was founded by the caliph Umar I, at the site of modern Az Zabair. It was a cultural center under Harun ar-Rashid and declined with the decay of the Abbasid caliphate. Its possession was long contested by the Persians and the Turks. Largely in ruins by the mid-14 cent., Basra was subsequently re-established on its present site. The British occupied Basra during World War I and used its port; they remained there until 1930. After World War I the construction of a rail line to Baghdad and the building of a modern harbor restored the city's importance. Due to its location on the heavily contested Shatt al Arab waterway, Basra was hard hit by Iranian forces in the 1980s during the Iran-Iraq War. The port was further bombed by western coalition forces in the Persian Gulf War (1991), primarily to thwart covert trade. Basra is the seat of a branch of the Univ. of Baghdad. The name also appears as Bassora, Bussora, and Busra.

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Basra. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/basra>



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