

of Eden). Oman is thought to date from the same era and was a colourful and important base of operations for the Portuguese in the sixteenth century before becoming a sea power in its own right and exerting hegemony over Zanzibar, East Africa and parts of India for a period of time.

In more contemporary times, tribes from the interior of the Arabian Peninsula migrated to the upper Gulf States in the eighteenth century and founded settlements based on fishing, pearling and seaborne commerce. In the nineteenth century, various treaties were signed with Britain, which maintained sovereignty of some sort over the area until after the Second World War.

Kuwait became fully independent in 1961; Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates in 1971. Oman remained relatively closed to the outside world until 1970 when its present ruler opened its doors to the international community.

## Government

Each of the Gulf States is governed by a ruling family. The United Arab Emirates is the only one with a national assembly at present. Each government has its own completely distinct and complex apparatus. With the exception of Oman (with its history of separate government and administration at the national, regional and local levels) the Gulf States could be considered as "city states" dominated by centralized forms of government.

## Population and Cities

Country	Population	Principal Cities
Kuwait	1 695 000 (1985)	Kuwait*
Qatar	281 000 (1983)	Doha*
Bahrain	397 000 (1983)	Manama*
United Arab Emirates	1 220 000 (1983)	Abu Dhabi*, Dubai Sharjah, Al-Ain
Oman	1 130 000 (1983)	Muscat*

\* denotes capital city