

Glossary

aalim	scholar (see also ulama/ulema)
aaprawalla	literally 'our own kind' and generally used by Gujaratis to refer to fellow Gujaratis or fellow villagers
abaya	cloak
abla embroidery	mirror work
achaar/atchar	pickles
aloo	potato
amanaah/amaanat	trust
arad	tumeric, also known as haldi or borrie
badla work	a type of embroidery where very thin metal wires are attached to the surface of a fabric
bhajans	Hindu chants
bhajias	Indian vegetable fritter
bhangra	music and dance that originated in the Punjab region of India but has become hybridised and is found in various forms across the globe – including in pop music and film soundtracks
bhurkoo	porridge-like dish made with crushed wheat, oil dhal and mealie rice and served with khuri
bibi	wife
bidah	innovation
biryani	a dish that originated in Persia and is made with spices, lentils, rice (usually basmati) and either meat, fish, or vegetables
Bismillah	'In the name of God'
boere	farmers
braai	process of roasting food over an open fire (Afrikaans)
bunny chow	hollowed out loaf of bread filled with curry
burfee	sweet typically made from condensed milk and chickpea flour and flavoured with nuts
chaat	saucy and chutneys
chotli	hair plaiting
dadabajee	paternal grandfather
dadi	paternal grandmother
dahi	yoghurt
dawah	propagation of the Islamic faith
dhal	lentil stew
dhania	coriander
dhikr	remembrance of God through specific acts of devotion
do baare	encore
downie	large scarf used as a head covering
duas	prayers/invocations

ematsheni	beer hall
fajr	dawn prayer
fatwa	religious edict
fitra	a donation to charity paid before the morning sermon on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting
garara	a divided skirt, similar to culottes
ghaam	village
ghaamariya	villager or peasant
ghawla	Indian pancake
ghazzal	poem of five or more couplets in the same metre
ghusal khana	ablution place
ghusl	ablution performed before prayer
godris	duvets
haal	trance-like state
hadith	narrations originating from the deeds and/or words of the Prophet
hafez	one who has memorised the entire Qu'ran
haleem	thick soup made from meat, wheat, lentils and spices
haraam	forbidden by Islamic law
hidayah	advice
hidayat	faith
hifazat	protection/security
hijab	scarf or veil worn by Muslim women
Hyderabaddee	someone from Hyderabad
iqraa	read
izzat	honour/reputation
jalebi	chewy orange-coloured sweet made by deep-frying batter in the shape of a coil and soaking it in syrup
jalsa	annual prize-giving ceremony at a madrassah
jama'at khana/jamaat khana	prayer room
jamboo/gulab jamboo	finger-shaped sweets made from flour and dipped in syrup
janaza	Muslim funeral prayer said before burial
jardo	sweet yellow rice
jeek	hand embroidery using variegated satin thread
jeera	cumin
Jodhya	Memon-speaking Muslim from one of the smaller villages around Porbander
Kabah	cube-shaped building in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, which is the most sacred site in Islam
kafan	white cloth in which Muslims are wrapped before burial
kala	maternal aunt
kalam	In Persian and Urdu, kalam refers to a poet's complete works
kalas	Muslim women who provide domestic assistance

GLOSSARY

kameez	a tunic worn by females over slacks or a skirt
kanikar	woven shawl
katayef	a dessert usually made from shredded pastry and filled with nuts
khitchiri/kitchdi	yellow spiced rice
khudi/khuri	spicy yoghurt prepared with cumin and turmeric and served with khitchiri
khurma/kurma	a sweet noodle soup
Kokni	Konkani-speaking Muslim
kopra lagan	coconut sweet
kunchas	trays on which nuptial gifts are borne when exchanged between families prior to marriage
kundi	mortar
kurta	a loose-fitting long-sleeved shirt that falls to any point between the mid-thigh and ankle
kutum	clan
laarwas	ball-shaped Indian dessert made with chickpea flour
lassi	yoghurt-based drink
lavang	clove
lillah	optional donation to charity for spiritual benefit
madrassah	Islamic religious school
majlis	gathering
masoor	lentils
maulana/mawlana	title used for an Islamic scholar
mealie	corn on the cob
Memon	refers to both a language and a linguistic group who speak it
mendhi	the application of henna as a temporary form of skin decoration
me'raaj	the heavenly journey of the Prophet
methi	fenugreek
Mia-bhai	passenger migrants from Rander who spoke Urdu
mir-e-musha'ira	compère
misar	triangular scarf worn to cover one's hair
mithais	sweetmeats
moorkhoos	savoury crispy snack made from flour
Moulood Sharief	a public salutation/tribute to the Prophet Muhammad
mubarak	blessed
mugh-ni-dhal	mung dhal
mushaera/musha'ira	poetry festival
naan kathai	a round biscuit made from chick pea flour, cardamom and cashew nuts
Nabee	the Prophet
namaaz	formal prayers directed towards Makkah
nani	maternal grandmother
nasheed	Islamic songs
nawaabi	Moghul elite
nikah	marriage ceremony

papad	thin crispy Indian wafer or flatbread
patta	appetiser made from yam leaves
platteland	literally 'flat land'; refers to rural or farmland areas. A plattelander is someone from the platteland
pukka	authentic
pur/purh	pastry
purdah	a curtain or screen; also refers to the system of segregating women from men
puri	small Indian flatbread in which patta is wrapped
putu	cornmeal porridge
qasidas	Urdu songs
qawwalis	devotional events accompanied by musical instruments such as the tabla and harmonium
roti	chapatti, soft unleavened bread
sabbaq	lesson from the Qu'ran
sadaqah	charitable works or financial contributions from persons facing misfortune and seeking assistance from God
sadaqah jariyyah	ongoing charity or charitable acts that assist the beneficiaries in perpetuity
salaamat	peace
salaat	formal prayers directed towards Makka
sehri	a meal consumed early in the morning before fasting
sev	salty snack made from flour
sha'er	poet
shairs	poems
Shamshul Ulema	honorary title meaning 'the son of all ulema'
shariah law	Islamic law
shehnai	an oboe-like musical instrument
shukar	to give thanks
Subhan'Allah	'Glory be to Allah'
Surti	an inhabitant or a descendant of an inhabitant of Surat or the surrounding area in the state of Gujarat in India
sutherfeni	delicate nest made of thin strands of dough, fried crisp and drizzled with syrup
tafsir	teaching and meditation on Qur'anic texts
takhallus	pen name used by Urdu poets
taleem	Islamic educational programmes held in groups
tarbiyah	an education curriculum that places God at the centre of a child's learning experience, aiming to address the heart, mind, body and soul
tava	frying pan or griddle
tughras	the calligraphic seal of an Ottoman sultan
ulama/ulema	educated Muslim scholars engaged in the study and interpretation of Islamic law; plural of 'alim'

GLOSSARY

Ummah	Muslim community/community of believers
umrah	pilgrimage to Makka undertaken at any time of the year
vadde	a savoury starter made from lentils, spices and herbs
veena	Indian musical instrument consisting of a long, hollow stick to which strings and gourds are attached
volk	'a people' with connotations of 'chosen race'
wah wah	similar to 'bravo' or 'ole'
wayez	lecture
winkel	shop
wudhu	ablution
yakhni	a rice dish usually cooked in meat stock
zakaat/zakaah	the 2.5 per cent of their wealth that Muslims pay annually in the form of a 'charity tax'. This is one of the five pillars of the Islamic faith and is obligatory for those with the means to pay