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Dear (Insert Name),

Thank you for your letter from February 22, 2020 requesting information on United States counties, paralegal book recommendations, and the Mediterranean Sea. I'd also like to thank you for the poetry as I really enjoyed it! In this letter, we've returned your SASE, as we cannot accept postage.

On the next three pages, you will find charts with data on the smallest 20 counties in the United States. All data was sourced from the United States Census Bureau, and is current to the last census for which information is available online, the 2010 Census.

As I wasn't entirely sure what metric you wanted to go by, I used three. The first chart lists the 20 smallest counties by population. The second lists the 20 smallest counties by land area in miles squared. The third and final chart shows the 20 smallest counties listed by population density.

Smallest Counties in the United States by Population

County	2010 Census	Land area in miles ²	Pop/mile ²
Loving County, Texas	82	668.93	0.1
Kalawao County, Hawaii	90	11.99	7.5
King County, Texas	286	910.87	0.3
Kenedy County, Texas	416	1,458.33	0.3
Arthur County, Nebraska	460	715.35	0.6
Blaine County, Nebraska	478	710.87	0.7
Petroleum County, Montana	494	1,654.87	0.3
McPherson County, Nebraska	539	858.98	0.6
Grant County, Nebraska	614	776.22	0.8
Loup County, Nebraska	632	568.29	1.1
Borden County, Texas	641	897.44	0.7
Thomas County, Nebraska	647	713.24	0.9
Yakutat City and Borough, Alaska	662	7,649.46	0.1
Banner County, Nebraska	690	746.11	0.9
Harding County, New Mexico	695	2,125.44	0.3
San Juan County, Colorado	699	387.49	1.8
McMullen County, Texas	707	1,139.43	0.6
Mineral County, Colorado	712	875.67	0.8
Treasure County, Montana	718	977.4	0.7
Slope County, North Dakota	727	1,214.92	0.6

Counties in the United States with the Smallest Land Area

County	Land area in miles ²	2010 Census	Pop/mile ²
Kalawao County, Hawaii	11.99	90	7.5
New York County, New York	22.83	1,585,873	69,468.4
Bristol County, Rhode Island	24.16	49,875	2,064
Arlington County, Virginia	25.97	207,627	7,993.5
Broomfield County, Colorado	33.03	55,889	1,691.9
Bronx County, New York	42.1	1,385,108	32,903.3
Nantucket County, Massachusetts	44.97	10,172	226.2
Hudson County, New Jersey	46.19	634,266 (rank 4639)	13,731.4
San Francisco County	46.87	805,235	17,179.2
Suffolk County, Massachusetts	58.15	722,023 (rank 4508)	12,415.6
Richmond County, New York	58.37	468,730	8,030.3
Kings County, New York	70.82	2,504,700	35,369.2
Grand Isle County, Vermont	81.81	6,970	85.2
Hancock County, West Virginia	82.61	30,676	371.3
Mathews County, Virginia	85.93	8,978	104.5
Ohio County, Indiana	86.14	6,128	71.1
Brooke County, West Virginia	89.2	24,069	269.8
Robertson County, Kentucky	99.91	2,282	22.8
Gallatin County, Kentucky	101.23	8,589	84.8
Newport County, Rhode Island	102.39	82,888	809.6

Counties in the United States with the lowest Population Density

County	Pop/mile ²	Land area in miles ²	2010 Census
Yukon–Koyukuk Census Area, Alaska	0.03	145,504.79	5,588
Lake and Peninsula Borough, Alaska	0.06	23,652.01	1,631
Yakutat Borough, Alaska	0.08	7,649.46	662
North Slope Borough, Alaska	0.10	88,695.41	9,430
Loving County, Texas	0.12	668.93	82
Denali Borough, Alaska	0.14	12,751.41	1,826
Northwest Arctic Borough, Alaska	0.21	35,572.58	7,523
Esmeralda County, Nevada	0.21	3,581.88	783
Garfield County, Montana	0.25	4,675.36	1,206
Dillingham Census Area, Alaska	0.26	18,568.78	4,847
Valdez-Cordova Census Area, Alaska	0.28	34,239.88	9,636
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area, Alaska	0.28	24,768.81	7,028
Kenedy County, Texas	0.28	1,458.33	416
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area, Alaska	0.28	7,524.91	2,150
Petroleum County, Montana	0.29	1,654.87	494
King County, Texas	0.31	910.87	286
Harding County, New Mexico	0.32	2,125.44	695
Carter County, Montana	0.34	3,340.75	1,160
Nome Census Area, Alaska	0.41	22,961.76	9,492
Terrell County, Texas	0.41	335.44	984

In this letter, I'd also like to address the questions for which you never received answers. Regarding books on negotiable instruments, Barrister Books recommends:

- *Understanding Series: Understanding Negotiable Instruments & Payment Systems* - William Lawrence, 2nd ed., 2019.

- This Understanding treatise provides a comprehensive treatment of the subject matter covered by Articles 3, 4 & 4A of the Uniform Commercial Code and by relevant provisions of the Truth in Lending Act, and Fair Credit Billing Act, the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, and Regulations E, J, Z, and CC. A primary focus is directed toward the law of negotiable instruments and of bank deposits and collections. The author also address the existing legal regimes that govern payments made in all forms, including checks and other drafts, cash, credit card, automated clearinghouses, automated teller machines, debit cards, and wholesale fund transfer.

- *Law In a Nutshell: Payments Law* - Steve Nickles & Mary Beth Matthews, 2nd ed., 2015.

- This text summarizes and explains the fundamental law applicable to a broad variety of current payment systems. Coverage includes issues of liability, transfer, holder in due course status, and check collection applicable to negotiable instruments (checks, notes, drafts) governed by UCC Articles 3 and 4, as well as letters of credit and documents of title governed by UCC Articles 5 and 7. The text further examines the rights, obligations, and federal protection applicable to credit and debit cards. Finally, this title addresses recent legal developments in regard to a variety of electronic fund transfers, prepaid cards and digital currencies.

The CIA Book of Facts unfortunately does not have a page for the Mediterranean Sea, so below I've reproduced portions of an entry from Encyclopedia Britannica Academic.

Mediterranean Sea, an intercontinental sea that stretches from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to Asia on the east and separates Europe from Africa. It has often been called the incubator of Western civilization. This ancient “sea between the lands” occupies a deep, elongated, and almost landlocked irregular depression lying between latitudes 30° and 46° N and longitudes 5°50' W and 36° E. Its west-east extent—from the Strait of Gibraltar between Spain and Morocco to the shores of the Gulf of Iskenderun on the southwestern coast of Turkey—is approximately 2,500 miles (4,000 km), and its average north-south extent, between Croatia's southernmost shores and Libya, is about 500 miles (800 km). The Mediterranean Sea, including the Sea of Marmara, occupies an area of approximately 970,000 square miles (2,510,000 square km).



View of the Mediterranean Sea from Andalusia, Spain.

The western extremity of the Mediterranean Sea connects with the Atlantic Ocean by the narrow and shallow channel of the Strait of Gibraltar, which is roughly 8 miles (13 km) wide at its narrowest point; and the depth of the sill, or submarine ridge separating the Atlantic from the Alborán Sea, is about 1,050 feet (320 metres). To the northeast the Mediterranean is connected with the Black Sea through the Dardanelles (with a sill depth of 230 feet [70 metres]), the Sea of Marmara, and the strait of the Bosphorus (sill depth of about 300 feet [90 metres]). To the southeast it is connected with the Red Sea by the Suez Canal.

Physiographic and geologic features

Natural divisions

A submarine ridge between the island of Sicily and the African coast with a sill depth of about 1,200 feet (365 metres) divides the Mediterranean Sea into western and eastern parts. The western part in turn is subdivided into three principal submarine basins. The Alborán Basin is east of Gibraltar, between the coasts of Spain and Morocco. The Algerian (sometimes called the Algero-Provençal or Balearic) Basin, east of the Alborán Basin, is west of Sardinia and Corsica, extending from off the coast of Algeria to off the coast of France. These two basins together constitute the western basin. The Tyrrhenian Basin, that part of the Mediterranean known as the Tyrrhenian Sea, lies between Italy and the islands of Sardinia and Corsica.

The eastern Mediterranean is subdivided into two major basins. The Ionian Basin, in the area known as the Ionian Sea, lies to the south of Italy, Albania, and Greece, where the deepest sounding in the Mediterranean, about 16,000 feet (4,900 metres), has been recorded. A submarine ridge between the western end of Crete and Cyrenaica (Libya) separates the Ionian Basin from the Levantine Basin to the

south of Anatolia (Turkey); and the island of Crete separates the Levantine Basin from the Aegean Sea, which comprises that part of the Mediterranean Sea north of Crete and bounded on the west and north by the coast of Greece and on the east by the coast of Turkey. The Aegean Sea contains the numerous islands of the Grecian archipelago. The Adriatic Sea, northwest of the main body of the eastern Mediterranean Sea, is bounded by Italy to the west and north and by Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania to the east.

Geology

Until the 1960s the Mediterranean was thought to be the main existing remnant of the Tethys Sea, which formerly girdled the Eastern Hemisphere. Studies employing the theory of seafloor spreading that have been undertaken since the late 20th century, however, have suggested that the present Mediterranean seafloor is not part of the older (200 million years) Tethys floor. The structure and present form of this tectonically active basin and its bordering mountain system have been determined by the convergence and recession of the relatively stable continental plates of Eurasia and Africa during the past 44 million years. The interpretation of geologic data suggests that there are, at present, multiple main areas of collision between Africa and Eurasia, resulting in volcanism, mountain building, and land submergence.

Desiccation theory and bottom deposits

The study of seabed sediment cores drilled in 1970 and 1975 initially seemed to reinforce an earlier theory that about 6 million years ago the Mediterranean was a dry desert nearly 10,000 feet (3,000 metres) below the present sea level and covered with evaporite salts. High ridges at Gibraltar were assumed to have blocked the entry of Atlantic waters until about 5.5 million years ago, when these waters broke through to

flood the Mediterranean. More-recent seismic and microfossil studies have suggested that the seafloor never was completely dry. Instead, about 5 million years ago the seafloor consisted of several basins of variable size and topography, with depths ranging from 650 to 5,000 feet (200 to 1,500 metres). Highly saline waters of greatly varying depth probably covered the bottom and deposited salts. Considerable uncertainty has remained regarding the chronology and character of sea-bottom salt formation, and evidence from subsequent seismic studies and core sampling has been subject to intense scientific debate.

Physiography

The Tyrrhenian Basin of the western Mediterranean has two exits into the eastern Mediterranean: the Strait of Sicily and the Strait of Messina, both of which have been of great strategic importance throughout Mediterranean history. The submarine relief of the Sicilian channel is rather complicated; the group of islands comprising Malta, Gozo, and Comino, all of which consist of limestone, stands on a submarine shelf that extends southward from Sicily.

The widest continental shelf is off Spain at the Ebro River delta, where it extends about 60 miles (95 km). Similarly, west of Marseille, France, the shelf widens at the Rhône River delta to 40 miles (65 km). The shelf is narrow along the French Riviera, the gradient of its slope increasing where cut by canyons and troughs. The narrow shelves continue off the Italian peninsula, generally with lower, more-gradual slopes. Along the coast at the base of the Atlas Mountains of North Africa, a narrow shelf stretches from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Gulf of Tunis with a slope marked by many troughlike indentations.

The coasts of the western Mediterranean, just as those of the eastern basin, have been subjected in recent geologic times to the uneven action of deposition and erosion. This action, together with the movements of the sea and the emergence and submergence of the land, resulted in a rich variety of types of coasts. The Italian peninsula underwent considerable uplift in post-Pliocene times (i.e., within the past 2.6 million years), as a result of which a strip of older rocks has been exposed on the Adriatic flank of the Apennines. The Italian Adriatic coast is typical of an emerged coast. The granite coast of northeastern Sardinia and the Dalmatian coast where the eroded land surface has sunk, producing elongated islands parallel to the coast, are typical submerged coasts. The deltas of the Rhône, Po, Ebro, and Nile rivers are good examples of coasts resulting from silt deposition.

The Sicilian straits scarcely exceed 1,500 feet (460 metres) in depth, so that there is essentially a shelf from Tunisia to Sicily separating the Mediterranean into two parts. South of the straits the shelf widens to as much as 170 miles (275 km) off the Gulf of Gabes (Qābis) on the eastern coast of Tunisia. The first mud appears on the approach to the Nile delta, and the shelf widens again to 70 miles (115 km) off Port Said, Egypt, at the entrance to the Suez Canal. Narrow shelves continue along most of the northern shore of the Mediterranean. An exception is the broad shelf extending for 300 miles (485 km) along the inner portion of the Adriatic Sea. Relatively deep water is found along much of the coasts of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro and along the southern Italian coast, in contrast to the gentle slopes of the Po River region.

The northern shores of the eastern Mediterranean are highly complex and, unlike the southern shores, have variable fold mountains that offered favourable sites for the development of the Mediterranean civilizations. The north coast of Africa bordering the

eastern Mediterranean is low-lying and of monotonous uniformity except for the Cyrenaica highlands in Libya, which lie to the east of the Gulf of Sidra. The largest islands of the eastern Mediterranean are Crete and Cyprus, both of which are mountainous.

Temperature and water chemistry

The parallel of 40° N latitude runs through the middle of the western basin, whereas the corresponding latitude of the eastern basin is 34° N; this explains the higher surface temperature of the latter. The highest temperature of the Mediterranean is in the Gulf of Sidra, off the coast of Libya, where the mean temperature in August is about 88 °F (31 °C). This is followed by the Gulf of Iskenderun, with a mean temperature of about 86 °F (30 °C). The lowest surface temperatures are found in the extreme north of the Adriatic, where the mean temperature in February falls to 41 °F (5 °C) in the Gulf of Trieste. Ice occasionally forms there in the depth of winter. In the deep zone the temperature range is small—approximately 55.2 °F (12.9 °C) at 3,000 feet (900 metres) and 55.6 °F (13.1 °C) at 8,200 feet (2,500 metres)—and temperatures remain constant throughout the year.

The salinity of the Mediterranean is uniformly high throughout the basin. Surface waters average about 38 parts per thousand except in the extreme western parts, and the salinity can approach 40 parts per thousand in the eastern Mediterranean during the summer. Deepwater salinity is 38.4 parts per thousand or slightly less. As in all other seas and oceans, chlorides constitute more than half of the total ions present in Mediterranean water, and the proportions of all the principal salts in the water are constant.

Levels of dissolved oxygen vary with the origin of the different water masses. The surface layer down to 700 feet (210 metres) shows a high oxygen level throughout the Mediterranean. The intermediate layer formed by the sinking of the surface layer in the eastern basin has a high oxygen level where it is freshly formed in this basin, but, as it moves westward, it loses some of its oxygen content, the lowest values occurring in the Algerian Basin. The transition layer between the intermediate and the deep water has the lowest level of dissolved oxygen.

Climate

Airflow into the Mediterranean Sea is through gaps in the mountain ranges, except over the southern shores east of Tunisia. Strong winds funneled through the gaps lead to the high evaporation rates of summer and the seasonal water deficit of the sea. The mistral—a cold, dry northwesterly wind—passes through the Alps-Pyrenees gap and the lower Rhône valley; the strong northeasterly bora passes through the Trieste gap; and the cold easterly levanter and the westerly vendaval pass through the Strait of Gibraltar. Hot, dry southeasterly winds—known locally as the sirocco, ghibli (gibleh), or khamsin—frequently blow into the Mediterranean basin from the Sahara and the Arabian Peninsula as low-pressure centres traverse the sea in late winter and early spring. These winds reduce heat and moisture in the surface waters to a significant degree by evaporative cooling, and this colder, denser surface water sinks. Atmospheric conditions over the Mediterranean also increase the salinity of incoming Atlantic water because of the evaporation of surface waters.

Mediterranean climate is confined to coastal zones and is characterized by windy, mild, wet winters and relatively calm, hot, dry summers. Spring, however, is a transitional season and is changeable. Autumn is relatively short.

Economic aspects

Biological resources

Plant nutrients such as phosphates, nitrates, and nitrites are scarce in the Mediterranean Sea. Just as in all other seas, these nutrients show seasonal fluctuations, generally with a rise in the spring, the phytoplankton blooming season. However, several factors account for the scarcity of nutrients in Mediterranean waters, the most important being that the Mediterranean receives most of its water from the surface water of the Atlantic Ocean. Despite low nutrient levels, the Mediterranean has a rich diversity of marine biota. Nearly one-third of its roughly 12,000 species are endemic.

The effective potential productivity in various regions of the Mediterranean can be measured by radioactive methods using carbon-14 dating to determine the amount of carbon produced in a given volume of water over a period of time. The lowest values are observed in the Levant and also in the Ionian Basin. The highest primary-production values in the Mediterranean Sea have been observed in springtime (March–May) off the Egyptian coast in areas under the influence of the outflow of the Nile.

Commercial fisheries are highly valuable in the nutrient-poor Mediterranean. There is great demand for fish, and total catches for consumption in Mediterranean countries—both from within and outside the region—constitute a significant portion of the total world catch. The high price of fresh fish in most Mediterranean countries has favoured the development of a large number of small-scale local fisheries, which take small catches in short trips. Though the boats used rarely exceed 70 feet (20 metres) in length, their numbers are sufficient to deplete the local stocks through overfishing.

The tendency to overexploitation is strengthened by the use of trawl nets with very small mesh size that retain the smallest individuals. Efforts to reduce the catch of undersized fish through controlling mesh size have not been successful, because equipment varies from country to country and compliance is difficult to monitor. The most recent trend has been to use drift nets up to 15 miles (24 km) long that extend 40 feet (12 metres) into the water. These nets kill many noncommercial species, including dolphins, whales, sea turtles, and the endangered Mediterranean monk seal.

The fishes of the Mediterranean are related to subtropical Atlantic species. Of the demersal (bottom-living) fishes, flounder, soles, turbot, whittings, congers, croakers, red mullet, gobies, gurnard, lizard fish, redfishes, sea bass, groupers, combers, sea bream, pandoras, and jacks and cartilaginous fishes such as sharks, rays, and skates are all caught by the trawlers. Among the demersal fishes, hake is one of the more commercially important in all countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

The coastal hake, sole, and red mullet fisheries have been seriously overexploited. Rocky coasts once provided a valuable harvest of crabs, shrimps, prawns, and other shellfish, but coastal pollution and overfishing have largely depleted natural fisheries. Aquaculture has become increasingly important, especially in the eastern Mediterranean. In Egypt, coastal lagoons have been impounded to raise fish.

About half of the Mediterranean catches are of pelagic species (those caught in the upper layers of the sea). Sardines constitute the main catch in the western and northeastern parts of the Mediterranean. Occasionally sardines also appear in relatively small quantities in the southeastern part. Closely related fishes (*Sardinella aurita* and *S. maderensis*), however, occur in large quantities in the southern and southeastern region of the Mediterranean. The sprat is taken in some quantities in the most northern parts,

such as in the northern Adriatic. Anchovy fishing is important in most regions of the Mediterranean.

The bluefin tuna is one of the high-value large fishes. It moves into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic and disperses in several directions: toward the southern and eastern coasts of Spain, the coasts of the Balearic Islands, the northern coast of Morocco, and the coasts of Sardinia, Sicily, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. Related commercially valuable species are the bonitos and mackerels. Varying quantities are caught by nearly all Mediterranean countries. Important nonedible marine products include the corals of Naples and the sponges of the Dodecanese islands, the Gulf of Gabes, and the western coasts of Egypt.

Mineral resources

Sea salt has been produced by evaporation in coastal pans along the eastern Mediterranean and elsewhere for millennia. In addition to its use as a seasoning, salt is now utilized by the chemical industry. Since the early 1980s, interest has grown in petroleum and natural gas exploration and production in the Mediterranean. Offshore wells produce a significant proportion of the oil and gas output of bordering countries. Italy, Libya, Egypt, and Algeria are the largest producers. Drilling also has been done off the coasts of Libya, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Tunisia. Bouri, in Libyan waters, is the most active Mediterranean offshore oil field. While Mediterranean oil and natural gas production is only a small fraction of world production, a significant proportion of total world oil refining takes place in the Mediterranean region. Refineries and petrochemical works in a number of major Mediterranean ports process crude oil from Persian Gulf countries shipped through the Suez Canal, as well as oil from Mediterranean countries.

In addition, petrochemicals and other petroleum derivatives are produced for domestic consumption and export.

Transportation and tourism

The 2,000-mile (3,200-km) access that the Mediterranean offers to rain-bearing westerly winds in the temperate zone, the ease of communications across the western, central, and eastern straits, and the prevailing freedom from storms in the summer months all made the Mediterranean the “inland sea” of early civilizations. Trade and communication flourished and declined with the fortunes of the Mediterranean civilizations. Following the Middle Ages, Constantinople (Istanbul), Barcelona, and the Italian commercial states assumed the role of trade intermediaries between the Orient and northwestern Europe. In the 15th century, however, the rise of the Ottoman Turks was followed by a rule of oppression and exploitation, and piracy made traffic on the sea hazardous. Moreover, the discovery at the end of the 15th century of the route to Asia around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa created a safer and easier sea route connecting northwestern Europe directly with the Orient. Mediterranean lands lost their commercial function as intermediaries between Europe and Asia, and, for more than two and a half centuries, the Mediterranean Sea remained a backwater of world ocean trade and traffic.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, together with the advent of the steamship, continued industrialization in northwestern and central Europe, and French colonization in North Africa made the Mediterranean again one of the busiest sea-lanes of the world. Much of the traffic, however, passed through the sea en route between Asia and northwestern Europe. Countries in the Mediterranean basin had not been able

to industrialize and had retained their agricultural and artisan economies, which limited their purchasing power and reduced their ability to trade.

The growth of the Mediterranean oil and gas industries has been paralleled by an increase in trade and transportation of the diverse consumer and industrial goods needed by expanding cities on both the northern and southern Mediterranean coasts. Coastal zones—especially in Egypt, Turkey, Algeria, and Morocco—have some of the world's fastest-growing urban areas. Increased economic consolidation of Europe, however, has stimulated new trading patterns.

The lands ringing the Mediterranean Sea include some of the world's most renowned tourist destinations, which lie either directly on the sea or its embayments (e.g., the French and Italian Riviera and Athens) or are close by (e.g., Rome and the Holy Land of the Middle East). Tourism is now a major source of income for those coastal countries, where a significant portion of world income from tourism is generated annually. Tens of millions of people descend each year to enjoy the Mediterranean's beaches and culture-rich shores.

Impact of human activity

Growing industrialization, shoreline populations, and tourism since the mid-20th century have resulted in severely polluted waters in many Mediterranean coastal areas. Pollution in the Mediterranean tends to remain near its source of discharge because of relatively weak tidal and current movements. Despite the absence of significant transborder effects, the countries of the region have agreed to cooperate to control the threat of marine pollution. Assisted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 16 countries adopted the Mediterranean Action Plan (Med Plan) in 1975. The Med Plan comprises four elements: legal measures, institutional and financial support,

integrated planning to prevent environmental degradation, and coordinated pollution monitoring and research. The two most important legal measures are the Barcelona Convention (1976), which calls for protective action against all forms of pollution, and the Athens Protocol (1980), which requires state parties to adopt programs to prevent and control pollution from land-based sources. The Med Plan has been widely regarded for successfully raising awareness of pollution in the Mediterranean; however, improvements in environmental quality under the plan have been limited.

Oceanographers sponsored by the European Union have discovered that major dam projects on rivers emptying into the Mediterranean (notably the Aswān High Dam on the Nile River in Egypt and the heavily impounded Ebro River in Spain) have been changing the Mediterranean's hydrological characteristics. The reduced flow of fresh water from those rivers has been replaced by increased flows of saltier water from the Atlantic and the Red Sea. The saltier (and thus denser) seawater has modified circulation patterns, as evidenced by observed elevated flows from the Aegean Sea into the deeper parts of the Mediterranean. The impact of such changes, including the potential effects on Atlantic currents influenced by high-salinity Mediterranean waters exiting the Strait of Gibraltar, has been the focus of much research.

I hope this has answered all of your questions! Please let us know if we can be of any assistance in the future.

Sincerely,

Lisa

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