



# Turkey - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture

*Charlotte McPherson*

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Standing astride two continents and stretching from Europe to the Middle East, Turkey is both feared by the West and wooed by it. Travelers have always been drawn to its glorious cultural heritage and heroic landscapes, and today, thanks to its burgeoning economy, growing geo-political importance, and young population, it is attracting more foreign visitors than ever.

This new, updated edition of *Culture Smart! Turkey* reveals a nation in transition. Over the last two decades living conditions have improved greatly and Turkey is now classified as a developed country with an emerging market economy. Viewed by many as a model for outward-looking Islam, it is a country with laws to protect against religious paternalism, where restaurants are open during the fast of Ramadan, and where headscarves or no scarves can be worn in universities, schools, and public offices. Turkey continues to seek EU membership, but the road to accession has been full of twists and turns and the outcome is uncertain.

The country is rapidly modernizing. The cities are being transformed with skyscrapers and gated communities. Politically, Turkey has changed dramatically over the past decade and today society is polarized between secularists and traditionalists. While Turkey is in many ways Western and modern, Islamic tendencies are strong. The situation can vary widely between, and even within, different parts of society, and, across the board, there are still forms of behaviour that are taboo. One thing is certain. Turkey's culture and social life are changing.

*Culture Smart! Turkey* is an invaluable guide to the intricate ins and outs of a rich and complex society. Whether you are planning a vacation or traveling on business, it is vital to be aware of appropriate behavior in different situations, and if you show a genuine interest in their culture and respect for their values, you will win the lasting friendship of your hosts.



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