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Italy - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



Synopsis

Culture Smart! provides essential information on attitudes, beliefs and behavior in different countries, ensuring that you arrive at your destination aware of basic manners, common courtesies, and sensitive issues. These concise guides tell you what to expect, how to behave, and how to establish a rapport with your hosts. This inside knowledge will enable you to steer clear of embarrassing gaffes and mistakes, feel confident in unfamiliar situations, and develop trust, friendships, and successful business relationships. Culture Smart! offers illuminating insights into the culture and society of a particular country. It will help you to turn your visit-whether on business or for pleasure-into a memorable and enriching experience. Contents include* customs, values, and traditions* historical, religious, and political background* life at home* leisure, social, and cultural life* eating and drinking* do's, don'ts, and taboos* business practices* communication, spoken and unspoken "Culture Smart has come to the rescue of hapless travellers." Sunday Times Travel "... the perfect introduction to the weird, wonderful and downright odd quirks and customs of various countries." Global Travel "...full of fascinating-as well as common-sense-tips to help you avoid embarrassing faux pas." Observer "...as useful as they are entertaining." Easyjet Magazine "...offer glimpses into the psyche of a faraway world." New York Times

Book Information

Series: Culture Smart!

Paperback: 168 pages

Publisher: Kuperard; Reprinted edition edition (September 5, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1857333160

ISBN-13: 978-1857333169

Product Dimensions: 4.4 x 0.5 x 6.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #956,485 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #424 in Â Books > Business & Money > Business Culture > Etiquette #471 in Â Books > Travel > Australia & South Pacific > General #603 in Â Books > Reference > Etiquette > Etiquette Guides & Advice

Customer Reviews

I read the first twenty pages or so, and then returned the book because the text I read had several factual errors and misleading statements. I decided I couldn't trust the book to teach me new things,

reliably, when the author was so obviously careless about the things I do know about. To give a single example, Abbott explains that the Roman Curia (the Pope's bureaucracy) is "the College of Cardinals" -- that's untrue, but it's also something anyone could get correct with 2 minutes of research (even on Wikipedia!). There were quite a few of these gaffes -- enough to make me want to look for something else for my information.

Unless you know absolutely nothing about Italy this book isn't that helpful. It says at nauseum that the Italians are loyal to their friends and family. The assumption is that if you are from an English speaking country you aren't. It is also biased against southern Italy. It assumes that the people buying the book are only going to Milan, and are married men with kids. I think for the money you can buy another book that is more thorough. It only took me two hours to read this book, and for what I got out of it it wasn't worth it. This book was written by a British author, I recommend buying a book by an American author if you are American because the British and American cultures are not identical.

I've been using Culture Smart series to get a quick glimpse of country when I visit it and it has always been an eye opener. The book covers a vast variety of topics and I always suggest to get to know a person in the country and talk to them as well. As the the book is merely a good starting point.

These Culture Smart guides are good introductions to nation and culture. Clearly it's an overview--and it is not a "tour book"--but it is easy reading and a great place to start learning about your next destination. In addition to this series I also like to recommend the unrelated "Culture Shock" series, which are more in-depth. For a humorous take, the "Xenophobe's Guide" series is another good short-volume introduction.

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