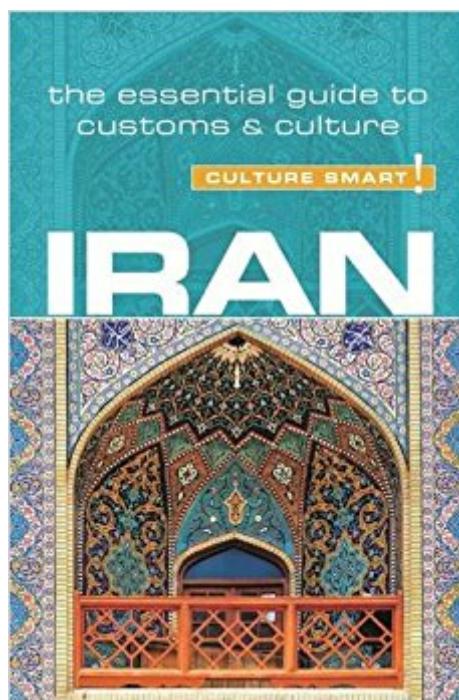


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# Iran - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



## Synopsis

Iran is rarely out of the headlines, and there is likely to be a rush of interest from tourists and investors if the provisional framework agreement reached in April 2015 is implemented, lifting most sanctions in exchange for limits on its nuclear program for at least ten years. Western fascination with Iran is nothing new. For centuries, foreigners have been entranced by a country that is quite distinct from all others in the region. Iran is home to one of the world's oldest civilizations. Travelers have long been seduced by the echoes of the extraordinary ancient history contained in the word "Persia." But Iran is also a modern society that is experiencing great change. Although it is still feeling the effects of the Islamic Revolution of 1979, social restrictions have loosened considerably in recent years. Strict Islamic rules coexist with an increasingly dynamic society driven by an overwhelmingly young population. Animosity toward the West at a political level sits side-by-side with a wholehearted welcome for foreigners as individuals. Culture Smart! Iran takes you beyond the clichés to show how life in Iran really is and how you can feel comfortable in its society. It offers insights into a country full of surprises. Despite Iran's deep commitment to Islam, the pre-Islamic Zoroastrian past is still part of everyday culture. Its language, Farsi, shares linguistic roots with English and French. It is a country where one of the more genuine democracies in the Middle East is overlaid by an unelected theocracy. And where "no thank you" really does sometimes mean "yes please." If nothing else, this entrancing, beautiful, and sometimes infuriating place is a country whose inhabitants genuinely wish visitors Khosh amadi! "Welcome!"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Culture Smart! has come to the rescue of hapless travelers." —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.

Stuart Williams is a British journalist specializing in financial and current affairs. A graduate of Worcester College, Oxford, he has worked in Frankfurt for AFX News, and for Agence France Presse (AFP) in Paris, Nicosia, and Istanbul, where he is now deputy bureau chief. Stuart first visited Iran after leaving university, and was captivated by the country. After learning Persian, he worked in Tehran for AFP for two years.

My wife and I are planning a three week visit to Iran at the end of April. Although we are frequent travellers to off beat destinations I must admit to a deal of trepidation about this trip. I found William's book immensely readable and full of balanced and useful information. I commend the book as a very useful introduction to travel to Iran.

A quick guide especially useful when talking to Iranians both here and elsewhere

Useful, brief and basic information.

good information, rather positiv everything (will find out if that all is true). A bit more about the language, like useful words and some phrases would be useful... guiding us to the nice people...

Based on living and traveling in Iran for an extended time under the Shah, speaking passable Persian, and visiting for 10 days in 2011, I found two kinds of things in this book: Things I know are correct; and things that ring true, which I wish I had known. I had a couple of little nit-picky disagreements with the text, but this may simply be that I lived in different places or travelled in different circles. Another commenter suggested this book missed a little on politics. I can't speak to

that. The bottom line is that Iranians are gracious hosts, being in Iran is a delight, and I always felt safe and secure.

Great book for two reasons: 1) it gives me what I need to know in a small purse travel size and weight; 2) good information. Things I want to know and would ask the question. If I want glossy colored pictures I can look at them online I don't need a heavy guide book I can't take in my purse or travel with because it is too heavy. This is an excellent reference. Read and print the history online.

Culture Smart Iran, gives a balanced view on Iranian culture. For instance the cultural challenges is weighted against the hospitality culture. The confusing paradox between the traditional and modern, sex segregation and mixing etc is also presented in an interesting manner. Some left outs and weaknesses that makes me rate this book with 4 stars instead of 5:-it is claimed that Iran was the only country in the first wave of the Arab conquests to retain its own language - what about the Ottomans?-when discussing the policies of the Shah that provoked the Iranian people, one of the most controversial - to make Americans immune against prosecution is left out.-former Iranian president Rafsanjani is introduced as a pragmatic leader who sought reconstruction after the war, but that he was the commander of the Iranian army during the war is not mentioned-because it was reprinted and not updated in 2010 many population numbers, exchange rates etc are outdated. For the same reason the Green movement is not covered.-In the communication chapter the all too familiar mistake of introducing the history of the Persian language instead of teaching the reader how to express "one bus ticket to Teheran" please and "tea please" is repeated.-The conclusion paragraph is hardly a conclusion All in all a quite decent introduction to Iranian culture!

Even though this small booklet is considered to be a travel guide, it is very well written. Detailed and factual. It gives a great image/impression of the Iranian people, their traditions and the country itself. It's short but fun to read. I laughed a lot while reading it. It really captured the meaning of being an Iranian. Fun Stuff and practical. Almost every thing in this little book makes sense and is true. Apparently the author has done his homework on Iran. Politics aside (no one gets the Iranian politics correctly any ways so I am willing to cut him some slack there) this tiny book does a good job. Buy this if you're traveling to/thru Iran. Have fun!!!

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