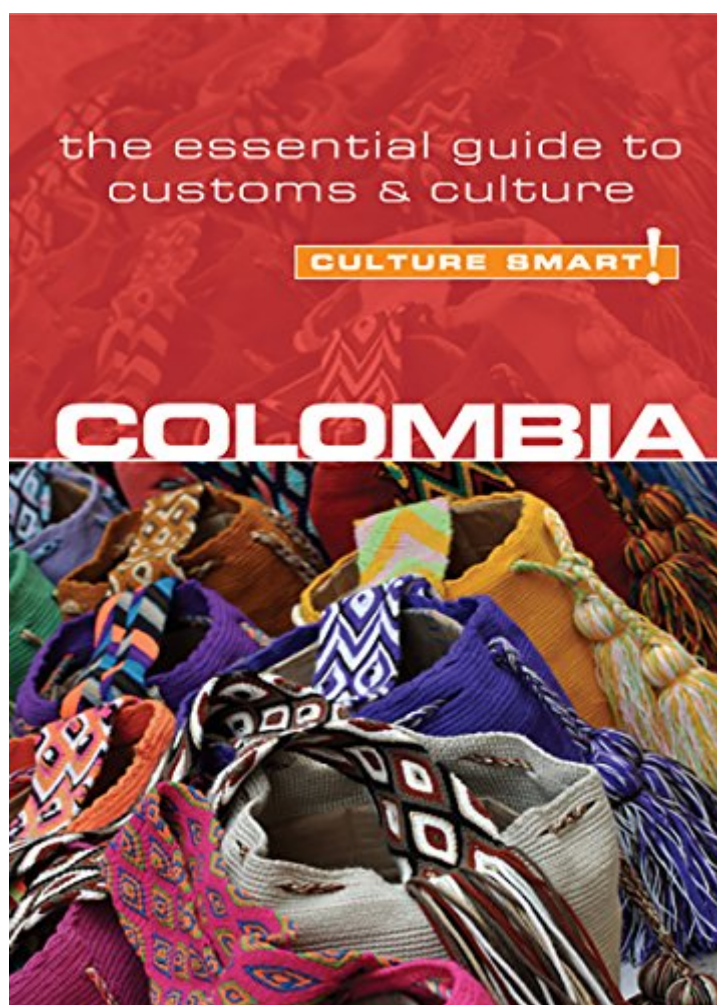


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# Colombia - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



## Synopsis

Colombia is a magical country, full of spectacular varied landscapes, rare ecosystems, succulent tropical fruits, salsa and cumbia music, and kind, fun-loving people. The modern culture is a synthesis of Spanish, indigenous, and African traditions, evident in the music, the food, and Barranquilla's famous Carnaval. The country's major cities are modern and cosmopolitan, with an international style and consumerism that makes them feel more like cities in the USA than Latin America. Yet, five minutes into the countryside, its distinct rural charms reveal a slower and more bucolic past. In the collective imagination, Colombia is exotic, lawless, and dangerous—an illegal narcotics trade and the ongoing armed conflict have contributed to its bad-boy image. But things are changing, and there is so much more than that. Entrenched social inequality has led to strife, manifest in the long-lived left- and rightwing rebel movements and a cycle of appalling violence that has saturated four decades with an undeclared civil war. And still, the Colombians are animated, lighthearted and fun—always ready to laugh and enjoy the moment. They have found strength in each other, in their families, and closest friends who are the cornerstones of their lives. Culture Smart! Colombia shows how the country's rough geography and tumultuous history have shaped modern values and attitudes. It looks at the public realm and at life at home with the family. It introduces you to Colombia's distinct and delicious cuisine, and reveals what people think about each other, their neighbors, and foreigners. There is advice on the safest ways to get around; on how business is done; and how Colombians communicate. Culture Smart! Colombia explains the intricacies of a culture that is both modern and steeped in tradition, international and regional, cosmopolitan and agrarian, very rich and very poor, and after more than four decades of undeclared civil war is happily emerging from tough times and getting ready for the future.

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## **Customer Reviews**

Very helpful advice, even my kids who were anxious about traveling there, were happy to read the book and found it interesting. Great book to read before heading to Columbia. Really was valuable information. We were able to navigate smoothly, purchase our farm, and negotiate with staff, successfully. We were able to plant 90 coffee bean trees in three days with everyone we had to liaise with, remaining happy and content to be working with us and coordinating with us. The three weeks we have spent so far in Columbia have been smooth sailing with much happiness. Half day school schedules are so sane! Home by lunch! It is very important to know what will be wanted and needed from you, upon entering a foreign country where the culture, traditions and history differ from your own. P.S. They LOVE children there!

I usually don't write reviews on books, but this one is so good that I had to say something. First let me say that I am a US citizen living and traveling in Latin America. I speak Spanish and understand the nuances of several of the cultures. This book contains the information needed by every thinking tourist. Your standard travel guide has no depth -- it simply includes what to see; where to stay; and where to eat. This book is a quick way to get a pretty good idea of how Colombianos live and think (the culture). If you really want to understand the culture, learn Spanish.

This book gave insightful, helpful and useful information about Columbia and kept the reader's interest throughout. I would recommend to any traveler.

This is different than most travel books because it doesn't just give you advice on where to stay and eat - it lets you know what is worth seeing in this beautiful country. I found this very useful for going online and finding the where and what based on what kind of trip I planned from reading this book.

The book talks about craft festivals and interesting cities and how to appreciate the country for its unique qualities. My advice is to get this book and then do your homework online.

A well written book on understanding Colombian culture. Had some very specific and valid points that are must-knows for conducting yourself in this country.

There are some problems here. I reviewed this with my Colombian girlfriend, who said the author got some things right, but balked at the section on dating (especially the anecdote).

Item was received promptly and in the exact condition as described. Concise, well organized, and easy to read. Will come in handy for my upcoming trip to Colombia.

Very informative!

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