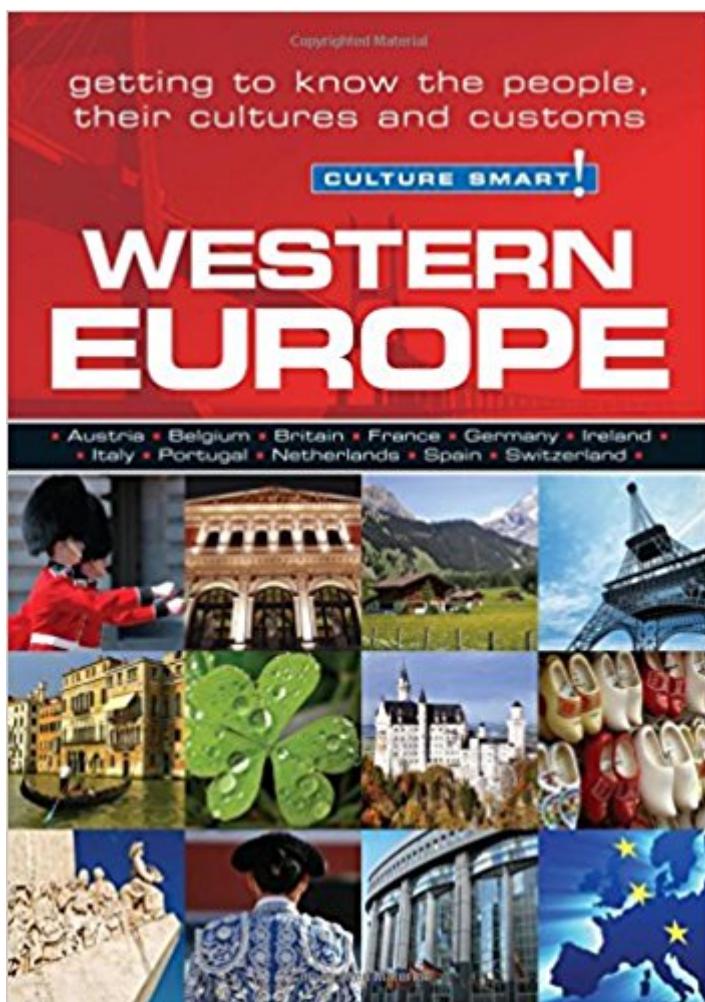


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Western Europe - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



Synopsis

The historic countries of Western Europe — Austria, Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland — are the jewels in the crown of European civilization. Their importance and attraction for the rest of the world are so great that the region is the prime travel destination for businesspeople, tourists, and students. Western Europe is a relatively compact geographical area, containing an enormous diversity of landscapes, peoples, and cultures. The historically competitive Western Europeans are unlike each other in many ways, yet share an underlying system of values, and the restless Western European spirit of enquiry, enterprise, and adventure has had a decisive impact on world history. In the past, their empires spread their languages, religions, arts, and ideologies around the globe, and today the world beats a pathway to their doors. For foreign visitors, first encounters in Western Europe can be overwhelming. The richness and complexity of the different national cultures are difficult to take in, and people's behavior and reactions can be surprisingly unpredictable. For example, attitudes to time vary. In Germany it's rude to be late; in France it's rude to be on time. In business there is a range of negotiating styles. And because there is more to communication than speech, it is easy to misread the signals in other people's societies. Even smiling can sometimes be wrong — in France it's distinctly uncool to smile at strangers. Western Europe is ideal for student travelers, businesspeople, or academics who will be visiting several countries on their trip and who don't wish to be burdened with eleven books on different destinations. In this it is unique. No other book captures the essence of eleven national cultures in a single volume. Drawing on the wealth of information in the individual *Culture Smart!* country guides, it focuses on those situations in each country where visitors are likely to come into contact with local people. Beyond listing the dos and don'ts, it explains the cultural context of different or unexpected behavior. It tells you about beliefs and attitudes, and alerts you to local manners and sensitive issues. Full of fascinating insights and practical advice, it will help you navigate your way through uncharted seas, avoid gaffes and misunderstandings, and establish a rapport with people wherever you are.

Book Information

Series: *Culture Smart!*

Paperback: 480 pages

Publisher: Kuperard (July 12, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1857334906

ISBN-13: 978-1857334906

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 1.3 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #440,189 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #190 in Books > Business & Money > Business Culture > Etiquette #697 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Customs & Traditions #2405 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > General

Customer Reviews

ROGER JONES is a specialist in careers, education, music, and preparing others for the practical and psychological adjustments of living abroad. A graduate in modern languages, he has traveled widely in Europe and worked for extended periods in a number of European countries. He has also worked in refugee welfare, as a bookseller, and as an examiner. His published work includes handbooks offering practical advice and insights into local traditions, behaviors, and attitudes for people planning to live abroad or visit foreign locations. He is also the author of *Culture Smart! Thailand* and *Culture Smart! Libya*, published by Kuperard. Roger lives in Gloucestershire, England.

One of the best overviews we've read about Europe, and the intricacies of the culture. Lots of very useful details to know and understand before traveling as well.

Very useful book.

Very well written

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