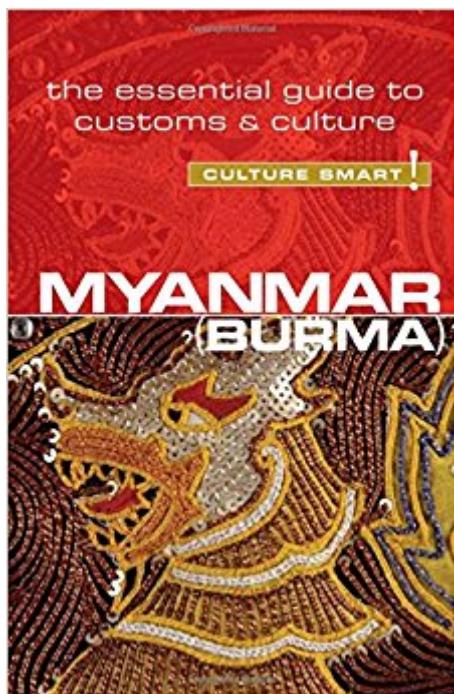


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# Myanmar - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



## Synopsis

Myanmar, as Burma is now known, is strategically situated between the world's two most populous nations—China and India—and its distinctive ancient culture shares some traditions with both countries. Hidden away from the eyes of the world for half a century by its military rulers' policy of self-isolation, the Burmese Way to Socialism, with a new democratic parliament and civilian government Myanmar is undergoing important changes as it approaches its next elections in 2015. Its most famous political detainee, Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel peace laureate, has been released after nearly twenty years of house arrest. The present administration faces teething problems in politics, governance, education, its dealings with over a hundred ethnic groups, and its society. At the same time, progress has been made with the emergence of a free press, the release of political prisoners, and the reemergence of the long-lost voice of the man and woman on the street. The country is opening up to tourism and business. The Burmese people are by nature friendly and polite, and are traditionally easy-going and peaceable. Most are devout Buddhists, and there are pagodas and meditation centers all over the country. They are also great lovers of fun, entertainments, and festivals—in fact, there is a festival for each Myanmar calendar month. *Culture Smart! Myanmar* provides much needed information about a country taking its first steps to becoming an important player on the world stage. It offers invaluable insights into the inner life of the Burmese, their history, traditions, attitudes, and work ethic, and gives practical advice on what to expect and how to behave in different circumstances. While their hosts may be naturally polite and accommodating, foreign visitors will have to go through a steep learning curve to understand the dos and don'ts of Burmese social customs. This book serves as an essential guide for Western tourists and entrepreneurs who are interested in visiting or doing business in this beautiful, enigmatic, and resource-rich country.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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,

Kyi Kyi May was born and brought up in Myanmar, where she attended Rangoon Arts and Science University and gained a M.Sc. in Zoology. She became a print journalist before joining the BBC Burmese Service in London as a producer and gained a BA (Hons) degree in Politics, Philosophy and History at Birkbeck College, University of London. As a BBC producer, a field reporter, and later as head of the Burmese Service, she has written and broadcast many current affairs and feature programs for Burmese listeners of all ages.

Myanmar "Culture Smart" is not a "see-this-go-there-stay-here" sort of guidebook. Nor is it one of those quick-read "Do's and Don'ts" pamphlets aimed at a business traveler. If you are seriously going to interact cross-culturally in business, as a government official, working with an NGO, or as an individual "a by-the-numbers" approach only goes so far, and sometimes can get you into trouble. Sooner or later, you will need a greater understanding of the society with which you are working. This is especially true with a country which is changing as dramatically as Myanmar is. You need a grounding in societal fundamentals. Myanmar "Culture Smart" provides a basis for this sort of understanding. In keeping with the theme of the Culture Smart series, it not only offers a grounding in Myanmar culture (in the broad sense), but weaves in many insightful perspectives. As an American who has been involved in Myanmar and watched other English-speakers work with Myanmar for over thirty years, I strongly recommend this book. Read and re-read it as you start and develop your relationships with Myanmar. I expect that sooner, rather than later, you will find an "Aha! Moment" in which you say "that's what the book said . . . now I understand."

This is NOT a travel guide. It's cultural guide, so if you're looking for travel information, e.g. where to stay, eat and what to see etc. this is not the book that you need. Regarding the book itself, the cultural information that is provided is sparse. A little bit of Myanmar's history but nothing about art, music etc.

The writer is familiar with Myanmar and gives very good information about cultural issues and food.

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