



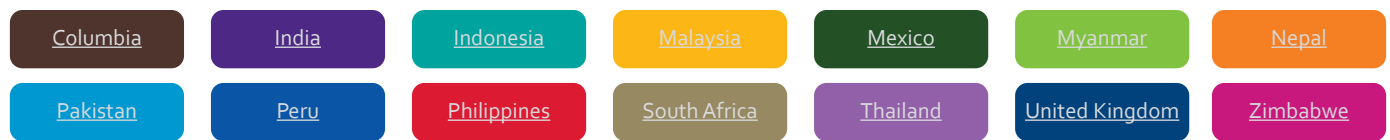
Respect & Protect

Learn about each other's
cultural values



Be curious. Be you. Belong.

Nationality fact sheets



The diversity of our people is one of the things that makes us great. But sometimes we find it easier to understand and connect with people who are similar to us.

These nationality fact sheets can help us recognise our cultural values, similarities and differences. What may be disrespectful for one culture may be a sign of respect in another. By learning about each other, we can be more open-minded and help everyone to feel respected and included.

It's also important to remember that no two people are the same. While people may come from the same part of the world, they may think or act differently. Practice respect by being curious, asking questions and getting to know your colleagues.

Top tips for managers

Once you've read, shared and reflected on these fact sheets, consider the following...

1. Could you include some dishes from home at crew events?

Why not ask colleagues what dishes, snacks or even condiments they miss most from home and include them at special events? Food is a great connector, so by offering national dishes, drinks or snacks, we might spark conversations or make people feel more at home. Examples could include: nasi goreng (Indonesia), adobo (Philippines), dal bhat (Nepal) and masala chai tea (India).

2. Be mindful of prayer times

It's important that we're mindful of when certain religions pray or key dates that involve an elevated amount of prayer. If you can make adjustments for prayer times when assigning shifts or organising activities, it would be a great way to recognise the importance of faith in our colleagues' lives and show that we support all religions at Carnival UK.

3. Arrange meet ups, such as a welcome party for new colleagues

Why not throw a welcome party one evening or host a hot drink and snack meet-up? If possible, you could serve some treats from different cultures represented on board our ships as an opportunity to bring people together from the same or differing nationalities.

4. Create a buddy system

Consider pairing new crew members from underrepresented nationalities with other colleagues on board from the same nationality groups. This could give individuals working in different departments the opportunity to meet and connect.



Want to find out more about working across cultures?

Search 'belong' on The Insider or scan the QR code to visit our Culture Hub. Here you'll find more information and activities to support you.



Buenas!

Hasta luego!

Colombia

“Libertad y Orden” which translates to “Liberty and Order” in English and is featured on the country’s coat of arms.

Colombia is a tropical country in northwestern South America - bordered by Panama, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru and Ecuador - known for its rich biodiversity and diverse geography, including mountains, coasts and rainforests, and is home to a vast array of animal and plant species.

Culture

Colombian culture is a rich blend of indigenous, European (primarily Spanish) and African influences, resulting in vibrant traditions, music and dance. As with many Latin American countries, Colombians place a high value on personal relationships, in both social and business settings, and believe family is central to social life with strong community ties.

Values

- Family
- Regional pride
- Politeness and hospitality
- Strong love for dance and music
- Harmony and consensus
- Resilience and warmth
- Respect
- Cleanliness
- Aesthetics and appearance

Religion

The predominant religion in Colombia is Catholicism (or Roman Catholic Christianity) with 75% of Colombians practicing although this percentage has been declining. Whilst there is no official state religion, the 1991 constitution guarantees freedom of worship for all faiths including smaller populations like Jewish, Muslim and Indigenous and Syncretic beliefs.

Language

More than 99% of Colombians speak Spanish but Wayuu (the largest of the indigenous languages) and San Andreas Creole (an English-based Creole) are also spoken by many.

Communication

- Colombians use a warm but formal approach when speaking (use of last names and formal titles)
- Colombians are emotionally expressive (i.e. close proximity when speaking or touching the other person’s hands/arms is common)
- The context in which messages are conveyed is important; background knowledge is assumed and needed for thorough understanding

Population
52 Million

Capital
Bogota

Currency
Colombian Peso

Time zone
UTC -5



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Use formal greetings (handshakes, use titles, greet people individually etc.)
- ✓ Be punctual (on time) and take care with your appearance (dress well and be well groomed)
- ✓ If visiting a home for the first time, bring a small gift for the host and wait to be seated; keep your hands visible and try every dish offered
- ✓ Invest in small talk (ask about family, culture, traditions). Be aware of non-verbal cues (tone of voice and facial expressions)
- ✓ Provide negative or constructive feedback in private
- ✓ Respect for hierarchy
- ✓ Even in informal settings, respect and politeness are important
- ✗ Discussing sensitive topics (like politics or religion) or joking about serious matters (like drugs and violence)
- ✗ Eating with your hands or putting your elbows on the table
- ✗ Pointing with index/one finger (use whole hand instead)
- ✗ Being too direct or confrontational

National dish

Bandeja Paisa is a platter of rice, beans, ground beef, chorizo, fried egg, plantain and avocado.



Namaste
नमस्ते

Alvida
अलविदा

India

"Satyameva Jayate", meaning "truth alone triumphs", is a part of a mantra from the Hindu scripture Mundaka Upanishad

India is the seventh largest nation in the world. It's been influenced by a long and rich history, with the Indus Valley civilisation dating from 3,000 B.C.! Following the independence of India, "Satyameva Jayate" became the national motto on 26 January 1950 – the day India became a republic.

Culture

Indian culture is often described as a combination of several cultures. The British Raj left an influence on many Indians, including cricket, tea, a legal system and parliamentary rule. In Indian society, people rarely want privacy and are often very open about their feelings. People also tend to multitask and are energetic.

Values

- Family
- Loyalty to a group, often professional
- Honour of family and group
- Material success
- Creativity
- Problem solving
- Risk takers and experimenters
- Arranged marriage
- Fatalism (belief in fate)
- Friendship

Religion

India is a multi-religion country, with most of the population identifying as Hindu. There is a large population of Muslims, followed by Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains in India.

Language

India is a multilingual country with 22 official languages and hundreds of regional and local dialects. Hindi and English are the most widely used languages for communication, education and media.

Communication

- Open with emotions
- Value eloquent and respectful speakers
- Considerate and humble listeners
- Sensitive and understanding
- Praise others generously
- Reluctant to criticise
- Flexible and patient

Population

1.4 billion

Capital

New Delhi

Currency

Indian rupee

Time zone

UTC +5:30



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Always show respect for older people
- ✓ Clothing in India is often opulent (meaning rich and luxurious)
- ✓ Leaders should put people and their welfare first by showing compassion and trust
- ✓ In India, women are often lower in rank or position to men, but equality for women is rapidly becoming an important issue
- ✗ Avoid talking down to others
- ✗ Never humiliate someone

National dish

Khichdi (a simple dish made with rice and lentils) has been suggested as the unofficial national dish, as every part of India has some sort of khichdi dish.



DID YOU KNOW?

Many Indians eat a variety of snacks, and each region has its own speciality. Common examples include samosas, dosa, vada pav, idli, chaat and biscuits. Favourite drinks include masala chai tea, chaas, lassi and filter coffee.

Halo

Selamat tinggal

Indonesia

"Bhinneka Tunggal Ika", meaning "Unity in Diversity"

Indonesia is the world's largest Islamic country and the largest archipelago with over 16,000 islands! Java, Sumatra and Bali are some of the most well known.

Culture

Family is extremely important in Indonesia. The relationship between each family member is usually close, but it's rare to see people showing their feelings and affection openly.

Values

- Family
- Hierarchy
- Unity and conformity
- Friendly hospitality
- Desire to please
- Saving face (avoiding humiliation)
- Courtesy
- Gentleness
- Respect
- Work should be fun

Religion

The Indonesian government recognizes six religions: Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Marriage between different religions isn't allowed, but people may convert to a different religion.

Language

More than 700 languages are spoken in Indonesia! The country's official language is Indonesian, but most people speak other languages, such as Javanese, as their first language. This makes plurilingualism (meaning you can speak in many languages) a norm.

Communication

- Talkative, but usually speak in a quiet voice
- Don't show intense emotions
- Avoid confrontation
- Careful and considerate listeners
- Rarely say anything that might be offensive
- Unlikely to say if they don't understand something

DID YOU KNOW?

The position of women in Indonesia is different from other Muslim countries. They can vote and have full civil rights, on many islands they hold leadership positions and they have never been veiled or secluded.

Population

277.6 million

Capital

Jakarta

Currency

Indonesian rupiah

Time zone

West UTC+7

Central UTC+8

East UTC+9



Manners and taboos

- ✓ It's important to dress respectfully
- ✓ Men often hold hands
- ✓ Things are handed over with the right hand or with both hands for added respect
- ✓ In Jakarta, women often shake hands, though sometimes they bow with their hands folded
- ✓ Leaders should make the decisions for their teams
- ✗ A hands-on-hip stance is aggressive
- ✗ It's bad manners to point, ask personal questions or to completely finish the food on your plate
- ✗ Your head shouldn't be held higher than a superior or older person's. Indonesians often bend or lower their head, even duck (or drop their shoulders), when passing "superiors" in the street
- ✗ Taboos include the Muslim prohibition (meaning it's forbidden or banned) on alcohol and pork as well as using the left hand

National dish

Nasi goreng is one of Indonesia's national dishes and translates as "fried rice" in English. It's often served with an egg, sunny side up.



Helo

Selamat tinggal

Malaysia

"Bersekutu Bertambah Mutu", meaning "Unity is Strength"

Malaysia is a country in Southeast Asia. It's home to tropical rainforests, beautiful temples and vibrant cities.

Culture

Spending time with people and deepening relationships is extremely important to Malaysians. Malaysian culture has the concept of budi, which means politeness and respect are essential to human interaction. To do something inappropriate brings a person malu (shame, shyness and embarrassment).

Values

- Gentleness (budi)
- Respect and courtesy
- Love of children
- Trust
- Compromise
- Goodness
- Strong Islamic beliefs
- Family and friends
- Saving face (avoiding humiliation)
- Fatalism (belief in fate)
- Do not value worldly success
- Arts
- Hierarchy

Religion

Malaysia is a multi-religious country with Islam as its official religion, followed by about 60% of the population. All the Malaysian Malay people are Muslim by law. Most Malaysian Chinese people follow Mahayana Buddhism or Chinese traditional religion (including Taoism, Confucianism and ancestor worship).

Language

Malay is the official language of Malaysia. Malay English is commonly spoken, along with Chinese and Tamil. Kadazandusuns and Iban are the most widely spoken indigenous languages in Malaysia, spoken by the people in Sarawak. Other than these, there are over 30 native groupings.

Communication

- Communication is formal at first and becomes more informal over time
- Polite and respectful speakers and listeners
- Do not interrupt seniors or elderly people
- Avoid giving offense or being too loud
- Always seek harmony and balanced discussions
- Value courteous, kind and gentle speakers

Population

34.3 million

Capital

Kuala Lumpur

Currency

Malaysian ringgit

Time zone

UTC +8



Manners and taboos

- ✓ A good manager is sincere, humble and thoughtful
- ✓ Promotions should be brought up by managers
- ✓ Be clear on roles and hierarchy
- ✓ Knowing someone's status helps you show the right amount of respect
- ✓ When greeting others, women often salaam, bowing very low
- ✓ Shaking hands (with the right or both hands)
- ✓ In the Malay handshake, the man offers both hands but without the grip. He lightly touches his friend's hands, then brings his hands to his breast. This means "I greet you from my heart"
- ✗ Avoid offending others
- ✗ Don't point with your index finger (it's more polite to point with your right thumb and your fingers closed)
- ✗ The head is sacred and should not be touched (don't pat children on the head)

National dish

The national dish of Malaysia is nasi lemak (a fluffy, fragrant rice cooked in coconut milk).



Hola!

Nos
vemos!

Mexico

Although Mexico does not have a single, universally recognised national motto, one that's widely quoted is "Entre los Individuos como entre las Naciones, el Respeto al Derecho Ajeno es la Paz" meaning "Among individuals, as among nations, respect for the rights of others is peace"

Mexico is a North American country known for its diverse terrain, rich history including ancient civilisations like the Olmecs and Aztecs and famed cuisine. It also holds the world's largest population of Spanish speakers and is home to the largest pyramid on Earth, the Great Pyramid of Cholula!

Culture

Mexican culture is a vibrant mix of indigenous and Spanish influences, resulting in a unique blend of traditions seen in its rich arts, diverse cuisine and lively festivals (like the famous Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead). Family is central to society, but the culture also includes a deep respect for ancient civilisations and a growing national identity.

Values

- Strong family ties and support
- Respect for elders, hierarchy and status
- Expressive sociability (love of social interactions and public settings)
- Dignity and grace (responding better to calm and courteous interactions)
- Flexible time management
- Trust and loyalty

Religion

Mexico's predominant religion is Christianity, with Roman Catholicism being the largest due to its cultural legacy from the Spanish colonial era, however, the country is officially a secular state (meaning its neutral in matters of religion).

Language

Mexico is linguistically diverse country with no single official language although Spanish is the dominant de facto language as it's spoken by over 99% of the country. Mexico also has 68 Indigenous languages it recognises as part of its national heritage including Nahuatl, Yucatec Maya, Mixtec and Zapotec.

Communication

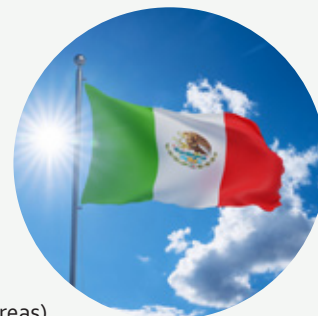
- Indirect and diplomatic (people often avoid saying no directly to keep the harmony)
- Use of high context and non-verbal cues (tone, body language, shared background etc.)
- Respect is shown through formality and use of titles

Population
132 million

Capital
Mexico City

Currency
Mexican Peso

Time zone
UTC -6 (in most areas)



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Use formal greetings (handshakes, use titles, greet people individually etc.)
- ✓ Embrace hospitality and accept offers of food/drinks (refusing could be seen as rude). Don't forget to say thank you and/or offer your services with domestic duties after (like taking the dishes to the kitchen or washing up)
- ✓ If visiting a home for the first time, bring a small gift for the host and wait to be seated; keep your hands visible
- ✓ Respect elders, in particular, letting them go first or offering them your seat
- ✓ Provide negative or constructive feedback in private
- ✓ Show patience with others punctuality. It's not unusual to be delayed/late for hours for an appointment, meeting or dinner
- ✗ Discussing sensitive topics (like politics or religion)
- ✗ Eating with your hands or putting your elbows on the table
- ✗ Pointing with index/one finger (use whole hand instead)
- ✗ Move away from or show discomfort from someone who is Mexican during conversations.
- ✗ Being too direct or confrontational

National dish

Mole Poblano is a thick, rich sauce made from dozens of ingredients like sauteed onions, garlic, spices, nuts, chillies and chocolate!



မင်္ဂလာပါ
Maingalarpar

သွားတရုမယ်
Swarttotmaal

Myanmar

Myanmar's former motto was “သမဂ္ဂါနံ တပေါ သုခေါ”, meaning “happiness through harmony”

Myanmar, also known as Burma (the official name until 1989), is a country in Southeast Asia.

Culture

Burmese society operates on ana (အာနာပူ), a feeling that has no English equivalent. It's characterised by a hesitation or reluctance to perform an action based on the fear that it will offend someone or cause someone to lose face.

Values

- Religion
- Saving face (avoiding humiliation)
- Serenity (calm or peace)
- Sense of duty
- Respect
- Neatness
- Humility
- Quietness
- Fatalism (belief in fate)

Religion

Religion is very important in Myanmar. Theravada Buddhism is practiced by 90% of the population. 8% of people follow Islam or Christianity, 1% follow Hinduism and the remaining 1% practice Mahayana Buddhism, Vajrayana Buddhism or Animism.

Language

Around 100 languages are spoken in Myanmar! Burmese is spoken by two-thirds of the population and is the country's official language. There are six other language families: Sino-Tibetan, Austro-Asiatic, Tai-Kadai, Indo-European, Austronesian and Hmong-Mien.

Communication

- Passive (patient and quiet) listeners
- Often hide their real feelings
- Humble and respectful speakers
- Slow and cautious to share thoughts and ideas
- Rarely share strong views or opinions

Population

54.5 million

Capital

Naypyidaw

Currency

Burmese kyat

Time zone

UTC +6:30



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Keep a respectful distance from others when talking (often a minimum of 1.5 metres)
- ✓ Allow time for prayer and to celebrate religious festivals
- ✓ Show interest in their religious activities
- ✓ Remove shoes before entering a home or a Buddhist place of worship. Many workplaces in Myanmar also don't allow footwear inside, with shoes left in the corridor or at the entrance of an office
- ✓ Both men and women wear the longyi (a sheet of cloth that's worn around the waist and runs to the feet)
- ✗ Avoid hugging or touching others when greeting someone new
- ✗ Don't talk too loudly

National dish

The national dish of Myanmar is mohinga – a fish soup made with rice noodles. The recipe varies based on the region.



DID YOU KNOW?

There are 12 months in the traditional Burmese calendar and a festival for every month. Most festivals are related to Burmese Buddhism. In any town or village, the local paya pwè (the pagoda festival) is the most important one. Myanmar's most famous festival is Thingyan, a four-day celebration for the Myanmar New Year when people throw or splash water at each other.

नमस्कार
Namaskāra

अलवदि
Alavidā

Nepal

"जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी", which translates in English to "Mother and Motherland are greater than heaven"

Nepal is a landlocked, mountainous country located between India and Tibet.

Culture

Nepali culture is very collectivistic, meaning they focus on the needs of the group over the individual. Families often combine their assets so that all members can be financially secure, and friendships are extremely important to people. Close friends often do favours for each other on a regular basis. Even though families are close, public displays of affection aren't common, even among married couples.

Values

- Family
- Loyalty
- Companionship
- Faith
- Tradition
- Patience
- Tolerance
- Dependability

Religion

The Nepalis population is largely made up of Hindus, but there are Buddhist, Muslim, Kiratist (indigenous ethnic religion) and Christian individuals. A small number of people are Sikhs and Jains, with some following other religions or no religion.

Language

Nepali is the official language of Nepal, but around 123 languages are spoken in Nepal as a first language! Nepali and Maithili rank as the first and second most spoken languages in the country.

Communication

- Nepalis people often enjoy conversation
- Nepalis often say "yes" to show they're listening – it doesn't mean they agree
- Will rarely say "no" directly
- May ask direct questions
- Nepalis are usually comfortable with silence
- Usually warm, patient and inclusive speakers and listeners
- Often speak quietly and in a soft voice
- People generally express thanks and gratitude through their facial expressions
- Often address others with family titles which show respect. For example, "didi" means "older sister" and "daai" means "older brother"

Population

30.9 million

Capital

Kathmandu

Currency

Nepalese rupee

Time zone

UTC +5:45



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Shaking hands (with your right hand)
- ✓ Women should offer a handshake first
- ✓ Greet anyone older or more senior than you first
- ✓ To be more formal or respectful, add "ji" to the end of someone's name. E.g. "Namaste, John-ji"
- ✓ A common question when meeting someone is "have you eaten yet?" This is the same as asking "how are you?" in England
- ✓ Showing affection for people of the same sex is seen as a sign of friendship. Nepalis men often hold hands and hug, and women may walk with their arms around each other
- ✓ Staring at strangers isn't seen as impolite in Nepal
- ✗ Don't criticise others in public
- ✗ Avoid confrontation
- ✗ Avoid greeting someone with a hug or a kiss unless you know the person well
- ✗ Keep eye contact to a minimum when talking to anyone of a higher status
- ✗ Don't point with a single finger (it's better to use your chin)
- ✗ The head is sacred and should not be touched
- ✗ Feet are seen as dirty. Showing the soles of your feet or touching someone with your feet is rude

National dish

Dal bhat is the national dish of Nepal. It's a vegetarian lentil curry and eaten with boiled or steamed rice.



ظفاح ادخ

ولیہ

Pakistan

English: "Faith, Unity, Discipline"

Urdu: مظلن، داحتا، ن امی ا

Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It has a cultural and ethnic background going back to the Indus Valley civilization, which existed 5,000 years ago.

Culture

In Pakistan, most people live in large extended families and have strong relationships. Pakistani society is largely patriarchal, meaning it's controlled by men. Women often fulfil the roles of wives and mothers. Cultural and religious beliefs encourage Pakistanis to show love and respect towards guests, so tourists and visitors are always welcomed with open arms.

Values

- Family
- Islam
- Devoutness or holiness
- Sincerity
- Sensitivity
- Warmth
- Traditions
- Sport, especially cricket
- Energy
- Education
- Poetry

Religion

Muslims make up the bulk of Pakistan's population, Hindus make up a small minority of the total population and Christians make up the largest religious minority in the country.

Language

Urdu is the official language of Pakistan, and while sharing official status with English, it is the preferred and dominant language used to communicate between different ethnic groups.

Communication

- Courteous speakers and listeners
- Polite and respectful
- Like small talk before discussing work
- Talkative
- Assertive
- Often show emotions through eye contact and facial expressions
- Willing to listen at length to develop a relationship
- Like speakers to be imaginative

Population

240.4 million

Capital

Islamabad

Currency

Pakistani rupee

Time zone

UTC +5



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Family members often work closely together
- ✓ Managers should put people and their welfare first by showing compassion and trust
- ✓ Promotions should be brought up by managers
- ✓ Show sympathy and empathy for others
- ✓ Look at things from other people's point of view
- ✓ Your word is important – in Asia, spoken agreements have more value than documents
- ✓ Communicate clearly and often
- ✗ Avoid sarcasm
- ✗ Don't be impatient
- ✗ Never humiliate someone

National dish

Nihari is the national dish of Pakistan. Nihari is a rich, slow-cooked meat stew flavoured with spices and thickened with wholemeal wheat flour (atta).



Hola!

Chau!

Peru

"Firme y Feliz por la union" which translates to "Firm and happy for the union" and was adopted after Peru gained independence from Spain to encourage national unity among its diverse regions.

Peru, the third largest country in South America, is the birthplace of the ancient Inca civilisation and home to Machu Picchu. Its diverse geography includes the Andes Mountains, the Amazon rainforest and coastal desserts.

Culture

Peruvian culture is a vibrant fusion of indigenous, Spanish and other global influences like Europe and Asia, evident in its diverse ethnic makeup, lively festivals, traditional arts (like weaving and ceramics), rich musical heritage and world-renowned cuisine.

Values

- Strong sense of family and community
- Respect for elders
- Loyalty
- Patience
- Pride in their heritage
- Courtesy (i.e. asking permission to take photos)
- Traditional gender roles
- Hierarchical society

Religion

The predominant religion in Peru is Catholicism (or Roman Catholic Christianity) with 79% of Peruvians practicing. Other religions include Buddhism, Judaism and Baha'I Faith present due to relocation and immigration over the years.

Language

Peru has three official languages – Spanish, Quechua and Aymara – but the country has over 70 indigenous languages and dialects with more than 40 having official alphabets!

Communication

- Peruvians are reserved and respectful (more conservative, particularly in professional conversations)
- Indirect communication style (meaning non-verbal cues like close proximity or animated body language)
- Personal connections are important, so they put a strong emphasis on relationship-building

Population

35 million

Capital

Lima

Currency

Peruvian Sol

Time zone

UTC -5



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Use formal greetings (handshakes, use titles, greet people individually etc.)
- ✓ Invest in small talk (ask about family, culture, traditions)
- ✓ Be aware of non-verbal cues (tone of voice and facial expressions)
- ✓ Provide negative or constructive feedback in private
- ✓ Respect for hierarchy
- ✓ Even in informal settings, respect and politeness are important
- ✗ Discussing politics or religion
- ✗ Eating with your hands
- ✗ Pointing with index/one finger (use whole hand instead)
- ✗ Being too direct or confrontational
- ✗ Criticising local cuisines or traditions

National dish

Ceviche is fresh fish that's marinated in lime juices and served cold, typically accompanied by red onions, boiled corn and sweet potatoes



Kamusta!

Paalam

Philippines

"Maka-Diyos, Maka-tao, Makakalikasan at Makabansa" (Tagalog for "Godly, Humane, Nature Lover and Nationalistic", translated in English as "For the Love of God, People, Nature and Country")

The Philippines is an archipelago of more than 7,100 islands. It's known as the "Pearl of the Orient" because of the richness of its culture and the beauty of its landscape.

Culture

Filipinos are well known for their resilience. They are extremely friendly and welcoming and love parties, singing, dancing and good food. Filipinos like to feel part of a group and always try to keep social harmony.

Values

- Family
- Education
- Politeness
- Respect for the elderly
- Games of chance
- Loyalty
- Hospitality
- Hiya or saving face (avoiding shame at all costs)
- Status and authority
- Fatalism (believe in fate)
- Flexibility
- Positivity
- Warmth

Religion

Around 90% of Filipino people are Christian, with approximately 80% of the population following the Roman Catholic Church. Islam is the second largest religion in the country.

Language

The two official languages of the Philippines are Tagalog and English. Tagalog is spoken by more than half of the population.

Communication

- Often show emotion openly, but can conceal their feelings well if they wish
- Talkative
- Polite listeners
- Value warm but modest speakers
- Speak calmly, sensitively and in a low voice
- Rarely interrupt others
- Rarely say "no" openly, but ready to give feedback
- Raising the eyebrows or jerking the head up means "yes"
- A jerk of the head downward means "no"
- Use "po" and "opo" when speaking to elders as a sign of respect

DID YOU KNOW?

Filipinos start celebrating Christmas in September! Spanning the "ber" months – September, October, November and December – it's the longest Christmas season in the world.

Population

117.4 million

Capital

Manilla

Currency

Philippine peso

Time zone

UTC +8



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Ask about their family and well-being
- ✓ Managers are expected to give clear instructions on how their teams can progress
- ✓ Shaking hands (briefly and not too firmly)
- ✓ Respect people in more senior roles than you
- ✓ Show modesty, gentleness and courtesy
- ✓ If criticising something, praise other things at the same time
- ✓ Be professional
- ✓ Dress neatly
- ✓ Men usually wear the barong tagalog which is a loose, frilly, white-or cream-coloured shirt – this isn't worn tucked in nor with a jacket or tie
- ✗ Don't accept a gift or service unless you've already refused it twice
- ✗ Don't criticise others in public
- ✗ Avoid heated discussions and confrontation
- ✗ Avoid topics such as corruption, foreign aid, religion and poverty
- ✗ Leaving something unsaid can be a way of showing disapproval

National dish

The unofficial national dish of the Philippines is adobo. Adobo is usually chicken or pork simmered in vinegar, garlic, black peppercorns, soy sauce and bay leaves.



Howzit

Kunjani

South Africa

“Ubuntu: I am because of who we all are”

South Africa is well known for its breathtaking natural landscapes, abundant wildlife, vibrant cultures and many tourist destinations. Yet it also bears the weight of a complex history marked by racial tensions and the dark legacy of apartheid.*

Culture

South Africa is one of the most culturally diverse places in the world. Among its people are the Zulu, Xhosa, Indian South African, Tswana, Ndebele and Afrikaner communities, to name but a few. While culture has been used to divide people in the past, South Africa's rich history and diversity has become a source of pride in recent years.

Values

- Family and community
- Hospitality
- Equality
- Hard work
- Looking after the environment
- Respect for diversity
- Resilience
- Education
- Justice
- Sports, especially rugby, cricket, and soccer
- Music

Religion

South Africa has many religions. Christianity is the most practiced faith, followed by Islam, Hinduism and indigenous African traditional religions. There's also other smaller religious communities, such as Judaism and Buddhism. This religious diversity is protected by the South African Constitution which guarantees freedom of religion.

Language

South Africa has 12 official languages. While English serves official functions, each language plays an important role in keeping cultural identities and voices alive. Languages like Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans and Sotho have unique dialects (meaning a language that only one place uses) and subtle or small differences depending on the region you're in.

Communication

- Warm and friendly
- Value storytelling
- Multilingualism
- Respectful listeners
- Many South Africans are very expressive

Population
60.1 million

Currency
South African
rand

Time zone
UTC +2

Capital

The capital of South Africa is Pretoria. It is one of the country's three capital cities, serving as the administrative capital, while Cape Town is the legislative capital and Bloemfontein is the judicial capital. Pretoria is located in the northern part of Gauteng Province and is a key hub of South African politics and culture.

Manners and taboos

South Africa is home to many cultures, so manners and taboos vary depending on where in South Africa you're from. Here's just some examples:

- ✓ Shaking hands
- ✓ Gift giving and tipping
- ✓ Respect for elders
- ✓ Always show kindness and sympathy
- ✓ Eye contact
- ✗ Don't point with fingers
- ✗ Avoid public displays of affection
- ✗ Avoid discussing politics and race



National dish

South Africa doesn't have one national dish, but bobotie (a spiced minced meat baked with an egg-based topping) is arguably closest as it isn't common in any other country.



*Apartheid was a system of racial segregation (or separation) and discrimination that was enforced by South Africa's government from 1948 until the early 1990s. Under apartheid, people in South Africa were divided into racial groups (such as White, Black, Coloured and Indian) and laws and policies separated races in all aspects of life. This included education, healthcare, jobs and socialising. Significant progress has been made, but traces of segregation still exist as a lingering legacy of apartheid.

สวัสดี
Sawasdi

ลาก่อน
Lā kxn

Thailand

"Nation-Religion-King"

For most of its history, Thailand was known as Siam. Thai means "free", so Thailand is "Land of the Free". The country is also known as the "Land of the Yellow Robes", describing the Buddhist religion embraced by the Thai people. Thailand has over 40,000 temples and more than 30,000 of them are still in use for monks' residence, worship, advice, schools, meditation, gatherings and healing.

Culture

Family almost always comes first in Thailand, with extended family being closer than it typically is in Western countries. There's no word in Thai for cousin – people refer to cousins as their brothers and sisters. Status is also important in Thai culture. Age, family connections, job types, education and income levels all contribute to a person's perceived status in society.

Values

- Family
- Work should be fun
- Saving face (avoiding humiliation)
- Pragmatism (dealing with problems in a practical and sensible way)
- Moderation
- Simplicity
- Freedom
- Dignity and honour
- Respect for age and seniority
- Fewer, deep friendships
- Buddhist fatalism, karma (meaning your future is based on your past actions – good intentions and actions lead to good karma)

Religion

Buddhism is the largest religion in Thailand, practiced by over 93% of the population. Islam is the second religion, and there are a small number of Christians and other faith groups.

Language

The national language is Thai, but Thailand is home to 71 languages with the majority of people speaking languages of the Southwestern Tai family.

Communication

- Respect people who keep cool
- Show compassion and kindness
- Patient and dutiful listeners
- Never interrupt a speaker
- Avoid being blunt
- Won't give feedback unless it's asked for
- The truth isn't a good thing if it's hurtful
- Rarely show emotions or share personal problems

Population

71.8 million

Capital

Bangkok

Currency

Bhat

Time zone

UTC +7



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Hierarchy is a good thing
- ✓ The best leaders empathise with their teams
- ✓ Success depends more on luck than good timing
- ✓ Talking about issues in teams is welcome, but final decisions should be made by managers and leaders
- ✓ You should always dress neatly
- ✓ Changes should be introduced gradually and with full explanation
- ✓ Promotions should be brought up by managers
- ✓ No clear separation between life and work
- ✗ Thais are friendly and often stand close, but are usually non-tactile (meaning you don't touch)
- ✗ Buddhism discourages competition, so Thais are often reluctant to initiate (or cause) change
- ✗ Always avoid direct confrontations or getting heated to avoid anyone losing face
- ✗ Superiors shouldn't be challenged
- ✗ Try not to be too materialistic
- ✗ Don't overlook or ignore people in your presence
- ✗ Avoid being pompous, meaning you're too proud, grand and bragging – the opposite of being modest or humble

National dish

The national dish of Thailand is pad thai (a stir-fried rice noodle dish).



Hello!

Goodbye!

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom doesn't have an official motto, but the motto of the royal family is "Dieu et mon droit," meaning "God and my right"

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, or the UK, is a country in Northwestern Europe. It's made up of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and is known for its pubs, sports, literature, music, royal family and rain!

Culture

While many Britons do love a cup of tea, the British stereotype you often see in films (wearing tweed and bowler hats, reading Shakespeare at Eton or Oxford and having tea with the vicar) is an upper-class idea of a former time. In fact, there are many regional differences in the UK. While the Southern English often prefer reason, privacy and dry humour, people north of Birmingham tend to show more openness and warmth and have less respect for class status.

Values

- Humour
- Common sense
- Individual liberty or freedom
- Democracy
- Originality
- Education/academics
- Resilience
- Compromise
- Respect
- Tolerance
- Sports, especially football, cricket, tennis and rugby

Religion

The UK's official religion is Christianity, followed by Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism. However, over half of British people don't belong to a religion – some feel the UK shouldn't have an official religion, and the majority believe religion should no longer have a place in British law and politics.

Language

English is spoken across the UK, but the country has almost 40 different dialects (or varieties of the language). You'll also find Welsh in Wales, Gaelic and Scots in Scotland and Irish in Northern Ireland. With people moving to the UK from around the world, many other languages are spoken, including Polish, Romanian, Punjabi, Urdu and Spanish.

Communication

- Value reasonable and calm speakers
- Often use humour
- Like polite listeners and speakers
- Can be vague so disagreeing isn't always obvious. (For example, "that's a great point, but...")

Population
67.8 million

Capital
London

Currency
Pound sterling

Time zone
UTC +0
UTC +1 during British Summer Time



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Most meetings begin with a few minutes of small talk
- ✓ Teams like to be consulted or included in decision making
- ✓ Managers usually want to be seen as part of the team but keep a slight power distance
- ✓ It's good to laugh at yourself
- ✓ Admire each other's successes
- ✓ Put things in writing – the English like confirmation of discussions and agreements, minutes of meetings and thank-you notes
- ✓ Give cards on birthdays and Christmas
- ✗ Avoid being sentimental, emotional or openly critical in public
- ✗ Don't name-drop or boast about who you know
- ✗ Try not to talk too much or too little
- ✗ Avoid pushing logic too much – Brits often value intuition or gut instinct
- ✗ Don't put forward too many strong opinions
- ✗ Avoid being too serious or always taking things literally – the English like to pull your leg!

National dish

The full English breakfast is widely considered the UK's national dish. It usually includes bacon, sausage, fried egg, mushrooms, baked beans, toast, hash browns and grilled tomatoes.



Mhoro

Sara mushe

Zimbabwe

"Unity, Freedom, Work"

Zimbabwe is a country in Southern Africa. It's bordered by South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique. The country became independent from the United Kingdom on 18 April 1980.

Culture

In Zimbabwe, family often describes a wide network of people. For example, there's no such thing as a cousin in Zimbabwean culture – cousins are known as brothers and sisters. Extended family relationships are very close and people tend to put the needs of the group or the family before their own.

Values

- Family
- Respect for age and authority
- Politeness
- Warmth
- Hospitality
- Respect
- Many value their belonging to a tribe
- Obedience
- Education
- Music and dance

Religion

Most Zimbabweans are Christian, with the majority following Protestantism. A small population are Muslim and 10% of people in Zimbabwe indicate no religion.

Language

English, Shona and Ndebele are the most widely spoken languages in Zimbabwe. Yet Zimbabwe has 16 official languages: Chewa, Chibarwe, English, Kalanga, Koi-san, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, Sign Language, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa.

Communication

- Rarely openly criticise others
- Avoid being blunt and frank
- Usually polite and agreeable listeners
- Respectful of people who are more senior or older
- More likely to be open about how they feel with people of the same age

Population

16.6 million

Capital

Harare

Currency

Zimbabwe dollar (ZWL), but US dollars are widely accepted

Time zone

UTC +2



Manners and taboos

- ✓ Give others personal space (an arm's length is good)
- ✓ Gift giving
- ✓ Respect those who are older or more senior than you
- ✓ Shaking hands (firmly)
- ✓ Greet anyone older than you first
- ✓ To show respect, Zimbabweans sometimes kneel or keep their head lower than the other person's
- ✓ Family and friends may hug and pat each other on the back
- ✓ Dress neatly and smartly
- ✗ Avoid eye contact or staring if someone is older or more senior – eye contact is common during conversations, but people often avoid eye contact to show respect
- ✗ Don't use a person's first name unless they invite you to do so (start with their title and surname)
- ✗ Never refuse a gift
- ✗ Avoid confrontation
- ✗ Slouching with your hands in your pockets

National dish

The national dish of Zimbabwe is sadza (a thick porridge made from cornmeal and water).



Dhan'yavāda
धन्यवाद

Salamat

Terima kasih

kyaayjuutainparsai
ကျေးဇူးတင်ပါသည်

Ndatenda

Thank you

Dhan'yavāda
धन्यवाद

Ķhxbkhun
ขอบคุณ

Dankie

Terima kasih

شکریہ

Want to find out more about working across cultures?

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