



Korea - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture

By James Hoare

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Apart from the headline-making politics, not much is known in the West about the Korean people and their ancient culture. Yet those who visit Korea, whether North or South, find a land of great interest. The Koreans, when not constrained by politics or other considerations, are friendly and sociable, and the peninsula has areas of outstanding natural beauty. The South's cities, if not always beautiful, are vibrant and alive. The North, while very different, is complex and fascinating. The standoff between the two countries of the Korean Peninsula is a legacy of the Cold War and a potential flashpoint for future conflict. Despite a brief thaw in relations a few years ago, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the north, a secretive single-party socialist state with a centralized industrial economy, conducted nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009. The Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south meanwhile, a free market democracy, has become a rising economic power, and in 2010 became the first former aid recipient to join the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Much has changed since the first edition of *Culture Smart! Korea* was published in 2005: the North's defiant development of its nuclear program, the end of the South's "Sunshine" or engagement policy in 2008, the opening up to US tourists by the North in 2010, and the death of its leader Kim Jong Il in 2011 and the succession of his youngest son, Kim Jong Un. This new, updated edition of *Culture Smart! Korea* looks at the changing social and economic situation and provides real insights into thinking and behavior in both countries. It indicates the pitfalls to avoid, and introduces you to some of the many delights of the Korean peninsula.

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Editorial Review

Review

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,

About the Author

James Hoare spent over thirty years in the British Diplomatic Service, with postings to Seoul and Beijing. His last job was Chargé D’Affaires in Pyongyang, North Korea, where he established the British Embassy. Since retirement, he has become a regular radio and television commentator on Korea, and he also teaches at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. He has written numerous books and articles about East Asia, including *Embassies in the East: The Story of the British and Their Embassies in China, Japan and Korea from 1859 to the Present* (1999), and, with his wife, Susan Pares, *North Korea in the 21st Century: An Interpretative Guide* (2005).

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