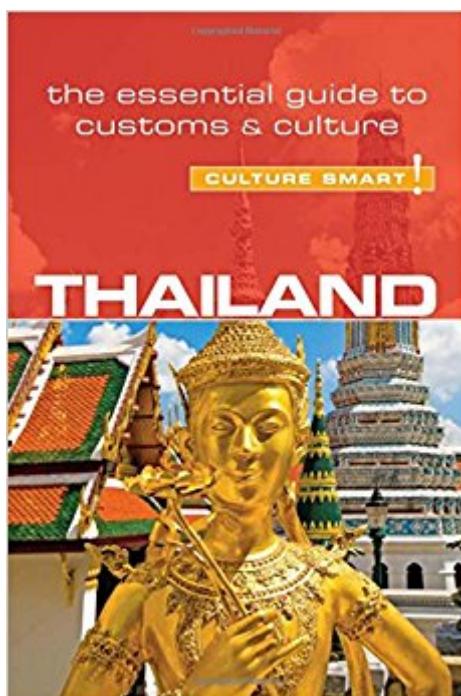


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# Thailand - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



## Synopsis

For many outsiders Thailand still conjures up images of the East at its most mysterious and enchanting — a view largely formed by Hollywood films like *The King and I*. Never conquered by foreigners, this proud and ancient land has been shaped by Buddhism, the monarchy, and the military. Today it is a representative democracy with a populist female prime minister, and is ranked among the tiger economies of Southeast Asia. It is a manufacturing powerhouse, the world's largest rice exporter, and a tourist paradise that welcomes 22 million visitors a year to its beach resorts and its vibrant capital, Bangkok. Yet despite the veneer of Western modernity, the country and its people remain an enigma for many visitors, smiling and inscrutable. It conceals a unique system of personal values and attitudes, developed over centuries. You may find that Thais react to you in surprising and unexpected ways, coming as they do from a culture based on respect, status, self-control, non-confrontation, and harmony. They are also naturally generous and have a great love of fun. Thais put a great deal of effort into social skills in order to maintain social harmony, and one of their most potent weapons is the smile that puts people at ease and helps to defuse a difficult situation. This new, updated edition of *Culture Smart! Thailand* describes how the Thai people view the world and themselves. It examines the impact of religious beliefs and history on their lives, as well as the continuing importance of the monarchy. It looks at recent social and political developments, including the current tensions in the south. Above all, it helps visitors to become more culturally aware and so better able to interact successfully with the locals.

Thailand's charm lies in being different, and visitors who make an effort to understand the differences will find their stay in "The Land of Smiles" a richly rewarding experience.

## 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,

Roger Jones is a writer and editor specializing in careers, living and working abroad, and music. A graduate in modern languages from King's College, London University, he has worked abroad in Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and in refugee welfare and education in the UK. He has written over fifteen handbooks including Culture Smart! Western Europe and Culture Smart! Libya, and two novels. He also writes and edits music reviews for an international classical music Web site, is a longstanding member of the Society of Authors, and plays an active role in civic amenity groups. He lives in Gloucestershire, UK.

Quick Summary: Great resource if you're planning an in-depth stay in Thailand for a longer period, but not necessary for a short tourist visit. I read Culture Smart!-Thailand before a three-month stay, during which I would be working in both rural and urban areas. The material in the book helped me feel more comfortable and confident before going, but once I was there I hardly touched the book. In urban areas especially, Thai services and people are very accommodating to western culture, and English is commonly used. As a tourist, you can get by with a very limited amount of prior knowledge of Thai culture and customs (although I am not encouraging this), and you can find enough tips about customs, food, and transportation using quick online searches. For those looking to stay long-term, form relationships with the people, or work in the country, I would highly recommend this book. Nothing can fully prepare you for what you'll experience in a different culture, but reading through this book certainly helped me feel prepared. In particular, I found the sections on the history and politics, the royal family, and the values and attitudes of the people to be useful when I was in the country. Also, the chapter on communication, paired with Learn Thai language learning app on my phone, helped me learn several key phrases. Speaking even just a little Thai seemed to have positive effects with Thai residents. The business chapter seems useful for a corporate setting, but I did not find it applicable to my work. Overall, I found that the customs and advice given in this book were accurate, although maybe a little over-exaggerated in regards to their

strictness among Thai people and the expectations placed on visitors. Also, the book was published before the King passed away in 2016, so an update is needed. Culture Smart!-Thailand isn't perfect, but I would recommend it to anyone looking to stay long-term or be a more responsible tourist.

Mostly rambling, somewhat informative. Author exudes pro-Thai bias / loyalty. Not always accurate, in my experience spending 10 days in Thailand, but not too far off and definitely worth a read if you care at all about the history.

A brief, but helpful introduction to Thailand... history, culture, geography, food, language...

Everything is covered briefly in a way that whets your curiosity and prepares you for a visit.

Very good and comprehensive guide if you're a traveler who would like to be culturally aware and culturally sensitive. I'm glad that I ordered it and read it in a day. Some points lead the reader to have additional questions.

I am heading to Thailand and this is a wonderful book to learn about where to go and their customs. So valuable and so happy to have it before I go. Full of everything you need to know...a must to take with you!

Has lots of useful info and is a good size to travel with.

as expected

Small enough to carry and thorough. Just what I wanted.

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