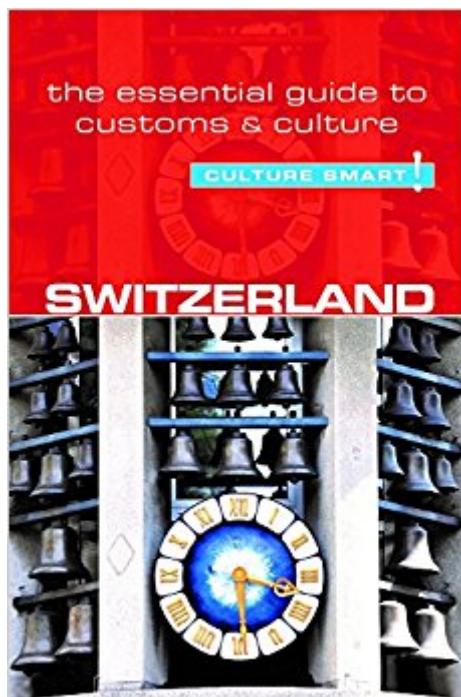


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# Switzerland - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide To Customs & Culture



## Synopsis

There is far more to Switzerland than beautiful scenery, chocolate, watches, faceless bankers, and spotless cities. The real Switzerland is full of surprises and anything but bland. This small, rugged, landlocked country at the heart of Europe has been a confederation since the first three cantons came together in a defensive alliance in 1291. Four national languages are spoken within its borders. Its present twenty-six cantons are largely autonomous and retain their individual characters. In this grassroots democracy real power lies with the people, who exercise it directly through frequent referendums. "Swissness" is, above all, a spirit of independence and of communal involvement. Although it is a model of peace and multicultural cooperation, with one of the highest standards of living in Europe, Switzerland's prosperity has been hard-won. Historically neutral, it maintains a semi-detached relationship within the European Union. In 2014, a national referendum supported quotas on EU migrants. Despite the several hundred thousand EU nationals living and working within its borders, and almost half a million Swiss working in the EU, this small, resource-poor country appears determined to retain its independence. *Culture Smart! Switzerland* provides an historical perspective, explores Swiss values and attitudes, and looks at the cultural continuity of festivals and traditions. It helps you navigate the workplace, the neighborhood, and the social scene. It offers crucial insights into Swiss business culture, and more generally on differences in communication style. Swiss people are not always easy to get to know. Proud, industrious, fair-minded, and creative, they respect the individual, which means that while they appreciate clear thinking and direct talking, they avoid confrontation. They will never intrude, yet will willingly help out if asked. Make the effort, and people will respond. Warmth, decency, intelligence, and wit are among the many hidden riches of this fascinating society.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Culture Smart! has come to the rescue of hapless travelers." à "Sunday Times Travel" "The perfect introduction to the weird, wonderful and downright odd quirks and customs of various countries." à "Global Travel" "Full of fascinating, as well as common sense, tips to help you avoid embarrassing faux pas." à "Observer" "As useful as they are entertaining." à "Easyjet Magazine" "Offer glimpses into the psyche of a faraway world." à "New York Times".

Kendall Hunter is a Canadian freelance journalist, author, photographer, and entrepreneur. After graduating in political science from the University of Calgary she worked and lived in South Africa, England, Wales, and Switzerland. Her first book, *Black Taxi: Shooting South Africa*, describes her experience as a news photographer in Johannesburg during that country's first democratic elections. She is the founder of Culture Dock, a new crowd-sourced global travel app that hinges on cultures of the world. She now lives in Toronto.

This book truly captures the Swiss essence in a respectful and appreciative way. My late stepfather was Swiss (my mom and I are Latin American, he moved to our country when they got married) and these pages brought to life so many memories! He trying to fit in a society that doesn't plan long term and time is 'relative', our emotional way to socialize, etc. I remember my mom once asking him by the tenth time in a very flirty way (as customary here) 'Honey, do you love me?', and him looking at her with an expression of confusion all over his face, answering 'Darling, I already told you I love you this morning. I haven't changed my mind.' In the end, we learned a lot from him as well as he from us. Books like these, that can actually help you understand and appreciate a different culture faster, are really a treasure. Thanks to the author for this great work. Totally recommended.

Superbly written, great insights into the Swiss culture. Details not found in any other travel guide such as why the Swiss never drive with the car windows down. Fascinating reading.

I bought this book as a gift for a graduate student who was going to work in Switzerland for two years. However, I did look through it before giving it away, and I had done quite a bit of research on

line before picking this particular item. The book seemed to me a very practical guide for someone taking up residence in Switzerland, and was not so much meant for the casual 2-week vacationer. The sections on cultural differences between the Swiss and other people were particularly interesting, and would head off some awkward moments for a new immigrant. The parts about rules for apartment living sound quite strict for someone from America, but, again, would prevent misunderstandings between Swiss and foreign tenants. There are also the more usual guidebook sections on recreation, such as hiking, skiing, eating in restaurants, etc. The student who received the book proclaimed it "great", and I think it will come in handy in the months ahead.

More of a series of extended tips for long term travelers. The ideas were however very helpful in understanding how to engage the Swiss on their terms and how to begin to navigate their milieu. An understanding of the French, German, and Italian/Mediterranean cultures are definitely helpful, since they all feed into the Swiss mix, but these cultures do not show how the Swiss are unique to any of them. A good book for those spending six months or longer in this beautiful country.

I loved this little book!!!!!! Very informative, insightful, and comical at times, concerning the way of life, and the people who inhabit such a diverse little country!!!! Makes me truly want to visit it someday if I can!!! I will be purchasing more of these little gems, about different countries in the near future!! Arlette Clements

A quick read for anyone who wants a good understanding of the Swiss culture and people. Because of Switzerland's different regions and languages, the author does an excellent job of depicting how this diversity works.

Just what I wanted to prepare for an upcoming trip to Switzerland.

This whole series is wonderful. Even if you have been to these countries.....the insight is terrific, just in case you want to talk about where you have been or plan on returning.

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