

### Peru - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Culture & Customs

John Forrest



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Peru is associated with ancient civilizations, awe-inspiring Inca cities, ruthless *conquistadores*, spectacular Andean scenery, astonishing biodiversity, and colorful woven textiles. All true—but visitors will find a great deal more to Peru than this.

The two distinctive cultures that first encountered each other five hundred years ago have, progressively, integrated. This process of mixing, however, raises questions about Peruvian identity. Peruvian society is divided between the wealthy, Westernized, coastal urban populations and the poorer, traditional, indigenous peoples, many of whom have migrated from the Andes to the cities.

Since the flight of the discredited President Fujimori in 2000 there has been a surge of economic growth and development, and continuing social inequality. Peruvians are increasingly embracing consumerism, but for their happiness they still depend on each other, and the family is paramount.

This new, updated edition of *Culture Smart! Peru* charts the rapid changes taking place in the country, including the election in 2011 of the left-leaning President Ollanta Humala, the third democratically elected president in a row. It describes how history and geography have shaped contemporary Peruvian values and attitudes. It provides insights into religious and public life, and reveals what people are like at home, in business, and in their social lives. Most Peruvians are laid-back and surprisingly calm and carefree, given the many uncertainties they face. They are outgoing and sociable. Get to know them, and they will respond with warmth and generosity.

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