

MIDDLE EASTERN CULTURAL TIPS

- TEA IS EVERYTHING**
- The tea culture is huge. If you spend a lot of time at a store or talking to a local person on the street, they will invite you to sit down for a cup of tea.
 - They are excited to share their culture with anyone outside of their culture.
 - There is no such thing as just one cup of tea. They can drink 5-10 cups of tea in one gathering. And they will also make you drink just as much!
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- FOOD CULTURE**
- When they invite you into their home, respect and embrace the different cultural traditions. In some houses, it is customary to wash your feet. You may sit on the floor to eat.
 - There are no personal plates. Food will be kept at the center of the table and everyone will eat from the same pot. Don't be shy and dig in. The more you eat the happier they will be.
 - They will never ask you to bring anything. They will insist you do not bring anything. But they always appreciate when you bring a small snack or gift to the home.
 - They are not very open to trying foreign foods. But you can always offer to cook. Avoid serving dishes with pork, or gelatin as this is "haram".
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- GENEROSITY IN HOSPITALITY**
- In many circumstances, they will invite you to spend the night at their home. They prefer you staying in their house rather than staying in a hotel.
 - For young people and foreigners, they will not allow you to spend your own money for food, drinks or accommodation. They consider you as the guest of their country. All newcomers and foreigners are considered their guests and are treated as such.
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- GROUP & FAMILY ORIENTATION**
- Young people live with their families until and even after marriage.
 - Most decisions are made as a family or by the head of the household.
 - Even if a young person disagrees with their family's opinion, they will not publicly express their thoughts.
 - In order to initiate deeper conversations, it is better to find one-on-one opportunities even in the group setting. In these cases, the individual will be willing to share their differing opinions from the group and open up about more personal matters.