



AFGHAN CULTURAL TIPS

- HOSPITALITY**
- Afghans are wonderful hosts and value hospitality. They take great pride in taking care of their guests and will go above and beyond to make sure you are comfortable while in their home! Honoring a guest is of highest priority
 - Invite them to your home and visit them in their home- this is an important part of friendship
 - Generosity is valued in their culture- they will quickly offer you the shoes off their feet, the bracelet they are wearing, or the last of their food. Be mindful of what they are offering and be careful not to take advantage of this generosity!
 - It is polite to take a small gift when visiting an Afghan home- for example cookies or sweets they can share with other guests who may visit later.
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- FOOD AND DRINK**
- Avoid serving pork products or gelatin- Afghanistan is an Islamic country and pork is considered 'haram', forbidden. Some Muslims try to avoid even using utensils or dishes that have touched pork
 - Alcohol is also considered 'haram' and should be avoided
 - Tea and snacks are essential parts of socializing- it is always good to offer and/or accept snacks such as cookies, fruit, nuts, juice and of course, tea!
 - They may initially decline when offered snacks or drinks- offer more than once
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- CLOTHING**
- Dress modestly when visiting their home- avoid tight or revealing clothing or showing too much skin, especially around the opposite gender.
 - It is customary to take off your shoes when entering Afghan homes.
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- SOCIAL INTERACTION**
- There are strict boundaries between men and women in Afghan society. Placing your right hand on your heart and bowing your head slightly is a sign of respect when greeting someone of the opposite gender- avoid initiating physical contact
 - Physical affection between men and women is uncommon in public, however Afghans are often very affectionate with friends of the same gender.
 - Avoid strict time frames- relationships are prioritized above schedules.
 - In Afghan culture there is little separation between public life and spiritual life- people are often open to discussing religion, beliefs and spirituality as these are woven throughout daily life.
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- SOME EXTRA TIPS**
- In Afghanistan and other Muslim societies, dogs are considered unclean. Your guests may be uncomfortable around or afraid of dogs.
 - They will likely be excited to share their culture with you! Westerners often hear only negative things about Afghanistan - be open-minded as you listen.
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