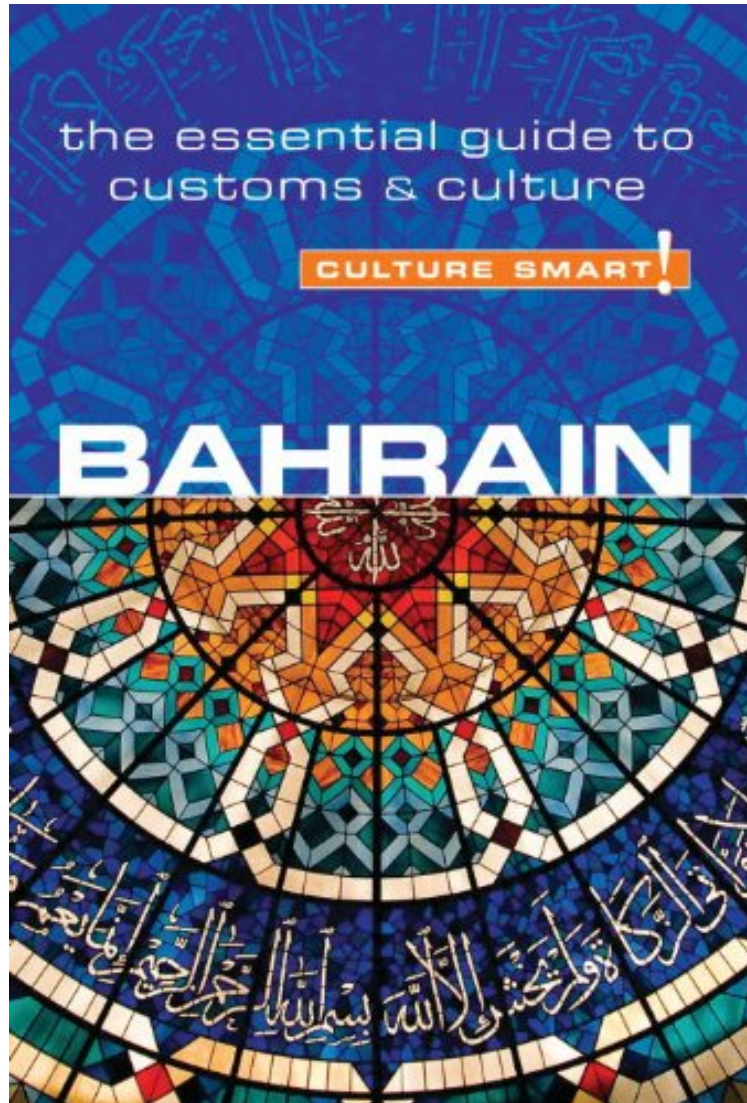


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Bahrain - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture

Reena Abraham

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Reena Abraham : Bahrain - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bahrain - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture:

This small island country an archipelago of thirty-three islands in the Persian Gulf, many of them connected by attractive bridges is a remarkable success story. Because of its strategic location, down the ages it has come under the

rule and influence of outside powers Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Arabs, Portuguese, and British and traders from India and further afield stopped there on their way to Mesopotamia. Today Bahrain is the fastest-growing, most open economy in the Arab world, and a banking and financial services hub for the region. A close ally of the United States, it is home to the US Navys Fifth Fleet. Bahrainis have always had a cosmopolitan outlook. Unlike that of other countries in the region, their prosperity is not solely a reflection of their oil wealth, but owes much to the existence of an indigenous middle class. As a result they are generally more liberal than their closest neighbors. Most of the population are Shia, but the ruler is Sunni. While Islam is the main religion, churches, Hindu temples, Sikh gurdwaras, and a Jewish synagogue can be found alongside mosques. The country is home to several communities that have faced persecution elsewhere, and there is a large population of expatriates. Bahrainis are proud of their Arab identity and of the modernity of their country, but they are not narrowly arrogant. More sociable and fun-loving than their GCC neighbors, they are also more educated and literate, which makes it particularly easy to meet and do business with them. Under the enlightened leadership of its ruler, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Bahrain is now a constitutional monarchy with an elected parliament. It is too early to say whether this political liberalization has strengthened or undermined its traditional tolerance and pluralism, but a remarkable facet of the new openness is Bahrain's status as the most prolific book publisher in the Arab world. Bahrainis are held in high regard for their sophistication and cultural history. Culture Smart! Bahrain introduces you to the modern worldly heirs of an ancient culture and civilization who are successfully managing change. It takes you beyond the date palms, pearl fishers, and skyscrapers of the tourist brochures, through the multifaceted layers of present-day Bahraini society, to meet the warm, courteous, outgoing Bahraini people themselves.

About the Author Reena Abraham is an author, writer, and editor based in the United Arab Emirates. Born and educated in India, where she gained a Masters degree in English Literature, she has lived for more than two decades in the GCC states with her family, developing a great rapport, knowledge of, and empathy with the people of the region. Her experience of life in different parts of Asia and her extensive travels all over the world give her writing and outlook an international perspective. Reena has written on a wide variety of subjects for travel companies, corporate organizations, and international magazines. She is also Partner and Editorial Director of Glow Publishing and runs a freelance services agency, Unlimited Words, offering professional creative writing services. Her published books include *Footprints in Time: The Story of Indians in Bahrain*; *The Journey Begins: The Story of Democracy in Bahrain*; *Lost in Translation*; *First Light: The Photography of GMB Akash*; and *Equine Treasures*.