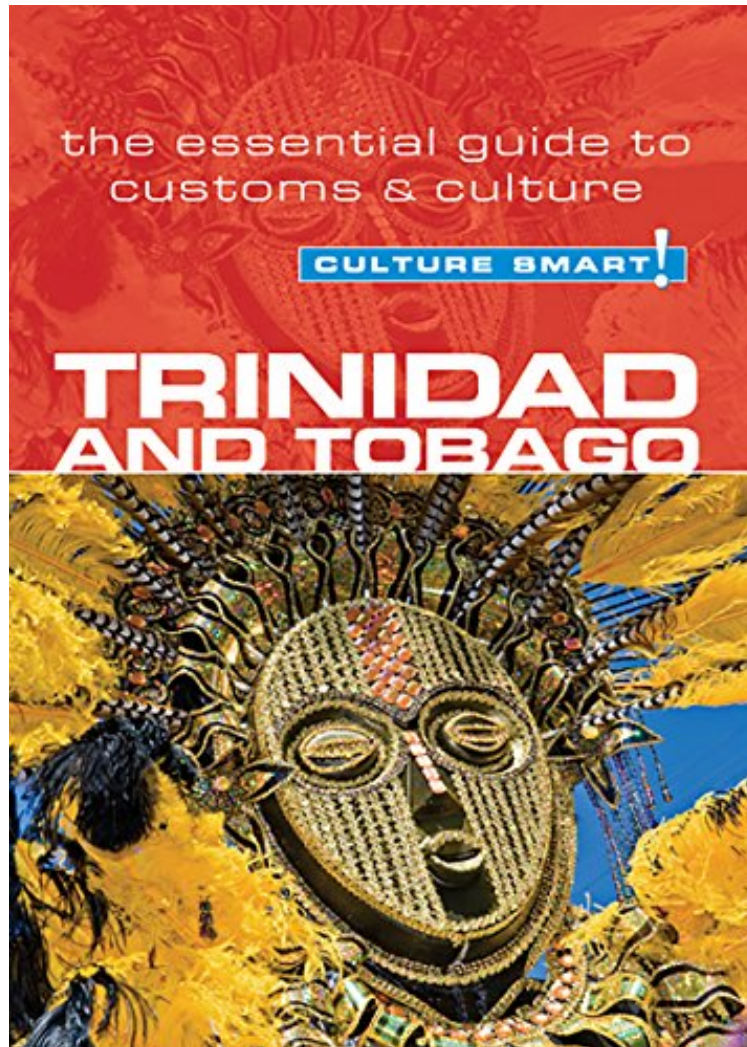


Trinidad Tobago - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture

Tim Ewbank

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The twin Caribbean islands of Trinidad and Tobago could hardly be more different. Trinidad is vibrant, cosmopolitan, culturally diverse, and multiethnic, with a population descended from East Indian, African, Spanish, French, Dutch, American, Chinese, Syrian, and English forebears. This potent mix finds full expression in unbridled revelry each February with the celebration of Carnivalmdash;a dazzling, open-to-all-comers, mass participation street extravaganza of steel bands, calypso, dance, and the magnificent costumed bands "playing mas" (short for masquerade). Tobago, by contrast, is much quieter, predominantly rural, and a tranquil tropical idyll.nbsp; Both islands have a history of slavery and indentured labor that, even today, engenders a determination in the people to live life as they choose rather than to order. "Trinis" are by nature friendly, outgoing, and hospitable. They are slow to anger and quick to walk away from confrontation. They have an infectious joie de vivre and a laid-back attitude to timemdash;which foreigners can sometimes find frustrating. Culture Smart! Trinidad and Tobago explores the codes and paradoxes of Trinbagonian life, describing the many and varied traditions, customs, and cultures of its diverse society. It outlines the contrasting histories of the two islands, and opens a window into people's private lives, showing how they interact socially, and their attitudes to people who are "from foreign." It offers practical advice from business tips to how to play mas at Carnival. It aims to make that first trip to the two islands as rewarding as possible by taking you beyond the stereotypes to the real people

Culture Smart! has come to the rescue of hapless travellers, Sunday Times Travel - ...the perfect introduction to the weird, wonderful and downright odd quirks and customs of various countries, Global Travel - ...full of fascinating, as well as common sense, tips to help you avoid embarrassing faux pas, Observer - ...as useful as they are entertaining, Easy Jet Magazine - ...offer glimpses into the psyche of a faraway world, New York Times.About the AuthorTim Ewbank was born in Kent, England. He started his career in journalism after graduating from Aberdeen University, where he gained a distinction in English. He has worked for several English national newspapers, including the Daily Mail, covering assignments all over the world. Tim is the author of sixteen books, including best-selling biographies of footballer David Beckham, cricketer Andrew Flintoff, and singer Rod Stewart. As a travel writer he has worked in TV and radio, and contributed articles to a wide range of international newspapers and magazines. For the past sixteen years he has been a regular visitor to Trinidad and Tobago, where his partner has a home in Port of Spain.