



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

By Paul Norbury

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**Japan - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture** By Paul Norbury

Japan is at a crossroads. The postwar economic miracle that brought it unprecedented development and prosperity is over. Since the publication of the first Culture Smart! guide, it has been overtaken by China as the world's second-largest economy. The balance of power in Asia has shifted and new players are entering the field. Loss of influence abroad, economic pressure at home, and the problems posed by a rapidly aging population present a real challenge to Japan's orderly and harmonious way of life, and to the very sense the Japanese have of themselves as a nation "apart." Traditional Japanese culture—based on a consensus-driven philosophy and underpinned by many protocols—is threatened by job insecurity, a growing class divide, and disillusionment with political leaders. But all is not lost. Japan is still a major economic power and cultural trendsetter, and the Japanese have a genius for innovation. The younger generation is open to change, women have a new confidence, and the country's technical and scientific research capability is as good as it gets. There is a growing ecological awareness that may well translate into new forms of eco-friendly industries. No one can predict how Japan will rise to the challenge, or what effect the changes will have on how people live, think, and behave. Paul Norbury's revised and updated edition of *Culture Smart! Japan* will guide you through a shifting cultural maze, and help you make your visit to this important, dynamic, and creative society a rich and mutually rewarding experience.

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