

Keeping Up With The Germans: A Comprehensive Guide to German Culture and Etiquette



Keeping Up With the Germans: A History of Anglo-German Encounters by Philip Oltermann

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Germany is a land of rich culture and history, and its people are known for their efficiency, punctuality, and love of order. If you're planning a trip to Germany, it's important to be aware of the local customs and etiquette to avoid any misunderstandings or 失礼. In this comprehensive guide, we'll cover everything you need to know about German culture, from greetings and s to dining and gift-giving.

Greetings and s

When meeting someone for the first time in Germany, it's customary to shake hands and make eye contact. It's also important to address people by their formal title and last name, especially in business settings. For

example, you would address a doctor as "Dr. Müller" or a professor as "Professor Schmidt".

When introducing yourself, it's common to state your full name, profession, and company affiliation. For example, you might say, "My name is John Smith, I'm a software engineer, and I work for Google." It's also considered polite to offer a compliment, such as, "It's a pleasure to meet you" or "I've heard great things about your work."

Dining Etiquette

Dining in Germany is a social occasion, and it's important to follow proper etiquette. When you're invited to someone's home for dinner, it's customary to bring a small gift, such as a bottle of wine or a box of chocolates. It's also important to arrive on time, as punctuality is highly valued in Germany.

At the table, it's considered polite to wait until everyone has been served before starting to eat. It's also important to keep your elbows off the table and to use your silverware correctly. When you're finished eating, it's customary to place your silverware together on your plate in a parallel position. This signals to the host that you're done.

Gift-Giving Etiquette

Gift-giving is a common practice in Germany, and it's important to choose a gift that is thoughtful and appropriate. For example, if you're invited to someone's home for dinner, a bottle of wine or a box of chocolates is always a welcome gift. It's also important to wrap your gift nicely and to include a handwritten note.

When giving a gift to a business associate, it's important to choose a gift that is both professional and personal. For example, a nice pen or a leather-bound notebook would be a good choice. It's also important to avoid giving gifts that are too personal or expensive.

Other Cultural Customs

In addition to the customs and etiquette mentioned above, there are a few other things to keep in mind when interacting with Germans. For example, it's important to be aware of the following:

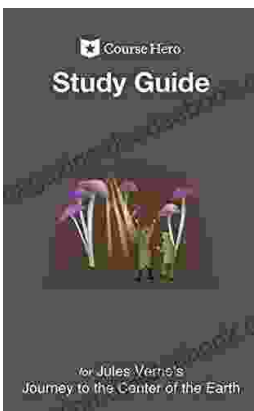
- **Germans are very direct and to the point.** This can sometimes come across as rude, but it's simply a reflection of their culture. It's important to be prepared for this and to not take it personally.
- **Germans are very private people.** They don't like to share personal information with strangers, and they may be uncomfortable if you ask them personal questions.
- **Germans are very punctual.** It's important to be on time for appointments and meetings, and to not keep people waiting.
- **Germans are very organized.** They like to have everything in its place, and they may be frustrated if things are disorganized or chaotic.

By following these tips, you can avoid any misunderstandings or失礼 when interacting with Germans. With a little bit of preparation, you'll be able to enjoy your trip to Germany and experience the rich culture and traditions of this fascinating country.

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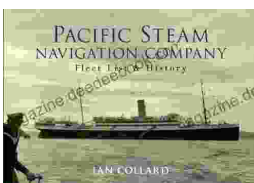


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