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Culture

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

The Center for Advance Research on Language Acquisition goes a step further, defining culture as shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialization. Thus, it can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group.



Culture

"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things," Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London, told Live Science.

The word "culture" derives from a French term, which in turn derives from the Latin "colere," which means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation and nurture. "It shares its etymology with a number of other words related to actively fostering growth," De Rossi said.

food

Food, substance consisting essentially of protein, carbohydrate, fat, and other nutrients used in the body of an organism to sustain growth and vital processes and to furnish energy. The absorption and utilization of food by the body is fundamental to nutrition and is facilitated by digestion. Plants, which convert solar energy to food by photosynthesis, are the primary food source. Animals that feed on plants often serve as sources of food for other animals. To learn more about the sequence of transfers of matter and energy in the form of food from organism to organism, see food chain.





Hunting and gathering, horticulture, pastoralism, and the development of agriculture are the primary means by which humans have adapted to their environments to feed themselves. Food has long served as a carrier of culture in human societies and has been a driving force for globalization. This was especially the case during the early phases of European trade and colonial expansion, when foods such as the hot red pepper, corn (maize), and sweet potatoes spread throughout Europe to Africa and Asia.

Food is treated in a number of articles. For a description of the processes of absorption and utilization of food, see nutrition; nutrition, human; digestion; and digestive system, human. For information on the methods used to prepare raw foods for cooking, consumption, or storage, see food preservation.

Kazakhs, probably more than any other Central Asian people, show the impact of nearly two centuries of close contact with Russians. Unlike Central Asians to the south of them, Kazakhs look more to Russia than to Islamic countries for inspiration in the post-Soviet period.



At the same time, Kazakh scholars and other intellectuals actively work to reclaim Kazakh traditions and distinctive ways of life, including the literary and spoken language of a people whose experience emphasized Russian culture, literature, language, and ways of thinking.

Urban Kazakhs of both sexes tend to wear modern clothing, but the women of remote villages continue to wear traditional dresses and head scarves. Kazakh-made carpets are a common sight, and less-Russified Kazakhs often decorate their homes with qoshmas, brightcoloured felt rugs.

Oral epics formed the main literary genre among the largely illiterate Kazakhs until the 19th century. In the 18th century, as a series of Russian outposts arose along the border of Kazakhstan's plains on the north, Kazakhs added other written, poetic forms to their literature.

Poetry remained the primary genre until prose stories, short novels, and drama were introduced in the early 20th century, before the end of the tsarist era in 1917.

Abay Ibrahim Kūnanbay-ulï (Kunanbayev) in the late 19th century laid the basis with his verse for the development of the modern Kazakh literary language and its poetry. (Aqmet) Baytūrsyn-ulï, editor of the influential newspaper Qazaq, led the advance of modern Kazakh writing in the early 20th century.

Baytūrsyn-ulï, along with Aliqan Nūrmuhambet Bokeyqan-ulï, Mir Jaqib Duwlat-ulï, and, later, Maghjan Jumabay-ulï, represented the cream of Kazakh modernism in literature, publishing, and cultural politics in the reformist decades before Sovietization set in after 1920.

All these figures disappeared into Soviet prisons and never returned, as a result of Joseph Stalin's purges, which destroyed much of the Kazakh intelligentsia. An early Soviet Kazakh writer, Mukhtar Auez-ulï, won recognition for the long novel Abay, based on the life and poetry of Kūnanbay-ulï, and for his plays, including Änglik-Kebek.



Kazakhstan has a number of modern theatres and offers Uighur, Korean, and Russian musicals, opera, ballet, and puppet performances. Cinemas and art schools, dance ensembles, and music groups are active, as are radio and television broadcasting, the last being especially important in communications with distant farms and villages.

Reception from outside Kazakhstan, especially from broadcasting stations in nearby Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and by way of relays from Moscow, enables listeners and viewers to follow programs from many sources.

Kazakhstan Loods; Beshbarmak

Beshbarmak is the national dish of Kazakhstand and among nomadic Turkic peoples in Central Asia. The term Beshbarmak means "five fingers", because nomads used to eat this dish with their hands. The boiled meat is finely chopped with knives, mixed with boiled noodles, and spiced with onion sauce. It is usually served in a big round dish.



Kazakhstan Loods; Shashlik

Shashlik is a common dish in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kirgystan, Georgia). It consists of meat cubes skewered with some vegetables cooked over an open fire or a bed of coals. Do not confuse shashlik with shash kebabs. Kebabs are also cooked on skewers but consist of small meatballs of ground meat mixed with herbs.



Kazakhstan Loods; Kazy

Kazy or kazi is a traditional sausage-like food of Kazakhs, Tatars, Kyrgyz, and other ethnic groups mainly of Central Asia, particularly those of Turkic origin. Kazy is a common element on a dastarkhan, a table set for a festive meal.



Kazakhstan Loods; Manti Dumplings

In Kazakh cuisine, the manti filling is normally ground lamb (sometimes beef or horse meat), spiced with black pepper, sometimes with the addition of chopped pumpkin or squash. This is considered to be a traditional Uyghur recipe. Manti are served topped with butter, sour cream or an onion sauce or garlic sauce. When sold as street food in Kazakhstan, manti are typically presented sprinkled with hot red pepper powder.



Kazakhstan Loods; Pelmeni

Pelmeni are dumplings consisting of a filling wrapped in thin, unleavened dough. The dough is made from flour and water, sometimes adding a small portion of eggs. The filling can be minced meat (pork, lamb, beef, or any other kind of meat), or fish. The mixing together of different kinds of meat is also popular. Various spices, such as black pepper and diced onions as well as garlic, are mixed into the filling.





Jurkmenistan; Cultural Life

Turkmen cuisine shares much in common with other cuisines of the region yet is markedly set apart by its nomadic tradition and geography. One of the most popular dishes is ash, a rice and meat pilaf not unlike those of other cuisines in Central Asia.



Jurkmenistan; Cultural Life

Meat and dairy play a heavy role in Turkmen cuisine, particularly fatty mutton and sheep's milk. A variety of dishes involving fish are also common in the Western part of the country near the Caspian Sea. Spices are used sparingly; Turkmen cooking aims instead to preserve the ingredients' flavours.

Some public holidays reflect Turkmenistan's cultural milieu, while others centre on national events. Like many countries in the region, Turkmenistan celebrates the spring festival of Nōrūz. The Islamic holidays of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are likewise observed as public holidays. A day of remembrance is held on October 6 to pay respects to the victims of the devastating 1948 earthquake in Ashgabat.

Jurkmenistan; The arts

The widespread Turkmen traditional practice of composing poetry orally gave way, after printing became well established in Turkmen centres in the 1920s, to writing and to the dissemination of verse and prose in book form. Although written Turkmen literature dates at least to the 18th-century poet Mahtum Quli (Magtim Guli), it underwent a burst of growth when the literary publications of the new republic began to appear in the late 1920s and '30s.



Jurkmenistan; Cultural institutions

The cultural centre of Turkmenistan is Ashgabat, which hosts several museums and monuments. The most notable of these is the National Museum of History, which features a sizeable number of exhibits representing 50,000 years of Turkmenistan's history. Another museum, housed in the gold-domed Palace of Knowledge, celebrates and glorifies Niyazov. The city is full of marble edifices and golden statues, most of which were erected during Niyazov's presidency.



Jurkmenistan; Media and publishing

Media and publication are tightly controlled by the state. Nearly all television stations and newspapers in the country are state-owned. Some provisions exist for private outlets, but they must secure state licensing and provide positive coverage of the government.

Literary expression is likewise controlled despite efforts to enrich Turkmen literature; for a time, in order to promote Niyazov's Rukhnama, the publication of all other works was suppressed.

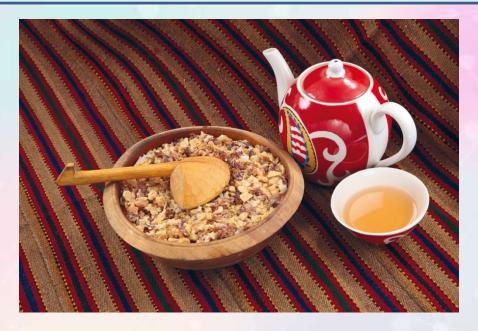
Jurkmenistan Loods; Pilaf

Pilaf, also called "ash," is the jewel in the crown of Turkmenistani cuisine. Similar to that found in the Turkic world, it comes in dozens of varieties, all which consist of two main ingredients: rice and meat. Turkmen prefer using lamb in their pilaf, flavoring the rice mixture with various spices, pepper, onions, thinly-cut vegetables, and sometimes add in fresh or dried fruit. Roasted slices of meat are cooked with chopped onions and carrots, then boiled with the rice until it turns a bright yellow. Pilaf is typically served as the main dish at festive tables, and is traditionally eaten with one's hands.



Jurkmenistan Loods; Dograma

f there is one dish on this list that is distinctly Turkmenistani – that is, has no equivalent in the region – it is dograma. The word literally means "to cut into pieces," and has a long history that date back to sacrificial rituals and rites. The dish is normally prepared for special religious holidays and occasions such as Gurbanlyk, a three-day religious holiday that falls on the tenth day of the Islamic month of Zulhijja, where families, friends and neighbors visit each other and share a meal.



Jurkmenistan Loods; Manti

Manti, in its various forms, can be found across the Turkic world, in countries as far west as Turkey and Azerbaijan (where it is called dushbara), and in Kazakhstan, where it is referred to by the same name. Cooked in a multi-level steamer or pan-fried, manti is a dumpling stuffed with meat, onions, salt and ground black and red pepper.



Jurkmenistan Loods; Kazanlama

Said to be an ancient dish, kazanlama was traditionally prepared by shepherds in the desert using saxaul, the desert bush that is also used to cook shashlik. Marinated in salt, garlic and paprika, lamb meat is placed directly onto hot coals and covered in a big cauldron, which in turn is buried in slightly wet sand. After about an hour, the juicy and golden-colored chunks of lamb are ready. Kazanlama is not the easiest dish to prepare, but one that is worth the wait!



Jurkmenistan Loods; Gutap

Gutap, meaning "half-moon," is a kind of flatbreads stuffed with beef or lamb and onions. They are cooked in a pan over the stove, and eaten with one's hands. Similar to Azerbaijani qutab, Turkmen gutab has several variants for the stuffing, including meat, potatoes, spinach or pumpkin.



Jurkmenistan Loods; Kovurma

Turkmens were historically nomads, and as such devised several ways for preserving meat. Kovurma is meat chopped into small pieces and fried in its animal fat. Kovurma is considered one of the tastiest dishes and could be eaten either hot or cold.



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