



# Culture and Customs of Uganda (Cultures and Customs of the World)

*Kefa M. Otiso*

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Since achieving independence from Great Britain in 1962, the East African country of Uganda has been ravaged by political turmoil and the more recent crisis of the AIDS epidemic, but is now in the process of rebuilding and democratizing. *Culture and Customs of Uganda* is a fascinating overview of the current state of Ugandan society, where largely rural ethnic groups are experiencing the pull of urban centers, while the changes brought about by Western influences bear on practically every aspect of people's lives. Examples from the main ethnic groups are used to explain traditional culture and adaptations to modern life in religion, gender roles, courtship and marriage, work, education, family life, ceremonies, the arts, media, and more. This is the essential reference source to turn to for solid insight into Uganda.

The wealth of detail in the coverage of the subjects above plus the land, people, history, literature, architecture/housing, cuisine, dress, gender roles, social customs and lifestyle, provides readers with broad sense of the country and its inhabitants. The sensitive narrative conveys the nuances between old and new, urban and rural, elite and poor for each topic. In addition, the evolution of Ugandan peoples is superbly demonstrated. Highlights include a discussion of the ways in which adherents of world religions such as Christianity and Islam mix these with traditional African religious belief in spirits, diviners, and rainmakers. The book also explores patriarchy and the social and inheritance system that has hindered women's education and prospects and exposed them to HIV/AIDS. Finally, there is a celebration of the various forms of artistic expression, such as drumming, ceremonial dance, and handicrafts, particularly ceramic pottery, that have won accolades, as well as a look at artists who excel in writing poetry, producing hip-hop, and painting batiks for popular consumption.

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