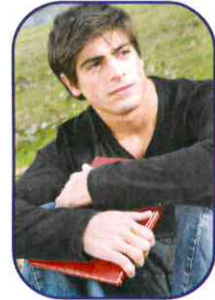


A. Warm Up

Read what these three people say about national customs.
Which of these national customs are you familiar with?

Pietro

One national custom we have in Italy is going for a stroll or leisurely walk, or *passeggiata*, as we say in Italian. We typically do this in the early evening between 5-7pm. We stroll through the main streets, sometimes walking arm-in-arm, looking at shop windows, greeting friends and their families by shaking hands and kissing on both cheeks. We catch up on news and gossip, and very often have a wonderful Italian ice cream too. Some people may stop in the cafes and have a glass of something or a coffee and watch the world go by. It's a time to see and be seen! Some people love showing off their best designer clothes and in some cities it can be very stylish. I'm not really into all that but I love bumping into my friends and socialising. It's something I really miss when I'm not in Italy.



Miguel

People always think all Spanish have a little nap, or siesta in the mid-afternoon, but this isn't really true anymore. It's more common for people in the south of the country where the temperatures can get extremely hot in the summer. Maybe the reason Spanish people eat so late is also connected to the weather. Many people tend to have lunch around 3pm and we might have dinner as late as 10pm. Quite a few restaurants in my town don't even open until 9.30pm. I have some foreign colleagues who thought the local restaurant was closed for the evening when they turned up at 7pm. I would advise any of my international friends if they were invited to a Spanish person's home for dinner, not to turn up at 7pm!



Shanti

Some people get married in a registry office but weddings in my country are often very grand affairs. There can be as many as ten thousand people at a wedding in India, and I had over a thousand at mine. It's unusual for the bride and groom to know all of their guests. An Indian wedding usually lasts for three days, but the main ceremony is on the third day and the reception is held then too. It's quite common for people to go on honeymoon as well. We went to a hill station in the north of India where the weather was a bit cooler. And if you are ever invited to an Indian wedding, I would advise you to wear bright colours as all the Indian guests do, and the ladies can wear a lot of jewellery.



Comprehension Exercises

1 Tick (✓) the correct box.

1. Pietro says the *passeggiata* has many purposes in Italy.
2. Pietro enjoys wearing stylish clothes.
3. Miguel explains siestas are more popular in all parts of Spain.
4. Foreigners are surprised at restaurant opening times in Spain.
5. Shanti says it's rare for the people getting married to know everybody at their wedding.

	True	False
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

2 Circle the correct words.

1. Typically the *passeggiatta* has a *flexible/inflexible* routine.
2. The Italian ice creams are *terrific/terrible*.
3. Many Spanish people *might/usually* have dinner very late.
4. Indian weddings generally *continue/conclude* after three days.
5. The clothes worn by guests should be *white/colourful*.

3 Fill in the gaps with **one word** from the texts.

1. The *passeggiata* typically takes place in the principal
2. In many hot countries people might have a after lunch.
3. Miguel advises his at work not to go too early to restaurants at meal times.
4. It may be surprising to many just how an Indian wedding can be.
5. The can be an important factor when choosing a honeymoon destination.

B. Vocabulary

1. Match the verbs (1-6) to what they mean (a-f).

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. stroll | a. to meet someone you know by chance |
| 2. catch up on | b. to attract attention or admiration |
| 3. show off | c. to have a short sleep |
| 4. bump into | d. to enjoy yourself by spending leisure time with friends |
| 5. socialise | e. to walk in a slow and relaxed way |
| 6. nap | f. to find out the latest news or information about something |

2. What is it? Fill in the gaps with **one word** from the box.

- a. registry office b. ceremony c. reception d. bride e. groom

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. This part of the wedding typically takes place at a hotel. | |
| 2. This is the name given to the woman who is getting married. | |
| 3. This is the name given to the man who is getting married. | |
| 4. This is a traditional act performed on special occasions. | |
| 5. This is the place people get married if they are not having a religious ceremony. | |

3. Choose the best option (a, b or c) to fill in the gaps.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. When people are walking side-by-side they might walk</p> <p>a. cheek-to-cheek b. back-to-back c. arm-in-arm</p> <p>2. Sometimes there are few better ways of relaxing than to sit in a café and</p> <p>a. show off b. watch the world go by c. gossip</p> | <p>3. Many people in Spain to eat quite late compared to other parts of the world.</p> <p>a. tend b. used c. advise</p> <p>4. After the wedding has finished the married couple go on a</p> <p>a. holiday b. hill station c. honeymoon</p> |
|---|--|

C. Listen in!

Part 1

Mehmet is talking about a national custom in his country. Tick (✓) the correct box. The second time you listen, correct the false sentences.

1. Mehmet normally advises tourists to have a Turkish bath.
2. It is necessary to wash yourself with a cloth.
3. The masseur is sometimes of the opposite gender.
4. The massage is usually quite relaxing.
5. The hard brush is used to scrub the dirt off your skin.
6. The masseur will use both hot and cold water before finishing.
7. You should have a short sleep in the cold room.
8. It is recommended to give the masseur some extra money.

	True	False
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Part 2

Katerina is talking about a Christmas tradition in her country. Fill in the blanks with one word. Listen twice.

1. Polish people sometimes keep a type of in their bath at Christmas.
2. If the fish swims in bath water, it will its insides.
3. Many Polish children would the fish while it was in the bath.
4. A few families would the fish before Christmas Eve.
5. Nobody is to leave the table once the meal has begun.
6. It is traditional to set an extra place at the table in case there is an guest.
7. Diners should place fish scales in their
8. Poland is not the only country where such customs are still

Part 3

Carmen is talking about weddings in her country. Circle the best answer (a, b or c).

1. It is traditional for wedding ceremonies in Argentina to be in the day.
 - a. early
 - b. quiet
 - c. late
2. Wedding hosts need to plan what their guests might want to eat for
 - a. breakfast
 - b. lunch
 - c. supper
3. It is quite usual for there to be two tables of
 - a. desserts
 - b. wedding cake
 - c. meat
4. Many couples are now often choosing to have weddings.
 - a. cheap
 - b. themed
 - c. farmed
5. games can be part of the traditional wedding reception.
 - a. Singing
 - b. Dancing
 - c. Horse-riding

D. Speak out!

In the conversation phase of the exam, the examiner might ask you questions about your ideas and opinions on national customs compared to your home country. These questions are only examples. Make questions from the words given and then make some questions of your own.

- National custom/your country/different/other countries?
- What/favourite/national custom?
- What/national customs/your country/meet people/first time?
- National customs/your country/use/different/past?
- National customs/important/country/identity?
- What advice/give someone/invite/dinner/your country?

Can you think of other questions?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Functional English

To elicit further information and expand ideas we can use some of the following expressions:

That's interesting. Why do you think that?

Really? What do you mean by that?

Could you give me an example of what you mean?

Could you expand on that?

Why does it depend on that?

Extra Speaking

Exercise 1A. This is an example of part of the conversation between an examiner and a candidate. They are talking about national customs. Note how the candidate shares the responsibility for maintaining the conversation by asking the examiner questions. Now, read the conversation and fill in the gaps with the words from the box.

registry office	greet	tips	better	groom
reception	host	use	stroll	bride

Examiner: Could you tell me about a typical custom in your country?

Candidate: Yes, something typical in our country is the *passeggiata* or (1)

Examiner: What's that exactly?

Candidate: It's when we go for a walk in the early evening and meet and (2) friends.

Examiner: So, what should a foreign visitor do if he/she meets someone from your country for the first time? Should they shake hands or kiss people on the cheek?

Candidate: Normally we just shake hands with people when we meet them for the first time. if it's a formal occasion, but it depends on the situation.

Examiner: What if it's an informal situation?

Candidate: Well, if you've met them before you can kiss the woman on the cheek.

Examiner: On one cheek or both cheeks?

Candidate: Here in central Italy we usually kiss both cheeks, first the right and then the left. What about in England?

Examiner: Well, it depends on how friendly you are but normally a man would kiss the women once and shake hands with the men. Have you got any (3) if I went to someone's house for dinner?

Candidate: Well, you should arrive at about 8pm, and you should take a dessert and maybe some flowers.

Examiner: Should I take my shoes off?

Candidate: No, not normally, but it depends. I would ask the (4) if I were you. What about in England?

Examiner: Well, again it depends, but not usually. Another thing I want to ask is - I've been invited to an Italian wedding later this year. Have you got any advice about that?

Candidate: You are lucky! The food at the (5) can be really amazing and you might have ten or more courses. You should be smartly dressed and you either need to buy a gift or give money. If the (6) invited you, you'd (7) ask him what he'd prefer.

Examiner: Did weddings in your country (8) to be much different in the past?

Candidate: Well, they are getting more expensive. Some people are even having them in a different country to save money! How about in Britain?

Examiner: Yes, I think more people get married in a (9) these days. Another thing that's changed is that the (10) 's family used to pay for everything, but now the cost is usually shared by both families. It's nearly always a lovely occasion though.

Exercise 1B. Now listen to the recording on *National Customs* to check your answers.

Pair Work

Exercise 1C. Work with your partner. One student is the examiner and the other is the candidate. Practise a dialogue similar to the one above. Before you start, write useful words in the study box.

Study Box

Ask questions like these:
 What would be the best ... ?
 What should I do if ... ?
 What would you like to ... ?
 What do you mean by that?
 Do you think ... ?

Exercise 1D. In pairs or groups of three, look at the different social occasions or events listed below. Discuss what the traditional customs for that event are in your country. Try to agree on what people are expected to do on those occasions if you are from the same country or find out what is different if you are from different countries. After you have finished, find other students in the class and find out if your opinions and ideas are the same as the rest of the class.

- meeting someone for the first time
- being invited for dinner
- attending a wedding
- going to a 15th/18th/60th birthday party
- leaving high school/university
- when someone moves into a new home
- after a friend has had a baby
- at New Year
- at religious or other festivals
- other national customs

For example:

Student A: What should we normally do when we meet someone for the first time?

Student B: We should shake hands.

Student C: Well, I'm not sure if I agree. I wouldn't do that if it was a woman.

Student B: What would you do then?

Student C: It depends. But if my friend was introducing me to his/her friends or family I would probably kiss them on both cheeks.

Student B: Ok, I agree it depends, but I would shake hands if it was a business meeting.

Student A: Yes, I probably would too.

Note these functions:

Agreeing/disagreeing by using:

I agree/don't agree ...

I think you are probably right ...

I'm not sure if I would agree with that ...

Let's agree to disagree!