

Cultures Around the World



Culture is defined as our way of life. It describes how we dress, the food we eat, the festivals we celebrate, the jobs we do etc. Each culture is unique and different. However, we may still have many things in common, because we all have basic needs (food, clothing, shelter) in order to live. It is the way in which we fulfil these needs that makes each culture different. However, one culture may be influenced by another. Tourism affects how we dress, what we eat, and how we treat each other. Most of our tourists come from **North America** and this continent affects our music, our food, our clothing and even the way we worship.

Cultures around the world

The culture of a place is influenced by its positions in the world and by its climate. Some parts of the world are hotter than others and some parts of the world receive much more rain than others. It is the temperature of a place, and the amount of rainfall there, that affects its climate. Climate affects the food and clothing of people in a region, the type of transport they use, and many other aspects of their culture.

There are three important influences on the climate of a place.

1. Distance from the Equator

The Earth receives both heat and light from the sun. All places that lie between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn have the sun directly overhead at some time of the year. The areas that lie between these two lines are called the **Tropics**, and they have a tropical climate. Areas to the north and south of the Tropics become cooler the farther one travels from the Equator.



2. Distance from the sea



Rain clouds are made up of water vapour which is picked up and carried by winds blowing over water. The rain falls when the clouds are forced to rise up over the land. Most of the rain falls close to the coast. Inland areas are drier than coastal areas, and countries with large areas of land may be very dry far inland.

3 Height of the land



Both temperature and rainfall are affected by the height of the land. The higher the land, the cooler the climate. Even in tropical areas, the climate in high mountains can be very cold. High land also forces clouds to rise, and if there are mountains close to the ocean, rain will fall from clouds blowing in from the ocean.