

## AFRIKANERS – INFORMATION SHEET

### BACKGROUND

Afrikaners (pronounced Ahf-rih-khan-ers,) originated from Dutch colonists from the Netherlands, known as Boers. They settled in South Africa in the seventeenth century. Over the next 200 years further British, German, and French settlers initiated the development of a unique cultural identity. They live predominantly in South Africa. **LANGUAGE:** The language Afrikaans, is one of four official languages of South Africa. It is spoken by the majority of the South African population either as a first or as a second language. Initially a spoken language, it was later developed into a written language. The language itself uses words from English, Khoi, Xhosa, Asian Malay, Malagasy, San, Portuguese and French, although many of these words do sound noticeably different to the language of origin.

### RELIGION

The Afrikaner religion stems from the reformed Church of Holland. Influences also came from the British ministers who arrived in South Africa and later the Calvinists who embraced the belief that the church should influence government policy. Part of their belief was the notion of retaining the separation of races and from this belief apartheid developed. Afrikaner children attend Sunday school where they learn the basis of Calvinistic Protestantism.

### CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

A custom that still exists today is the practice of naming the first son after the husband's father and the first daughter after the wife's mother.

On New Year's Eve, in remembrance of people who died during the year, the names of the deceased are read aloud in the church. As a gesture to remember them the front pew is draped in black or purple.

### CUISINE

Afrikaner meals are made up of meat, starch and cooked vegetables. Porridges, a kind of gruel, called *putu pap*, are common for breakfast. A sausage called *boerewors* is also very popular. Venison is a popular meat as grazing animals can be hunted or culled from national parks. *Sosaties* (skewered marinated meat similar to shish kebab) are frequently included in a *braai* (barbeques). Fish is popular for those living near the ocean. Two foods from pioneer days are still popular among Afrikaners: *beskuit* and *biltong*. Beskuit (rusks) are biscuits that have been oven-dried. They are served with coffee. Biltong are strips of dried meat (traditionally, beef or venison; more recently, elephant and ostrich). The biltong are treated with salt, pepper, and spices prior to drying.

### REFERENCES

1. <http://www.sa-venues.com/language-afrikaans.htm>
2. <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Rwanda-to-Syria/Afrikaners.html>