

10 Tips for Nurturing Nation Love



#1 I love Cracker Barrel and Chick-fil-A, too, but one of the easiest and most delicious ways to nurture nation love and understanding is to go to International Restaurants. You don't have to order a whole meal or even go for the dinner hour; just do appetizers or dessert and drink in the atmosphere. Some of our favorites nearby: Lotus Garden, Taj, Don Carlos. What a yummy way to learn about the nations!



#2 Read ... the library is a great source. Hear the name of a nation you don't know? Go look it up and bring home a picture book. Here are several excellent websites for learning basic facts and spiritual facts:

- *CIA Factbook* (yes, as in spies and dark glasses)
- *Kids of Courage* (excellent for children)
- *Voice of the Martyrs*
- *Serving in Mission*



#3 Maps and Atlases at home. Do you have these resources at home? You can find excellent copies at resale book stores like McKays or in the clearance section of larger bookstores. Lay out an atlas or map on the floor and find countries as you hear the names of other countries. Last night at our house: "Where IS Kazakhstan?"

#4 Talk about the beautiful qualities of other nations (land and people). That means you have to discover how they're beautiful ... see #1-3. This helps to set our perspective and that of those in our hearing. Our birth country is NOT the only beautiful place even Virginia. (See #6 below)



#5 Missionary prayer cards. Know their names, their needs, their ministries, and pray for them. Understand what drew them to the nation or people group they serve.

#6 "Option" Talk. I come from a long line of Virginians who have been rooted in Virginia since the first quarter of the 17th century. THAT was exploration then, but now there are so many options. As parents we should resist painting the picture for our children that our happiness depends on them living down the road or in the same county (or even country) as we will in our old age. When you talk about options and dreams, include the world! God may want to use us or our children in another nation or with another people group. Smile at that possibility. Your children will see your outlook and broaden their possibilities.



#7 Garment Tags. Check the tags of what you are wearing and find out about that country or pray for those people. A quick check through your closet or on your coat rack may reveal that you are far more inter-national (hyphen is on purpose) than you realize.



#8 Watch and learn ... When you see daily news reports, take the information a step further by getting out the atlas to find that place and then "take it" to your conversation. Instead of letting the names and lives of others nations pass over you like a sale in "Automotive", learn more and use it immediately, so it becomes woven into the fabric of your kimono.

#9 Food. Do you use the "international foods" section at the grocery store as a chance to check your texts or call your family? Wait!!!! That's where the excitement is. Stop and linger there. Read the labels (out loud is more fun). Pick up the cans and bags and boxes and let yourself make a connection. Take something home and bring a little "nation" into your kitchen. We have more available to us than EVER before. There's no excuse for being a family who never experiences the flavors of the world. Shame on us if our kids turn up their noses at lo mein.



#10 Words, words, words. Just pay attention, and you will realize we use many words from other languages. Every language is doing it. Think about why we transport the words we do and what it says about the nation of origin. Have no idea what I'm talking about? Think about a few of these: boutique, attache (with a little mark over it, hamburger, shmooze, oy vey, shampoo, verandah, Feng shui..... Use international words and enjoy it. Hear someone speaking "mumbo jumbo" in the aisle beside you at the store? Ask them what language they are speaking and what brought them to your country.



Put on a scarf from India, some flip flops from China, some jeans from the Philippines, and grab a bag from Madagascar. Go out and order some Chile Rellenos. It will help us anticipate the day when we'll kneel with ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD to worship our King.