



# Tea with Arwa

By Arwa El Masri

First published in 2011

## Genre & subject

Australian literature

Memoirs

Spirituality and Religion

## Synopsis

The most important things in Arwa el Masri's life are her family and her faith ... and then her love of food. *Tea with Arwa* tells her personal story and her belief that regardless of faith, we are all looking for the same things: safety, love and a sense of home.

## Author biography

Arwa is a child of many countries. She was born in Saudi Arabia in 1976, lived in America as a child and spent time with her extended family in Syria. As the child of Palestinian migrants she was a stateless person with no recognised home country.

In 1990 Arwa became an Australian citizen. She is married to legendary Australian rugby league player Hazem El Masri.

## Discussion starters (general, not specific to the book)

- What observations are made in the book about politics, family traditions, religious beliefs, language or food?
- Does the author criticize or admire the culture? Does he/she wish to preserve or change the way of life? Either way, what would be risked or gained?
- What is different from your own culture? What do you find most surprising, intriguing or difficult to understand?
- What is the central idea discussed in the book? What issues or ideas does the author explore?
- Do the issues affect your life? How so—directly, on a daily basis, or more generally?
- What evidence does the author use to support the book's ideas? Is the evidence convincing...definitive or...speculative? Does the author depend on personal opinion, observation, and assessment? Or is the evidence factual?
- What kind of language does the author use? Is it objective and dispassionate? Or passionate and earnest? Is it polemical, inflammatory, sarcastic? Does the language help or undercut the author's premise?
- What are the implications for the future? Are there long- or short-term consequences to the issues raised in the book? Are they positive or negative...affirming or frightening?
- What solutions does the author propose? Who would implement those solutions? How probable is success?

- Talk about specific passages that struck you as significant—or interesting, profound, amusing, illuminating, disturbing, sad...? What was memorable?
- What have you learned after reading this book? Has it broadened your perspective about a difficult issue—personal or societal? Has it introduced you to a new culture, an ethnic or regional culture?

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