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Could you travel in Asia without making a scene?
Tips that increase your international social savvy.

SO RIGHT IN AMERICA, SO WRONG IN ASIA:

1. Referring to the woman of a household as your “hostess”:
In the Philippines, the term is associated with prostitutes.
2. Giving a clock as a gift to your host or business colleague:
To the Chinese, a clock measures the passing of time, and as such, is regarded as a symbol of death.
3. Maintaining eye contact: In Pakistan, it’s rude for a man to hold an extended gaze. Worse yet, it’s considered a sexual invitation when done by a woman toward a man.
4. Wearing a sleeveless dress or blouse: Even when it is 100° F outside, Indonesian women keep their arms covered—and they expect American women to do the same.

WHEN DOING BUSINESS IN ASIA:

1. Avoid asking “yes” or “no” questions. In many Asian cultures, people don’t say “no,” even when they mean it. In India, for example, “I will try” generally means “no.” Instead, ask others to explain their intentions, capabilities, or actions.
2. Gift-giving is an extremely important business tradition. Giving an inappropriate gift can kill an otherwise promising business deal. Learn gift-giving protocols and follow them.
3. Accept the fact that life is different for men and women. Both sexes need to learn gender-appropriate social rules if they want to be successful businesspeople in Asia.

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GOING OUT ON THE TOWN? DON’T YOU DARE:

1. Clean your plate at dinner: In China, eating everything on your plate tells hosts they did not provide enough food.
2. Turn down an offer to go bar-hopping: In Japan and Korea, going out on the town is key to building relationships, even when you’re there for business.
3. Offer others food from your plate: Indians consider food to be tainted once you touch it. This is an ancient practice, used to curb the spread of disease.
4. Pass food with your left hand: In Islamic cultures, like those found in Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan, the left hand is widely thought to be unclean.
5. Leave a tip at a restaurant: If the locals don’t tip, then you shouldn’t either. Tipping is rare in Japan. However, it is expected in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Tips from:
**Asian Business
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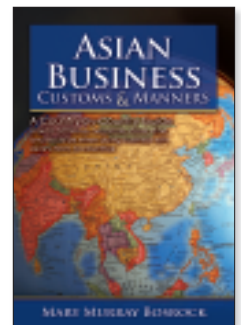
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