

Foreign Languages & Cultural Awareness

The Aide Memoire

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Introduction

In this proposal, I was asked to Produce an Aide Memoire for hotel staff for better management of services for international visitors. A list of international countries must be highlighted and identify the main cultural differences, customs and behaviour. In the end, a "do's and don'ts" table for hotel staff will also be highlighted. We will talk about the various nationalities and their cultures and habits and how hotel staff should treat these types of customers.

The Aide Memoire of a Hotel is a professional document concerning cultural communication in the structure that goes from guests to employees. It is a formal document that serves to know a series of useful information to relate to people and peoples of different cultures.

It is important to know the habits of the various cultures because this can demonstrate professionalism to customers by employees. In this way, the customer can be shown that there is maximum respect for his own culture.

Culture is both simple and difficult to understand (Steers, et al, 2016).

Hotel owners and hotel managers have admitted that high-quality service is increasingly becoming an important success factor, high service standards allow the structure to be present in the market and actively.

Quality in the service sector is difficult to evaluate due to three distinct characteristics of the service: intangibility, heterogeneity and inseparability of production and consumption.

International Countries

Everywhere in the world, we can find hotels, which is why the sector is one of the best in the world. Most of the customers that we will find, wherever we go, are international. This means that we will find any type of customer who will be distinguished by nationality, culture and behaviour.

Nobody should discredit an individual's traditional beliefs and practices. This is the key to success with a client of a different nationality, and this in going forward will lead to the success of the company.

Most of the tourists we find in the hotels come from Asia, which is defined as the largest continent in the world and maybe the Chinese, Asians, Japanese, Indians and many others.

Asia

The characteristics of Asian nationalities are based on equity and not on wealth; on saving and conserving resources. They are nationalities that have a strong network of social ties and are highly disciplined and motivated. Education is an investment in the prestige and economic wellbeing of the family.

One of the peoples who have stricter rules and ways of doing things is the Chinese one. The name of their country translates into "centre of the world" for they saw themselves, their country, and the culture as the centre of human civilization. One of China's most predominant characteristics is its tradition of isolation. Chinese posture becomes rigid whenever they feel their goals are being compromised. They are sensitive about foreigners' comments on Chinese politics. They don't like physical contact like a handshake but prefer a simple bow. China is a peaceful people who love peace and do not appreciate loud and boisterous behaviour.

A nationality that has a large variety of languages, customs, beliefs and cultures in India. There are 16 official languages, including Hindi as the most important and English is commonly used for business. Hinduism is not only the principal religion of India; it dominates the culture and relationships and also a woman's role in society. Their way of doing is very unusual compared to other nationalities. For example, a bold, emancipated woman may give to indulge in dancing with her husbands, but to dance with anyone who is not her husband would be improper. Their greeting method varies among people. Among educated and western-style people, they shake hands. Hindu women are the first to extend someone's hand and not the other way around. Food in India varies from province to province and in most cases, Hindus are vegetarian, and beef is forbidden.

Europe

A popular destination for this type of nationality in Europe made up of 50 sovereign states and with more than 200 native languages. The most common are Italian, English, German, French and Spanish.

Despite its market share dropped in 2015, Europe continues to be the most popular tourist destination today. The hospitality sector is one of the key drivers of the European economy, and European tourism, both in terms of employment as well as of direct contribution to the economy.

Europe is one of the most loved continents by tourists because it is very rich in history, culture, nightlife, tasty European dishes and fascinating and affectionate people.

Europe is well known above all for its historical part, although it has undergone many constructions works, it still has ancient buildings, and some may date back over 2000 years and the city of Rome is the living proof of this.

Berlin also has a rich history, and the most visited places of it are the Olympic Stadium, the Holocaust Memorial, the East Side Gallery, the Brandenburg Gate and not least, the Berlin Wall.

At the same level, as the most visited continent, we find the variety of food that these continent hosts. European cuisine is unique and delicious and everywhere you go you can find different dishes. What characterizes Belgium is the beer tasting in pubs and bars. In France, we find the best cheeses and in Germany their sausages, which are among the largest in the world and Italy.

Europe is also famous for its nightlife, for young people and adults and especially for its beaches. We can find white beaches and crystal-clear water in the islands of Italy, the most famous being Sardinia, half the tourist destination for many celebrities; In Spain, like Ibiza and the Canaries; Greece such as Zakynthos and Mikonos; Croatia and also some coasts of France.

What makes all these things unique is fabulous, it's its people. Europeans are friendly and generous people. They love to drink large glasses of beer with friends, celebrate and watch sports programs. They are very friendly especially with tourists and are very helpful in giving the right directions and in recommending a nice place.

Near Europe, we find a continent of which it was formerly part, the United Kingdom. It is also called Great Britain and is made up of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The English language is the most famous and best known worldwide, especially in business and international travel and in the hospitality sector. In fact, to apply for a job in this sector you must at least have a basic knowledge of the English language, not only in the United Kingdom but all over the world since most tourists are international. The United Kingdom is also known for its famous, in fact, here we find the famous Fish and Chips with mushy peas; Black pudding, laverbread, she skinks and many others.

Do's and Don'ts

Each continent has its own culture and ways of doing things, especially at the table.

There is what characterizes China and Japan and unites them in the kitchen are not only very similar dishes but also the way to eat them. Forks and spoons are not used but only chopsticks and the latter must be placed correctly, for example, you must not leave them in a vertical position in the rice bowl because this image would remind them of the incense sticks placed vertically in the bowls when the dead are in mourning and a funeral is celebrated.

In Japan to honour the kitchen it is important to do things calmly, to appreciate the table, the dish and its composition. If you are eating a bowl of soup or a bowl of noodles, you will have to be noisy because in this way you will prove that you have enjoyed the dish.

In China, a nice burp is the best way to thank the Chef for the excellent food and to show great appreciation for the meal. (Denny, 1994)

But cleaning the whole dish means not having eaten enough so for the chef it means not having cooked enough and therefore one must always leave some on the plate.

In Thailand, they use the spoon which must only be brought to the mouth while the fork accompanies the food. To prove that you enjoyed the meal before you can take the last portion left, you need to make sure everyone else agrees.

On the contrary, it is in Spain, where asking for an encore is shown as a sign of rudeness while it is almost obligatory to ask for it in Georgia.

In India, Ethiopia, Indonesia and in some areas of the Middle East the hands are essential: you eat with the right hand because the left is used in the humblest operations and the cleansing of the body.

In Arab countries, asking for an encore is taken as a compliment for those who have cooked.

In Portugal asking for salt and pepper is considered rude because it will mean that the food has not been cooked with taste.

In South Korea, you should never touch the food before the elderly person sitting at the table.

In Germany and Austria, it is unlikely to arrive late to a reservation and it must be communicated to the host.

On the contrary in Mexico, Greece and Argentina where it is normal to arrive after the scheduled time, even an hour later.

The best known and also most rigid table etiquette is the Italian one. Usually, invitations for a special lunch or dinner must be sent at least a week in advance by mail or email, as you may be vague and inaccurate by voice. An immediate, albeit negative, a response is polite. A conversation at the table is important, being careful to avoid topics like religion, politics or football because these could lead to feedback. It is considered unpolite to speak of people unknown to the majority of the guests. You absolutely must not rest your elbows on the table; eat noisily especially if there is broth; speak with a full mouth; take food from serving dishes with your fork; refuse to drink with blatant gestures, covering the glass with your hand or knocking it over; start eating before the hostess has done it; yawn and burp; place the mobile phone on the table or use it secretly under the tablecloth.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Not To Do</i>
<i>China</i>	• Be on time; • Burping at the end of the meal; • Using chopstick;	• Touch or shake hands; • Being loud
<i>India</i>	• Shaking hand between men; • Eating with righthand;	• The left hand is considered unclean, use always the right hand to eat and giving things; • Wasting food is very unpolite;
<i>South Korea</i>	• Being extremely polite; • Lay the chopsticks or spoon on the table to indicate you have finished eating;	• Making a joke about expenses; • Touching;
<i>French</i>	• Wait for a woman to offer her hand first; • Being punctual;	• A firm and pumping handshake;
<i>Germany</i>	• Firm handshakes are preferred;	• Being outward people; • Being loud; • Talk to someone with your hands in your pocket;
<i>Portugal</i>		• Ask for salt and pepper;
<i>Japan</i>	• Remove your shoes before going into a house;	
<i>Egypt</i>	• Accept always coffees and teas; • Wait for the oldest person to start eating;	• Ask for salt and pepper;
	• Invite people by mail or email;	• rest your elbows on the table;

<i>Italian</i>	• Good conversation at the table;	• speak with a full mouth; • take food from serving dishes with your fork; • place the mobile phone on the table or use it secretly under the tablecloth;
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