



East Asia: Hospitality

Did you know . . .

- Except in places that are very cold such as Tibet, you should always remove your shoes before entering anyone's home.
- When visiting someone's home, they will offer you tea many times; you should politely decline it three times before accepting it. This way, you don't appear too eager.
- It is considered an honor to be invited to someone's home. Most people feel their homes are too humble to entertain guests.
- Usually, people will invite you to a restaurant dinner instead of to their homes. In China, most restaurants are divided into small, separate private dining rooms where you and your guests can enjoy each other's company without noise and interference from other restaurant patrons.
- When visiting someone's home, you should always bring a gift. A box of tea or fruit is customary.
- You should always hand your host, your gift with two hands to show respect.
- In China, you should never give someone four pieces of anything. Four sounds like the word for death and is considered unlucky. It is better to give three or five items (such as fruit, candy, etc.).
- If you are visiting someone's home, your host will often appear very busy to give the appearance that everything is being taken care of and you can relax.
- A guest always takes priority. Guests are given the best seats and the best food.
- Greetings are very important. Children are expected to greet teachers every morning before entering the classroom and are often admonished for not saying "hello" or "good morning" vigorously.
- When parting from someone's home, it is more respectful to make a wish to meet again instead of simply saying "bye."
- Chopsticks should only be used to eat and then laid over or next to your bowl. Never place your chopsticks down into a bowl where they stick straight up out of the top or play with your chopsticks.



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