

Food and Hotel

Intro and background about person's country

1. Talk about food etiquette in your country.
2. What foods do you eat? What food do you not eat? What is your spice level? Spicy or Bland? What is typical food for each meal time?
3. What time do you prefer to eat? How many meals do you eat?
4. Any religious restrictions or guidelines that should be followed?
5. Talk about living arrangements in your country.
6. Talk about special accommodations that might be needed.
7. Talk about restroom hygiene.
8. Do you like AC or not?
9. What are typical sleeping habits and hours? How long do you sleep and when?
10. Typical smoking and drinking preferences?
11. Do you need more towels?
12. What incense/ perfumes are used? Strength of smell (if any)?
13. What is your preference on cleaning your rooms?

If someone offers you food from their country, do not refuse it. You will offend them. Accepting food builds a bridge between cultures. Rejecting another person's food is frequently interpreted as an insult.

Many cultures do not eat pork, beef or shellfish. Have several alternatives to pork and beef – chicken and fish. Have several vegetarian options available too.

If guests decline food on the first offer, offer the food at least two more times. This is a cultural etiquette issue.

Many cultures do not drink milk or eat milk products. Have other food options available. Be aware of when milk, cheese or butter is used in recipes. Some religions do not mix milk and meat at the same meal nor can the same utensils, dishes and cooking vessels be used for both.

Most cultures have particular staple food that without which a meal is incomplete. Be prepared to have rice, bread, and beans.

Many cultures do not drink alcohol at all nor cook with alcohol. Some people will not eat around alcohol being consumed.

Many cultures eat with their fingers, not utensils. They also eat off of a common plate. DO NOT BE OFFENDED BY THIS. Some eat with chop sticks.

Many cultures make eating noises to show their appreciation of their food. Interpret this as a compliment and NOT bad manners.

Many cultures do not eat raw/rare meat. They do not eat blood.

Many cultures do not eat foods or candy with gelatin in it. Please know what is in the food you serve.

The Chinese culture believe the number 4 is bad luck – do not give them a hotel room with the number 4 in it.

It is important to have a prayer room available at each hotel. Prayer times are at 5:35am, 1:30pm, 5:09pm, 8:01pm and 9:24pm in the United States for Muslims. Friday at 1:30 is an important time for all Muslims to pray. Muslims need to face east when they pray.

Health and Religion

Intro & background about person's country

1. Talk about health practices in your country. Doctor vs. local healer.
2. Talk about typical medicines and herbs used in your country.
3. Do you accept blood transfusions? Does your religion and/or culture approve of CPR, AED machine, of life saving measures?
4. Hoping this never happens; what culturally is approved when someone dies?
5. Talk about proper greetings in your country.
6. What is your religion? What are the most common religions in your country?
7. What are common religious practices in your county?
8. If you pray; where do you pray? And how many times? Do you need a special location for prayer?
9. Any change in diet, special foods, or restrictions because of your religion? Like smoking? Drinking? Mixed company settings?

If you work in a health care profession, encourage patients to tell you what home treatments they have been using.

It may be difficult to dissuade patients from using folk remedies because they are closely bound to cultural customs that are important for patients to maintain.

Patients often wish to use traditional healers rather than a doctor.

If possible, try to incorporate the patient's own beliefs into their care.

Hot/cold systems vary with people's different backgrounds; for example, a Middle Easterner and a Latino may give opposite classifications to the same food or procedure. Always ask the person what is specifically hot or cold to them.

Health practitioners must make certain that patients fully understand instructions. Never take their comprehension for granted.

Interpreters are crucial when language barriers exist. However, when working with an interpreter, you should be addressing the client, not the interpreter. The interpreter should not be behind or in front of the client, but rather on the side. Speak normally, no "Could you ask him.." Everything should be conducted in first person conversation.

Do not speak loudly to someone who is limited English, they are not deaf. They just don't understand English.

Some cultures resist having blood drawn; fearing the blood will not be replenished. Talk to them – do not criticize their beliefs. Same for X-rays – some will resist this.

Female patients need to be seen by female doctors.

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Retail and General Public

Intro and background about person's country.

1. Talk about greetings in your country what gestures are right or wrong: eye contact and personal space, pointing.
2. Where and how do you sit?
3. Greeting: shaking hands, kissing on the cheek, etc.?
4. Where do you stand?
5. Who do you greet first?
6. Talk about buying groceries, clothes, and necessities in your country. Firm price vs. bartering? Sales tax in your country? On the street vs. in a building?
7. Talk about religion and what common practices: head coverings, prayer schedule.
8. What are current political issues going on in the world that we need to know about?
9. Paying culture; who pays? How bills are paid? Directly handing vs. set on counter?
10. Appropriate questions for your country – employment, salary, family, etc.?
11. What are compliments and what they truly mean? If you comment on something you like – given to you.
12. What slang terms are not appropriate? Be very literally – no slang terms or expressions.

13. Comment on receiving gifts- and returning a gift in equal value.

14. How to work with interpreters limited English folk?

Many cultures dress very modestly. Please make sure that you are dressed modestly.

It is insulting to show the soles of the shoes to people.

Some cultures put money on the counters, not given to a clerk. Again, females and males don't touch.

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