

EUROPEAN TIPPING SURVEY

BRITISH TRAVELLERS IGNORANT OF HOLIDAY TIPPING ETIQUETTE

Yet Brits Are Not the Meanest in Europe, Reveals TripAdvisor® Study

LONDON, U.K. – 26 MARCH, 2009 – A study of over 2,400 European travellers by TripAdvisor®, the world's most popular and largest travel community, reveals that despite being among the most generous tippers in Europe, Brits still view themselves as the meanest tippers on holiday.

Holiday tipping can clearly be a stressful situation – 15% of Brits have actually been confronted by staff on holiday for not leaving a tip. An unfortunate 6% have had their holiday ruined because of a tipping situation and over a quarter (27%) of Brits believe tipping should be abolished altogether, reveals the pan-European TripAdvisor research.

“Tipping can be socially awkward and can cause endless embarrassment, especially on holiday when we are unfamiliar with local customs,” cautions Emyr Thomas, Director of concierge and lifestyle management company Bon Vivant, “In some countries it is considered rude not to tip, so you might need to justify yourself, just as in others, such as Japan, it is often considered rude to tip at all.”

Embarrassing Lack of Research

Three quarters (74%) of Brits admit to not always researching tipping etiquette before holidaying in another country, and almost half (46%) of British travellers approach holiday tipping with a “one size fits all” attitude, tipping the same regardless of which country they visit.

“I would always recommend reading up about the customs of a particular country before travelling there,” continues Thomas, “However, if you are stuck, adding a tip of 10% is the course of action least likely to cause offence and embarrassment, especially in Europe, where customs do not vary too much.”

Tip-Top Tippers

The USA's hard-line tipping culture is well-known, indeed, two thirds (37%) of Brits admit their tipping culture puts them off holidaying in the States. Despite these concerns, there is universal acknowledgement across Europe that American tourists are the most generous tippers.

On the other side of the coin, when it comes to the meanest tippers on holiday, Brits vote for themselves. Europeans generally are tough on their fellow countrymen - French and Spanish respondents also rate their own nationality as the least generous tippers. Italians, however, cite the Irish as the worst holiday tippers.

The TripAdvisor European Tipping study also reveals that:

- Spanish travellers are the worst tippers, with 80% confessing they do not always tip on holiday – closely followed by 78% of Italians, 76% of French and 57% of Britons.
- Italian travellers are the most flirty tippers, with 33% admitting to having tipped someone on holiday because they fancy them, compared to just 8% of reserved Brits.
- A third (30%) of travel-savvy Brits have tipped hotel staff at the start of a holiday in order to get better service for the duration of their stay.
- Waiters are the most likely group to be tipped by holidaying Brits – 90% of Brits tip waiting staff when on holiday with two thirds tipping 10% of the bill and only a tiny 3% tipping 20%.
- Almost a third (30%) of Brits do not tip hotel porters, it seems many of us prefer to carry our own luggage rather than be faced with the awkward situation of having to find change for the porter. Of those that do tip porters, 84% give no more than £2.
- A third (31%) of Brits just round tips for taxi drivers up to the nearest coin/note when on holiday, while two thirds (39%) tip

10% of the fare.

- Let's hope British travellers keep their hotel rooms clean and tidy on holiday because over a quarter (27%) do not tip hotel housekeeping/maids.
- A surprising 18% of Brits tip hairdressers on holiday, perfectly groomed hair is clearly an important holiday factor, even more so for our French cousins – 22% tip hairdressers.
- Economy has not significantly affected holiday tipping, less than a third (32%) of Brits have reduced their tips because of the recession, with only 2% saying they have stopped tipping.
- Good old-fashioned manners are still the most important factor for Brits when tipping hotel staff, kindness of staff is cited by 86%, beating even cleanliness of rooms (73%).

“This research shows that British travellers, despite a lack of planning by many, are a generous bunch when it comes to holiday tipping. Brits typically hate to cause a scene so always investigate local customs before you leave to avoid any embarrassing tipping situations,” said Emma O’Boyle, TripAdvisor spokesperson.

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