

# Gift giving in thailand



Gift giving in Thailand nowadays is more Westernized than ever and less formality compare to other countries in Asia. In general, gifts are not required but it is appreciated. And as we all know, Thai people is considered as collectivist culture. So when it comes to receiving gift or giving gift, loss of face or making someone lose face is best to avoid. They will not open gift in front of the giver because they don't want to look greedy or appear disappointed if they don't like the gift.

Instead, they will say thank you and put it aside and open it later after the giver left. Some foreigners especially westerners might feel put off by this reaction but if they wish to create a good relationship with Thai clients or show Thai business people their goodwill. They should follow the procedure. Here are some tips of what foreigners should do and avoid when they give or receive gift from Thai people whether the gift is exchanged at the meeting or give when invited to Thai people home.

Don'ts 1) Expensive and “ run-of-the-mill”. Do not offer gift that is obviously expensive and run of mill. If your gift is obviously expensive, it will make the recipient feel uncomfortable and refuse to take it because it might look like you trying to bribe them especially in business context or with government official agencies. And by Run of the mill it means common stuff such as things that the recipient already has or they buy it frequently. Because it can interpret that you are careless. ) Sharp objects or personal stuff. Do not give sharp objects such as knives and scissors, and mirrors, as gifts. If you are involved in business transaction with Thai business people or especially Chinese-Thai business people, you would want to maintain a good relationship with them. By giving those sharp objects, to some people it can

imply that you want to sever the relationship. Moreover, do not give personal stuff such as perfume and handkerchief as a gift because it might convey different message to the recipient.

And these are things that people usually buy for their love ones. 3) Rip the wrapping paper of the gift. As I mentioned that Thai people will open the gift they receive in private in order to avoid loss of face and this is the rule that foreigners should follow. But if you are invited to open the gift you received in front of the giver, do not rip the wrapping paper of the gift. Because it is consider as being rude and not appreciated the gift. You should carefully remove the wrapping, fold and set aside.

Dos 1) Research As I said before that Thailand is consider as collectivist culture wherespectfor hierarchy and senior is important. Therefore, it is better to know about the social status of the person or the structure of the company you going to give gift to. It will help you a lot in terms of finding the right thing to give. 2) Appropriated gifts Small, inexpensive and thoughtful gifts should be given. You can buy them things like chocolate, fruit or flowers.

These are also things you could give to the hostess if you are invited to their homes, including brandy/liquor, cake and candy. In business, you should also bring a small gift for anyone who works for you regularly. Give brandy, liquors, books, specialfooditems and desk attire is appropriate gifts. At New Year's it is common to give gift baskets full of tinned fruits, cookies, whisky and other items. These are usually given and received on behalf of a company. 3) Nicely wrapped gift. It is important to wrap the present before you give it to someone or firms.

Gifts should be wrapped attractively, since appearance matters than the gift itself. Use bright colors for your wrapping. Bows and ribbons add to the sense of festivity. Use red wrapping paper if giving a gift to a Chinese Thai because red color represents good fortune. 4) " Wai" For foreigners simply say Thank you is enough when you received gift from someone. But if you want to impress them, Wai is another way to show that your appreciation and respect to Thai culture. 5) Right Hand Always receive and give gift with right hand.