

## **International Gift Giving Tips**

There are several good references to assist you in your gift giving research. This list is not intended to be all inclusive, but rather points to evoke thought into the importance of understanding the cultural differences in gifting. Understand there will be variations in each country as a result of different cultures and religions within the country.

### **Argentina**

Knives symbolize the severing of friendship. Wrap gifts nicely and expect they will be opened when received.

### **Asia**

Generally do not open wrapped gifts. Present and receive gifts with two hands.

### **Belgium**

Flowers...avoid chrysanthemums, which signify death. Do not present 13 of any flower. Present gifts before, not after a meal.

### **Bolivia**

Knives, scissors, and letter openers symbolize the severing of friendship. Gifts are not opened until after the giver has departed.

### **Brazil**

Anything purple or black, since these are colors of mourning. Handkerchiefs connote grief. Knives symbolize the severing of friendship.

### **China**

Be prepared to exchange a modest gift with your business colleagues at the first meeting. White is associated with mourning, while red paper signifies good luck. Avoid the number 4 and clocks which are associated with death.

### **Ecuador**

Avoid lilies and marigolds as they are used at funerals.

### **Egypt**

Accept the gifts with the right hand not the left hand.

### **Europe**

Gift giving is a personal expression; the appropriate time is after a relationship has developed.

### **France**

Gifts tend to be opened when received and the wrapping of the gift is very important.

**Hong Kong**

Clocks connote death, time is running out, gifts wrapped in blue is the color of mourning, pairs of two brings good luck.

**India**

Avoid gifts made of leather (cowhide). The cow is a sacred animal.

**Indonesia**

Do not give toy dogs, or gifts with pictures of dogs--dogs are considered to be unclean. Avoid gifts made of leather (cowhide). Avoid pigskin products and perfumes containing alcohol.

**Japanese**

Like to give gifts when they first meet, and when they depart. Never give 4 or 9 of anything...represent death and suffering. Correct wrapping is very important. Avoid white, black, and blue.

**Mexico**

Knives symbolize the severing of friendship. Avoid gifts made of silver, silver is associated with trinkets sold to tourists. Yellow flowers represent death and red flowers cast spells.

**Middle East**

Normally presented before a group. Avoid gifts of alcohol or gifts reflecting the human figure or dogs. Handkerchiefs are associated with tears. Gifts made with pigskin should be avoided.

**Russia**

Knives and scissors are considered bad luck. Even number of flowers are given at funerals.

**South America**

Usually wait until business matters have concluded; present gifts in a social atmosphere. Gifts are appreciated for children.

**South Korea**

Knives and scissors signify "severing" a relationship, gifts in sets of four denote death.