

# Travel

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**Summer  
tip advisor**

YOUR M&S

Living in a society where tipping for customer service is both infrequent and entirely discretionary, it's fair to say that leaving tips whilst abroad on holiday doesn't come naturally to most Britons. Firstly, there is the worry as to whether a tip is required and then if it is, who should you leave it for? And more to the point, how much is an acceptable amount to leave behind?

With gratuity rules varying greatly from country to country, unfortunately one size does not fit all when it comes to tipping. Not only can it prove confusing, but gratuity payments can also prove costly to British holidaymakers. A new survey by **M&S Travel Money** has found that saying thank you could cost British families holidaying abroad up to £135 per week this summer, adding an extra 30% to the cost of families' holiday spending funds.

The Tipping Point Survey reveals that almost half of travelling Britons (45%) regularly find themselves 'caught short' by forgetting to budget in tip requirements when planning their holiday finances. British holidaymakers can be expected to tip up to 13 different services abroad. Ignorance of tipping expectations and requirements is resulting in 41% of Brits parting with unnecessary cash. British confusion is leading to over tipping and over spending - and at its worst causing offence abroad.

**M&S Travel Money** has created the summer Tip Advisor Guide detailing global tipping recommendations and expectations to help British holidaymakers avoid unnecessary expenditure. A valuable and complimentary travel tool from your trusted foreign currency provider, read on to learn why it's never a good idea to tip in Tokyo and why you should pay more attention to that restaurant bill in France...

Safe travels!

James Yerkess

**M&S Travel Money Manager**

# Global gratuities guide

## EUROPE

### Croatia

Tips and taxes are included in the bill for most holiday scenarios, so tipping is not necessary.

### France

French law requires service to be included in restaurant bills and it is usually around 15%. Look out for the words 'service compris' (tip included) on the bill.

This law does not lend itself to bar service however, and though not obligatory, 5-10% of the total bill is common practice if you are pleased with service.

Additional customary French tips include usherettes at the theatre/opera (a couple of Euros is acceptable) and hotel porters – one Euro per bag is adequate.

Tip taxi drivers at your own discretion – up to 10% at most.

### Germany

Tipping is not common in Germany and particularly not recommended in restaurants. A service charge is generally already included in bills and money is considered rude if left on the table. Bartenders also do not expect tips.

### Greece

When dining out, the service charge should be written on menus as per Greek law, so additional tipping is discretionary and reserved for excellent service.

A local custom is to leave loose change on the plate and an equal amount on the table. The tip on the plate is for the waiter, the tip on the table is for the busboy who supported the waiter, brought extra bread etc. Busboys work for tips alone. 5% is common practice, 10% is very generous.

Most taxi drivers will round up the change themselves so there is no need for additional tipping here.

### Holland

Service charges are included in hotels, shops, taxis and also restaurants. Tips for service will be very much appreciated but are not necessary. If you do wish to tip, about 10% is more than adequate for decent service.

Many public restrooms will have attendants who will expect a small coin tip, e.g. EUR 0.50.

### Italy

Contrary to popular belief, you are not compelled to tip service in Italy. No tip is expected in restaurants throughout the country as a service charge of 15% is automatically added to your bill ("coperto" or cover charge).

Tips are also not expected in bars or taxis – though of course will always be welcomed if you wish to reward excellence.

## Portugal

A service charge (servicio) is not usually added to the bill in restaurants so if the service warrants it, it is customary to leave an additional tip of about 5-10%.

Hotel bellhops will welcome the occasional €1-2, whilst housekeeping normally look for €1 per day – but this is not compulsory. Rounding taxi costs up to the nearest Euro is also common practice – particularly in Lisbon, the capital city.

## Spain

The addition of value-added tax (IVA, pronounced “iba”), especially in expensive restaurant, is oftentimes mistaken as a service charge.

Unlike France, service is not automatically included in bills for hotels and restaurants and it is customary to leave between 5-10 % to show appreciation for very good service.

Although Spain generally does not have a big tipping culture, small coin gestures for bartenders, hotel cleaning staff, doormen, taxi drivers and toilet attendants are both common and acceptable.

## Turkey

It is common, but not mandatory, to leave up to 5% for inexpensive eateries and a 10% tip in high scale restaurants. If you feel it is deserved you can also leave between 5-10% for hotel chambermaids, hotel reception staff and for bus drivers/guides.

Taxi drivers do not normally expect a tip but if you are feeling generous you can round up the total to the nearest whole sum.

For a traditional Turkish bath, it is customary to tip 15% of the total bill.

## ASIA

### China

You are not required to tip anywhere in China. Several establishments actually have a strict no tipping policy.

### Hong Kong

The situation in Hong Kong could not be more different however – tipping is part of daily life.

A 10% service charge is usually already included in most restaurants and hotels unless specified otherwise. It is common for taxi drivers to self tip by rounding up to the nearest full amount, whilst hotel bellhops expect \$5-10 Hong Kong Dollars (HKD) per piece of luggage carried (that’s around 80p/£1).

### Japan

Tipping is considered insulting and not required anywhere in Japan.

## Singapore

According to government mandate, tipping is a no-no. Officials encourage tourists not to add to the 10% service charge that many hotels and restaurants include in the bill.

Individual hotel staff are however the one exception to the no-tipping rule. As a general guide, one Singapore dollar is adequate for things like baggage service.

## Thailand

Tipping is not generally expected in Thailand, but Bangkok has a more developed tipping culture and tipping for services is often required.

In all restaurants, except soup shops and roadside food stalls, there is a “keep the small change” common policy when settling the bill. At many hotel restaurants or other up market eateries, a 10% service charge will be automatically added to your bill.

Expect to tip the hotel porter 20-50 Baht per bag (that’s up to £1).

When it comes to taxis, local custom is to round up the fare to the nearest baht, but you don’t have to pay the extra because they already charge 35 Baht on flag-down.

## Vietnam

Tipping is not customary in Vietnam, but always appreciated - what seems the smallest of tips to you, could equal a day’s wages for a local. A 5-10% tip is adequate for most services. Some Government-run restaurants catering to tourists will automatically add a 10% service charge to the bill.

Porters, if they are available, can be tipped with coins (dollars preferred) whilst hotels often also automatically add a 10% service fee to bills so additional tipping is not necessary.

## THE AMERICAS

### Canada

Most service staff will expect something in the 10-20% tip range, depending on what city, if it’s French or English Canada, and the level of service.

Tipping is expected for restaurants, bars, food delivery and taxis. 15% is a good tip in a restaurant. In most of English Canada, you would not be expected to tip as much. You should never feel obliged to tip if service is poor in Canada.

### United States

Tips are customary everywhere. Restaurants in America usually call for a 15-20% tip and bartenders will expect the same for the bill total, or alternatively a couple of dollars per drink, per round.

Hotel staff can expect up to \$9 per day for room service and house keeping and it is common practice also to tip the concierge/doormen and tour guides around \$20 to show gratitude for assistance.

You can be expected to tip a parking valet up to \$5 and taxi drivers approx 10% of the total cost of the journey.

## Central America - Mexico

In Mexico tipping is expected for almost any service.

The best practice is to follow tipping etiquette and percentage recommendations for the USA.

## AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Tipping in Australia and New Zealand, like the UK, is not expected but can be done at your own discretion if you think service merits it.

## OTHER POPULAR DESTINATIONS

### South Africa

Those in the customer service industry will expect tips. It is customary to tip between 10 and 15% in restaurants and bars, though it is common practice for some businesses to add the tip to the bill automatically if groups are 6 plus, so check the bill carefully.

At hotels it is customary to tip the porter around 3 - 5 South African Rand per bag (less than 50p) and around the same amount to parking attendants and petrol attendants at re-fill stations.

Taxis anticipate a 10% tip and tour guides and coach drivers will expect a combined tip at the end of a tour – the norm is around 15 Rand per person per day (little over £1 each).

### Dubai

In Dubai, restaurants, hotels and bars automatically apply a service charge. If not, it is common practise to add 10% of the total to the bill – more if you feel it merits it.

You can tip bellboys 5 or 10 Dirhams (around £2), as you might do so for parking valets or porters.

Taxi drivers don't expect a tip

Tipping in bars is not usually expected but can get you speedier service

## Egypt

Tipping is a way of life - though always at your discretion. If you use a caleche (horse-drawn 'buggy') to get about, the driver will expect a tip on top of the agreed fare. Taxi drivers don't get tipped generally. Good guides should be tipped appropriately, with more than loose change to avoid insult.

Tips are welcomed but not mandatory in local restaurants as there is up to a 12% charge added to the bill. For upscale eateries including hotel restaurants, most people leave anywhere between 20-50 Egyptian pounds (LE - Livre Egyptienne), that's up to approximately £5.

Smoking shisha is popular and it is customary to leave two tips – a collective tip for the bill and one for the 'wala' (the man who brings your shisha and coals). At least £1-2 for the 'wala' is sufficient.

In addition to parking lot fees, valets will also expect tips ranging from LE 3 at restaurants to LE 10 at five-star hotels (from 50p - £2). Bell boys expect £2 tips for individual services also, whilst housekeeping anticipate a total of around £5-6 at the end of your stay.

Tipping is expected when using most WC facilities. Loose change is acceptable. Lift operators will also expect a small gesture.