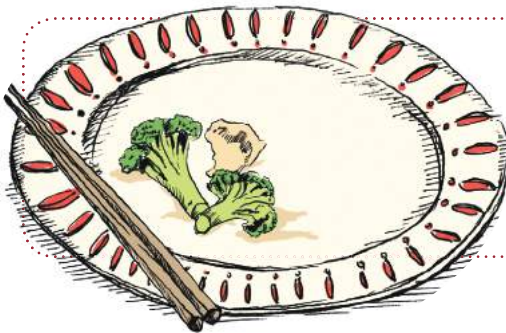


Rules for the Road

If you're traveling to these countries, you'll need to relearn your table manners.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAY VAN MILLENGEN

RUSSIA: No hands in your lap—they should always stay visible, above the table.



CHINA: Leave a few bites of food on your plate. This signals to the hosts that they gave you plenty to eat.

HUNGARY: Never clink your beer glasses. Legend has it the Austrians did this after defeating the Hungarians in the 1849 War of Independence, so Hungarians put an informal ban on the action.



PORTUGAL: Don't ask for salt and pepper if it is not offered. The chef might take it as an insult to his cooking skills.

INDIA: Eat with your right hand only. Sorry, lefties: The rule dates back centuries, and it designates the right hand for eating and the left for "unclean" actions, like taking off your shoes.

KOREA: Wait to start eating (or leaving the table) until the oldest male has done so. It's one of the many ways Koreans show respect.

ETHIOPIA: Don't serve dinner on individual plates—instead, eat family-style. All of those extra dishes are seen as wasteful.

VENEZUELA: When you're invited to someone's house for dinner, arrive 15 minutes late. If you show up on time, you might seem eager or greedy.

THAILAND: Never eat off your fork. Locals insist that forks don't hold Thai food like curries and rice very well, so they use them only to push food onto their utensil of choice: the spoon.

FRANCE: Don't bite directly into bread; it's considered uncouth. Tear off a piece instead—but feel free to use it to soak up whatever's on your plate.

JAPAN: Never tip the waitstaff. Good service is considered standard—paying extra would suggest otherwise and could insult the servers.

