

SMOKING GUN



Travel expert reveals the Dos and Don'ts for a trip to Thailand you probably didn't know

All comments to be attributed to [Destination2's](#) destination expert Betty Bouchier-Hobin.

“[Thailand](#) is a country known for its warmth and hospitality, but respecting local customs is key to having a truly enriching experience. Even the smallest gestures can have a big impact on how you're received and something as simple as how you step through a door can speak volumes”.

Betty's essential tips to help tourists navigate Thai etiquette:

DON'T touch people's heads:

“The head is regarded as the most sacred part of the body in [Thailand](#), so it's important to never touch anyone's head, even casually or playfully. If you ever find yourself in a situation where you must touch someone's head, always ask for permission first to show respect for their belief.

DON'T point:

“In Thai culture, pointing can often be seen as rude, especially if directed at people. If you must, try using your whole hand or a subtle chin nod instead. A small change in gesture like this can show great respect and help you feel at ease with the locals.

DON'T step on thresholds:

“In Thailand, door thresholds often hold spiritual significance, particularly in temples, so it's important to respect that. Stepping on a threshold is seen as disrespectful, so always step over it to show your awareness. Respecting Thai traditions is a huge part of mastering etiquette.

DON'T raise or point your feet:

“Although you must remove your shoes when entering temples to protect the building from dirt, propping them up or pointing them at sacred objects is highly disrespectful. In Thai culture, feet are considered the lowest and least clean part of the body. It's important

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to avoid sticking your feet out, especially towards monks or Buddha images and never at food or books.”

DO return the Wai Greeting:

“If a local offers you a wai, it's polite to return the gesture. Instead of a handshake, press your palms together in a prayer-like gesture and offer a slight bow. This traditional greeting helps show respect and is a great way to connect with locals.

DO smile...a lot:

“Smiling is a universal language in Thailand and an integral part of cultural etiquette. With Thailand being known as the ‘Land of smiles’, keeping a happy face or returning a smile can express friendliness and ease any tension.

DO be mindful when taking pictures:

“Of course, you’ll want to capture Thailand’s beauty on your visit for your Instagram, but it’s important to be respectful.

“Always ask permission before photographing people, especially monks, and be mindful of sacred spaces like temples. To help, look out for the temple’s rules listed outside, or just ask the locals, they’ll be more than happy to help.

ENDS

For media enquiries please contact the Destination2 PR team on
destination2@smokinggun.agency | Tel: 0161 839 1986

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