

So how much should you tip on holiday?

You've just had a wonderful meal on holiday, tasted the local delicacies — and Roberto, the waiter, could not have been more helpful. So the last thing you want when the bill arrives is to accidentally cause offence by getting the tip wrong.

Every country has different customs about when you should tip, when it's inappropriate and how much you should leave.

And even within each country it can be different if you are paying for a meal, taxi, room service or just a drink at the bar. Here, we ask local experts in major holiday destinations for the insider's guide to tipping.

A smile is as important as cash for the Italians

In Italy, a tip is not expected, but a token gesture is appreciated.

Fabio Datteroni, the general manager of Castello Del Nero Hotel & Spa in Tuscany, says: 'If you tip someone it is because that person really made the effort to go the extra mile and has been extra kind and welcoming towards you.'

Restaurants: Any service charge should be included in the bill. But most Italians will leave an extra couple of euros if the service was very good. Always leave any tips in cash and hand directly to the waiter.

Bars: Italians rarely tip when out for a coffee or glass of wine as most of the time they drink while standing in front of the bar rather than at a table. At most leave a little loose change.

Hotels: If a doorman parks your car or a porter helps with your luggage, tip between five and ten euros. Similarly, if you are pleased with room service, leave between five and ten euros for each day of your stay.

Fabio recommends leaving a thank you note in an envelope with the maid's name on. You can ask at reception who looked after your room during your stay.

Taxis: Just round up the bill. So if it is 16 euros and 60 cents, for example, make it 17 euros.

Top tip: Smile, say thank you and shake their hand. You don't have to give money to show your gratitude.

Round up the bill for taxis in Spain

The Spanish are not big tippers. Remy Arroyo, of Palladium Hotel Group which owns Only YOU Hotel & Lounge Madrid, says: 'Gratuities in Spain are certainly welcomed but not expected. If you don't tip, you won't get any nasty looks, and they won't chase you down.'

Restaurants: It's normal to leave a few coins. For example, if your meal costs a total of 35 euros, you might leave one euro, two at most.

It's unlikely you'll be able to add the tip to a card payment so keep some cash with you. In a fancy restaurant you might leave between 5 and 10 per cent.

Those who dine alone are also usually expected to tip a little extra, especially if the restaurant is busy, as are large family groups.

Bars: If you get table service or you are given free olives or cheese you would usually leave some small change. If you are just having a drink at the bar you wouldn't be expected to leave anything.

Hotels: You might want to leave chambermaids some loose change, and porters one euro — although Miguel Moreno, of price comparison website HotelsCombined, says bellboys will be very careful not to seem as though they are waiting for it because it is considered rude.

Tour guides get good tips — around ten euros from each person in the group.

Taxis: No tip is expected, but most Spaniards would round up to the nearest euro.

Top tip: Alfredo Martinez, head of concierge at Cotton House Hotel Barcelona, an Autograph Collection Hotel, says: 'When handing over a tip, say 'Muchas gracias por la ayuda' — it means thanks for your help.'

Cruise Liners can charge £11.30 per person per day

Each cruise liner will have its own tipping policy. However, a spokeswoman for Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) says that the majority add a set amount to an on-board account each day, which you pay at the end of the trip.

You are not expected to leave a tip every time you order a drink or eat a meal. P&O Cruises, for example, has a £5.50 per guest per day charge — though it maintains this is voluntary and that you can ask for it to be reduced. The money will be split between the whole crew, including waiters and cabin stewards.

Some cruise liners may even encourage you to pay your tips in advance. Royal Caribbean says pre-paying its \$13.50 (£9.22) per day (\$16.50 or £11.30 if you have a grand suite) charge makes it easier for passengers to budget for their trip.

You will also avoid being hit by a fluctuating exchange rate because you can pay in pounds. When on board its ships you must pay in U.S. dollars.

Many people prefer to put some cash into an envelope for the crew members at the end of the holidays. But this can be tricky as, with so many restaurants on board these days, it's unlikely the same member of staff will serve you every day.

Pat French porters

The French word for tip is *pourboire*. It literally means 'for a drink'.

And, as a rule of thumb, a few euros — enough to buy a glass of wine or a beer — should be enough in most circumstances. It is not compulsory.

Restaurants: Most establishments add a 15 per cent surcharge on restaurant bills for service — though this usually goes directly to the owner who then distributes it to staff.

Some diners choose to offer something extra to waiting staff. Philippe Bassoul, UK sales manager at the luxurious Barriere Group of hotels in Paris, says: 'Normally how you tip depends on the calibre of the restaurant.'

'If service has been exceptional, then you can add 10 per cent to 15 per cent. If it is a Michelin-starred gastro restaurant, then it's ten to 15 euros per person.'

'If you visit the same cafe every day, it's nice to leave a couple of euros once a week.'

Bars: Tips are not demanded — but a couple of euros slipped to hardworking staff can help you get served more quickly.

Hotels: Tips are generally not expected, with the exception of porters, when you would usually pay two or three euros for each bag that is carried for you.

Some upmarket hotels might offer an envelope to leave a tip for the room cleaning staff, but again this is not expected.

Taxis: There is generally no need to tip.

Top tip: Be nice to people who are nice to you. Reward service but only if it goes beyond what is necessary.

Leave a kuna for coffee in Croatia

You are expected to make some gesture for the service you receive in Croatia. The extra kuna comes in handy for hotel and restaurant workers on relatively low salaries.

Restaurants: Mate Perajica, a private tour guide based in the city of Split, says: 'Around 10 per cent is typically expected in restaurants.'

'You can also leave a kuna or two if you stay somewhere for a coffee. You don't need to tip in fast-food restaurants.'

Bars: Tips are optional, but feel free to leave a little extra cash.

Hotels: Tips are generally not expected. But Ivona Grgan, director of the Croatian National Tourist Office, says: 'In hotels, tips are seen as tokens of gratitude and small amounts are welcomed with good grace.'

Taxis: Round up the bill and tell the driver to keep the change.

Top tip: Try the phrase 'U redu je'. This means 'It's OK' and will let a waiter know you are happy for him to keep the change.

YOU COULD GET STUNG FOR AS MUCH AS 30% IN THE STATES

In the U.S., tip everywhere. Joel Freyberg, MD of Gansevoort Park Hotel, Park Avenue, New York, says: 'If you have a terrible cab ride or bad service in a restaurant, you can just not pay a tip, but be prepared to be frowned on.'

Restaurants: Most Americans pay by card. To make it easy for customers to tip, there are three options on the card machine and you pick the one you want.

Previously it was normal to tip 15 per cent of the total bill, but today it's nearer 20 per cent. For exceptional service,

Americans tip as much as 30 per cent.

Hotels: For housekeeping, leave \$5 for the day maid and another \$5 in the evening if the hotel offers a turn-down service.

If you are staying more than one night, leave the cash in an envelope at the front desk.

If someone carries your bags to your room, tip \$5; if a doorman hails a cab, give one to two dollars.

If the concierge desk makes a dinner reservation in a restaurant that is difficult to get into you should give around \$10.

Bars: Just select an option on the card machine. If you are paying in cash, one or two dollars is enough — never less than a dollar or you may struggle to get served again.

Taxis: As above.

Top tip: If in doubt when working out how much to tip in a restaurant, double the tax part of the bill (it's listed separately, a bit like VAT) and you should be fine.

Tip for beers on the beach in Oz

Australians have a minimum wage of \$17.29 an hour (£8.50), so tipping is never expected. But if you get good service and would normally tip at home, staff will always appreciate you rounding up the bill.

Leo Seaton, general manager of media and communications at Tourism Australia, says: 'Tipping in Australia is a discretionary thing. Some people do, some don't.

'Some restaurants include an optional service fee, but it is down to the customer as to whether they choose to pay this.'

Restaurants: You won't cause upset if you choose not to tip, but if you've particularly enjoyed your meal a 10 per cent tip would be welcomed. Either round up your bill when paying by card or leave a few dollars behind.

Bars: While tipping is not expected, lots of bars have outdoor areas where a waiter will bring out your drinks while you enjoy the sun. Leaving them a few coins would be appreciated.

Hotels: You don't need to tip your concierge, but leave a few dollars behind for the maid. The same applies for doormen if they help you with your luggage.

Taxis: Again, while not expected, it's not unusual to leave an extra \$2.

Top tip: Australians are proud of their food, so a few kind words after a meal are always well received.

Add 10% to eat out in Portugal

Offering a tip is normal in cafes, restaurants and taxis in Portugal.

Restaurants: A tip of 5 per cent to 10 per cent of the bill is typically expected. If you visit a cafe for a drink, leave the change behind on the table along with the payment.

Bars: Offer around one euro each time you buy a drink — although it's not compulsory.

Hotels: Pedro Ribeiro, sales and marketing director of Dom Pedro Hotels, a chain around Lisbon, Madeira and the Algarve says: 'It's usual to offer a couple of euros for each bag to the bellboys, but it's not usual to give something to the maids, unless they have brought something from downstairs for you.'

Taxis: Add just one to two euros to the bill.

Top tip: If you go on an organised tour, most passengers will do a collection for the driver. For a half-day tour, expect to pay a few euros each.

However, this rule does not apply for transfers between the airport and hotels on package trips.