

Read the following article and answer the questions that follow:

5 TOILET TIPS: HOW TO PEE ALL OVER THE WORLD

Every traveler has a foreign bathroom scary toilet story. For all activities in foreign countries that incite culture shock, nothing gets as personal or as shocking as visiting a strange bathroom.

Unfortunately, not every bathroom or toilet is as clean or as luxurious as those found in Japan. On the other hand, there are toilets in Finland where you're required to send a text message to open the stall. Since you may not be traveling to Japan or Finland, then read about TripAtlas.com's 5 Tips to Help You Pee All Over the World. You'll soon become a seasoned traveler, adventurer and bathroom expert after you've finished reading this article.



1) Always bring toilet paper & antibacterial & menthol rub with you

Never assume that toilet paper is a given nor that it will automatically be provided for you by restaurants, stores, etc. Even if a bathroom does have toilet paper, it may remind you more of cardboard than toilet paper. If you're picky, then bring rolls with you when you travel (taking the cardboard out of the middle and squishing the roll helps you fit more).

Antibacterial rub is great when you don't find water, sinks, soap -- or after you've touched the bathroom door handle. Dab or spread menthol rub, lip balm or moisturizing lotion under your nose to keep you from gagging if you've found yourself in the worst or smelliest of bathrooms.

2) Get used to the Squat Toilet



From Africa to Asia, to Europe and anywhere outside North America, squat toilets are standard and they are everywhere. So if you're planning on traveling, you might as well get used to them. They range from dirt holes in the ground with space for your feet; to holes in the ground with no space for your feet because someone peed all over the space; to ceramic holes in the ground with space for your feet -- and a flushing system. Some may be stalls with doors, so they may be open, indoors and outdoors. Surprisingly, sometimes these may be much cleaner than typical American flush toilets!

As long as you master the squat toilet, you'll be set to go anywhere. Hold on to the walls if you have weak quads -- you don't want to fall in.

3) Bring coins/change with you to open the stalls or tip attendants

As shocking as it may be that you have to pay to use a washroom that's being "taken care of" by a crabby attendant, it's part of the custom and it's got to be done -- even if the bathroom looks filthy. Some places like Turkey have supervised bathrooms to make sure you don't splash. In Paris, London and other tourist cities, even San Francisco, you'll find coin-operated public cabins on the streets. Insert coins and the door opens automatically. You have 15 minutes to finish. Once you're done the cabin steam cleans and disinfects itself for the next user. Spic and span!

4) Ah, the Elusive Flush

Some flush, some don't. Some are levers, some are buttons, handles, pulled strings or chains. Some you pull, push, turn. Some have two buttons. Unfortunately, you'll have to trust your quick wit and intuition when it comes to flushing. If all else fails, it's all right to give up. Just hope that there are no witnesses.



5) Museums, McDonalds, Starbucks and Big Hotel Chains

If you find one of these, it's likely you'll find a great bathroom -- as long as you can get over the same disinfectant smell that seems to be the international bathroom cleaning detergent for all McDonald's restaurants. When you find one, then go to the bathroom even if you don't "need" to go.

You may thank yourself for it later.

Multiple Choice (Select the best or most correct answer.)

- _____ 1. According to this selection, in what country can you find the best bathrooms?
- a) Finland
 - b) while traveling
 - c) McDonalds
 - d) Japan
- _____ 2. What is the only way that some washrooms in Finland can be accessed?
- a) by paying the attendant
 - b) by sending a text message
 - c) by going to a restaurant
 - d) by asking ¿Dónde está el baño?
- _____ 3. What do the authors of this website suggest that travelers bring with them?
- a) lotion, toilet paper and bottled water
 - b) antibacterial rub, toilet paper and lotion
 - c) lip balm, toilet paper and smelling salts
 - d) lotion, lip balm and kleenex
- _____ 4. Many foreign toilets...?
- a) are a hole in the floor
 - b) are very different from Canadian ones
 - c) are tricky to flush
 - d) all of the above
- _____ 5. Public restrooms on the street...?
- a) are very clean
 - b) give the user as much time as they need finish
 - c) are free to all citizens and tourists
 - d) can only be found in Europe
- _____ 6. The final bit of advice this website has to offer is...?
- a) don't travel
 - b) hold it until you get back to your hotel
 - c) avoid the Starbucks restrooms at all costs
 - d) use the facilities at McDonalds whenever you find one

Have you ever traveled to a foreign country? What experiences did you have that were significantly different from here in Canada?

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why?
