

## Here's a Tip!

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Tipping, or gratuities to give them a posh name, is a way of life in America. Any service that is given which might be a taxi ride a meal or drinks in a restaurant, help with your luggage, a coach journey. a hotel porter etc. expects to be tipped for a well provided service. Many British visitors find this to be a nuisance, inconvenient and sometimes even offensive. Many ask why these people are not just paid a decent living wage.

This is of course a uniquely British view of the situation because it is only here that you would go into a restaurant and automatically pay a service charge on the bill irrespective of the standard of service provided. Indeed I think many Americans would argue strongly against a change in their system. It has provided them with a nation of people who want to give excellent customer service and gives the visitor the chance to reward that service if you so wish.

It was explained to me that many American teenagers who go to college go with no state financial assistance and with parents who cannot afford to help them with their fee's. Therefore they have to work their way through college. It is true that there are many more service jobs available in America than here in the UK, Americans eat out much more often than we do for example. What this does mean though is that many of these young people are going into service type industries where they can quite often double or treble their wages simply by providing good service.

There is a trend in British industry to look for local independent suppliers. This is based on the belief that smaller organisations can provide faster and more friendly service. Therefore the challenge for us all is to emulate the American philosophy of providing good service, with a smile when and where that service is needed. The "tip" of course is that they are more likely to promptly pay invoices for a service well provided.

The message from America is that service can be provided well and that people can enjoy providing good service.