

TAIWAN CUSTOMS

[contributed by various students]

- * The drinking of wine and the toasting of guests at business functions-with “bottoms up”
- * The exchanging of cigarettes on meeting friends and being introduced to new friends
- * The presenting of namecards in a ritualistic fashion on being introduced to someone
- * The tradition of praying for, burning incense to, and offering food to the “hungry ghosts’ (who are regarded as brothers) during the “ghost month” (the eight month of the Lunar calendar)
- * The giving of a “red envelope” stuffed with money at Chinese New Year, to various family members (usually children)
- * The giving of a “red envelope” (hong bao) stuffed with a LOT of money to someone in an attempt to establish a working relationship with that person, or in an attempt to obtain “better” service, if that person is a doctor, teacher of one’s children, a legislator, or other public figure
- * The giving of a “white envelope” at a funeral service for the family of the deceased
- * The holding of a “street wedding” (at the “Hei Song Da Fan dian”) in the actual street, usually outside the newly-wedded couple’s home
- * The traditional slight bowing accompanied by the exchanging of namecards is giving way now to the shaking of hands in modern business circles
- * The presenting of a gift to a host at a “party” or other function
- * The enquiring after one’s sustenance needs as a greeting- “Have you eaten?”
- * The enquiring after a friend’s or newly-met friend’s family
- * The frequent attending of business socializing functions and meetings held at various drinking establishments, catering to tastes for liquor, food, carousing, short term female companionship, and doing business
- * The participating in marathon singing orgies at do-it-yourself entertainment centers known as KTVs and RTVs by both young and old alike
- * The general flouting of most civil traffic laws such as the non-wearing of seatbelts except on the highway [and others such as the running of red traffic lights, speeding, double parking and parking on the pavement and drunken driving, are all examples of time-honored traditions on the road...]
- * The greeting of old friends with “Long time no see” if the time period has been over a fortnight

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