

Unusual Things Tourists Can Find in Japan

There are some things in Japan that are really shocking. Before you go to Japan, make sure that you are not overweight, that you carry your trash with you, and remember that only some people are allowed to swim in pools.

1. You can't buy some medications.

Most medications which can easily be bought in other countries can be bought only by **prescription** in Japan. For example, inhalers and some allergy medication can be bought only if it is prescribed by a doctor.

2. There are severe restrictions on how you can name a child.

In Japan, there are very severe rules on how you can name a child because the Japanese believe in the strength of the name and the fact that it influences a person's **fate**. Parents don't have the right to choose a name that can seem ambiguous or sound negative. For example, in 1993, some parents wanted to name their child "Akuma" which can be translated as "devil." The parents were **sued**, and the baby was given a different, a more "positive" name.

3. You can't throw away money.

This is a very strange rule: in Japan, it is prohibited to throw away or damage money. Otherwise, the person may be sentenced to one year in jail or a \$2,000 fine.

4. You can't be overweight.

Since 2008, there has been "The Metabolaw" in Japan. This way, the government is trying to fight against citizens being overweight. According to the law, people from 40 to 75 years old have their waist measured. For men, it shouldn't be more than 34 inches, for women — not more than 35 inches. In case a person is more overweight than that, the Japanese are prescribed special medical support to control the weight. There are no **penalties** or fines.

5. You can't make alcohol.

No homemade beer or wine. The law prohibits private alcohol production. If you break this law, you might be **sentenced** to 5 years in jail or a \$5,000 fine.

6. Dumpsters in public places are prohibited.

You won't see a dumpster in a public place in Japan. This rule is connected to the culture itself: since childhood, the Japanese are taught to sort the **trash** and throw it away at home. And another reason is that there was a terrorist attack in the Tokyo subway in 1995 and the government decided to get rid of the trashcans where a bomb could be planted.

7. You can't dance in night clubs.

The Japanese law says that you can't dance in places that are smaller than 710 sq ft. And in order to open a dance club, you need to get a special dance license.

8. The age of sexual **consent is 13.**

In Japan, people can officially have a sexual relationship as early as 13 years old but they can only get married when they are 18 years old. Before, according to the Japanese law, girls could get married at the age of 16, and boys only after 18. But now the rules are different, and both boys and girls have to reach 18 years old in order to get married.

9. You can't go fishing without a license.

This rule works only with the fugu fish. The thing is if you cook it wrong, it will become deadly for people. That's why only the people who have a special license can catch this fish and cook it.

10. You can't visit pools and saunas if you have tattoos.

There is no formal law about the prohibition of tattoos. However, there are signs in public places which prohibit the people who have tattoos to visit swimming pools and saunas. This rule extends to both the Japanese and tourists.

11. You can't participate in wars.

Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan says that the country refuses to **participate** in wars because they want international peace. They don't have an army at all.

12. Women have to wear bras.

Women in Japan have to wear bras in the buildings where there is an air conditioner. This law was designed to avoid sexual **harassment** at work.

Bonus: the poop trend

There are a lot of poop-themed things in Japan, for example, a cafe where you can eat food that resembles poo or even **vomit**. Or even an actual museum of poop! There you can see all kinds of poop — even poop from animals. You can buy a hat that looks like poop. There is even a chorus of singing toilets! Who might want to see something like this? People in Japan are not embarrassed to talk about things like this so it's not a big deal for them.

Internet source: brightside.me/wonder-curiousities/12-crazy-things-possible-only-in-japan-457510

EXERCISES:

I. Decide if the sentences are true (T) or false (F). If false, explain why.

1. In Japan you can buy any medicine without going to a doctor first.....
2. If you throw away money, you can go to prison.....
3. If you are overweight in Japan, you will have to pay a fine.....
4. There are no dumpsters in public places because of aesthetic reasons.....
5. According to the Japanese law, girls can't get married before they are 18 years old.....
6. You can't go fishing without a license.....
7. The prohibition of tattoos when you visit swimming pools does not concern tourists.....
8. When you are a woman, you have to wear a bra in the room with air conditioner
9. Poop is a taboo topic in Japan.....

II. Match the highlighted words to their Polish equivalents:

1. MOLESTOWANIE -
2. UCZESTNICZYĆ -
3. WYMIOTY -
4. RECEPTA -
5. SKAZAĆ -
6. ŚMIECI -
7. ZGODA -
8. KARY -
9. POZWAĆ -
10. LOS -

III. Which of the bans do you find reasonable? Why? Which of them do you find weird? Why?

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Mgr Maria Lisiewicz