



MUROTO EXCHANGE GIFT GIVING & IDEAS

When invited into a Japanese home, as a friend or for an official homestay, it is customary to bring a gift, or *omiyage*.

To the Japanese, gift giving is **a way of communicating respect, friendship, and appreciation**. When meeting with a Japanese colleague or visitor for the first time, always be prepared for the gift giving ritual that has been deeply embedded in the Japanese culture for centuries.

The presentation of the gift is important too; try to avoid white and brightly coloured wrapping paper however, as white symbolizes death and bright colours are considered too flashy. Also, try to avoid giving gifts in sets of four, as the word four in Japanese is *shi*, which is also associated with the word for death. Always present your gift with two hands.

When unwrapping a gift, Japanese people may carefully remove the paper/seals and keep the paper as a compliment.

• GIFT IDEAS:

- Photo album
- Tim Tams / Caramello Koalas
- Australian tea
- NOT Vegemite (although Vegemite merchandise is okay)
- Books (picture/children's/Australian)
- Art & craft
- Clip-on koalas
- Kangaroo stick pins
- Plush toys (host brothers/sisters)
- Coins
- Stamps
- Pencils / erasers / rulers
- Postcards / magnets / key rings
- Stubbie holders
- T-shirts (e.g. EP or Lincoln Surf)
- Ties (host father – not black) & scarves (host mother)
- Jewellery (e.g. opal)

*The following shops are worth checking out: **Visitor Information Centre, Post Office, Nautilus Arts Centre, the newsagents, the supermarkets, Cheap as Chips (check for "Made in China" labels), Fresh Fish Place, Lincoln Local etc.***



MUROTO EXCHANGE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

- **BATH:** shower/wash on stool first, soak in bath second (leave crystal clear)
- **BOWING:** copy them, face to face
- **CHOPSTICKS** (see separate sheet)
- **EATING & DINING:** banquet, try everything, sit down, various tables
- **GIFTS** (info/ideas overleaf)
- **SHOES & SLIPPERS:** shoes off inside, toilet slippers
- **SLURPING & SNIFFING:** is okay
- **TATAMI & FUTON:** straw floor & mattress bed
- **TOILET:** variety (squat toilet through to hi-tech)