

THE WORLD'S MOST SUPERSTITIOUS LOCATIONS



Superstitions are closely linked to culture. Most of the time, they transcend national boundaries, but in some cases, they're hyper-localized.

For example, the number thirteen isn't used by most companies in North America given its association with bad luck; this includes airline rows, floors in skyscrapers, and more. The same goes for the number four in East Asia. Japanese, Chinese, and Korean companies are less likely to use the number four whether providing cell phone numbers or pricing a deal.

But for the most part, superstitions are private. In some cases, people develop their own quirky habits for situations that require luck or total focus. For example, some students may use a 'lucky pen' when it's time for exams, going to great lengths to make sure it's available to them.

But what about locations? Do certain areas and cities auger more superstitious habits than others? Let's take a closer look at five of the world's most superstitious cities.

Las Vegas (USA)

With its 30 state-of-the-art casinos and some 40 million tourists passing through each year, Vegas is a melting pot of odd superstitions. Most are related to gaming, such as wearing a certain color or sitting in a certain direction while at the table.

The number and variations are fascinating—the game of poker alone has [six main superstitions that many recognize](#), such as winning first hand and wearing the same clothes. Most interestingly, these habits can be contrasted with professionals and tourists from Asia's gaming mecca of Macau.

Hong Kong (China)

Though Hong Kong is home to one of the world's leading financial markets, not all locals are banking on investment forecasts and stock market shifts. Millions of [visitors often flock to areas like Kowloon](#), which are littered with fortune teller stands and shops that locals and visitors alike can visit.

Most superstitions here have to do with day-to-day life, like not leaving chopsticks upright in a bowl or how deeply to cut into a birthday cake. Others cover appropriate gifts (steer clear of shoes and clocks). Only one common superstition has to do with profit margins—as mentioned above, avoid the number four at all costs!

Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

Similar to Varanasi (see below), Rio de Janeiro is one of the most culturally diverse areas in the world. As such, existing traditions are unique to the city and surrounding areas. One local commodity is the 'figa', a small rock or crystal that works as a protective amulet to stave off danger.

But remember—these should only be gifted, never purchased for oneself.

Other superstitions require a bit of thought. For example, one way to ward off bad luck is to enter and leave a location by putting the right foot first. To be extra careful, a person can also take care to enter and leave a location through the same doorway.

Moscow (Russia)

As the capital of Russia, folk traditions from across the nation have taken root in Moscow. The most common that tourists will notice on a visit are shaking hands through a doorway and stepping over another person. The first they may whilst notice walking about, while the second will become very apparent on a crowded train. Both are considered bad luck.

Other superstitions in Moscow will pertain to travelers, specifically. The first is taking a moment of silence before traveling; it's considered good luck, but can also help someone remember something important. Another superstition is to avoid cleaning up after someone until they've arrived at their next destination. In Moscow, locals may not wait longer than an hour, but in more rural locations, it's customary to wait a full day.

Varanasi (India)

As one of the most-visited sites in India by domestic and international tourists, Varanasi is a melting pot. There are a few city-specific superstitions that differentiate this metropolis from nearby areas—in fact, there's a movement of 'rationalists' who look to dispel certain superstitions.

One interesting belief is that hanging lemons and chillis inside a business will help attract good fortune. Science (sort of) agrees—lemons and chillis may not bring in the big bucks, but they will fend off small insects and certain parasites.

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