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You may have seen a few in your school. You may also know a couple of them in your class. You know, those peers who speak with an atas accent, or are unfamiliar with Singapore culture even though they’re Singaporean. You may even live in an age of globalization, Third Culture Kids are quite widespread in Singapore. But who are these Third Culture Kids, and how much do you know about them?

Who are they?

A term coined in the 1950s, Third Culture Kids (TCKs) refer to children who have spent their formative years in places that are not their parent’s homeland, influenced both by their parent’s culture and the culture in which they are raised.

While many are children of expatriate workers, missionaries, diplomats or military families, they can also be from transnational marriages, which is increasingly common across Asia. In fact, 1 in 3 Singapore marriage these days are transnational, and children of these marriages sometimes end up moving around places that are neither of their parents’ home countries.

Redefining ‘Family’

Even the idea of ‘family’ may be different from what many people understand. For example, a typical Singaporean family will have Singaporean passports for all members, but a TCK family may have parents with different passports each, which also may be different from their children’s. Sometimes, it’s not unusual for each family member to be holding different passports or even multiple passports. Some of their siblings may be born in different countries.

For example, fresh grad Julian has an Australian passport, and his family comprises a father with British and Australian passports and a mother with a Swiss passport. One of his brothers was born in Switzerland, the other in Singapore.

What sets them apart?

ACCENTS: While we tend to categorize Singaporeans who speak with an atas accent as those who are trying to sound posh, the accents of TCKs are often acquired through prolonged interactions with peers and educators from all over the world.

LANGUAGE SKILLS: TCKs often acquire their language skills based on how far they’ve travelled and how long their heritage is. Some TCKs are bilingual, or even multilingual depending on circumstances. For example, JingXuan is a TCK who was raised in Taiwan and Japan for many years where her parents worked, she now speaks English, Mandarin, and Japanese.

OPENNESS: A recent study showed that third culture kids score more open to new experiences and more conscientious. This is probably due to the fact that, in the midst of moving around, they need to adapt fast. – easier than someone without their experience.

Same age, but they’ve learned to be independent. This is because they’ve had to adapt to life without the facts that, in the midst of moving around, they need to adapt fast.

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE: Most TCKs tend to be able to adapt to any situation very quickly. This has given them the cultural sensitivity to know how to behave appropriately or when not to ask intrusive questions. TCKs are often acquired through prolonged interactions with peers and educators from all over the world.

INDEPENDENCE: Because they’ve had to adapt to life without the same set of friends growing up, they’ve learned to be independent. This means they’re able to adapt to new environment – or, university almost instantly than someone without their experience.

TRAVEL EXPERIENCE: TCKs tend to travel a lot with their families, and are also perfectly fine to travel alone.

IDEA OF HOME: Ask any TCK where they’re from, and they’ll give a more variable answer than answer. It can be difficult if their parents are from two different countries, they’ve grown up in multiple countries, and/or have multiple passports. Life as a TCK can create a sense of rootlessness, because their home is both everywhere and nowhere.

SENSE OF RESTLESSNESS: TCKs may also feel restless as adults, who are present in multiple-studies to have less emotional stability. This could be because TCKs don’t have a sense of belonging, commitment, and attachment to one culture, affecting their sense of identity. The need to constantly move around may be rooted in their psyche, making it difficult for them to form close bonds with anyone.

CAN’T BE A HOARDER: One of the downsides of frequent relocation is that they don’t have the chance to give up owning things, like favourite toys or mementos. Their minimalist lifestyle is borne out of necessity, as many TCKs grow up not being attached to things.

TRAVEL NIGHTMARE: Travelling with family can be a hassle for a TCK. Even members of the same family have different passports, it’s not uncommon to find families split up at immigration.

DIFFICULTY MAINTAINING FRIENDSHIPS: Many TCK families move as often as every two years, leaving close friends and making it difficult to form meaningful bonds. While TCKs may even be perceived as snobbish because of the accents and/or world experience, which can be difficult for them to blend in as social insiders.

STRESS AND TRAUMA: Every time the family moves, it’s obviously stressful for anyone. TCKs are also at risk of PTSD if they live in an environment where instances of violent crime, kidnapping or political causes are happening. One TCK who lived in ảnhan was kidnapped because his father was a prominent figure in China.
India has over 450 spoken languages, but the pizzaghetti is as one has claimed to invent it. Its history is Italian dish yet: pizza-ghetti. The pizzaghetti looks as messy as its name – it’s essentially a spaghetti-topped pizza. It must surely taste better than how it looks, as it has a cult following in Canada. At the height of its popularity, Couche-Tard, a popular convenience store chain, offered pizzaghetti-flavoured slushie. This may be the most offensive ‘Italian’ dish, but others might argue that nothing is more Italian than this.

Singapore Noodles

Singapore is known for being a food paradise, but tourists would have no luck finding the westernised bee hoon dish known as “Singapore Noodles” here. Sold in Chinese restaurants in the west, like the USA or UK, this stir-fried dish includes toppings of scrambled eggs, assorted vegetables, meat and curry powder. Putting curry powder on bee hoon might make locals cringe, but many time zones away, some would associate this with our country. Mysteriously, there is little evidence to explain the naming of this dish, especially since it was actually created in Hong Kong, where it is known as “Xing Zhou Hu Fan” (“Xing Zhou” means Singapore). Perhaps it references their love of exotic food.

Singapore Noodles continue to be a mainstay in Chinese stores across the western world, having been successfully adapted to their tastebuds. It is also a popular home-cooked meal as recipes emphasise flexibility on the types of meat and vegetables needed. Just remember to add curry powder.

Pizzaghetti!

It’s no secret that Italians are passionate about their food, but this is not the case for the pizzaghetti. The pizzaghetti can be traced back to Canada’s French-speaking region of Quebec, although no one has claimed to invent it. Its history is scarce online, but the pizzaghetti is at Quebecois as possible.

California Roll

Before Japanese cuisine became popular worldwide, Westerners were first introduced to the California roll. This inside-out sushi usually contains cucumber, crab and avocado, wrapped with seaweed and then wrapped with Japanese rice. Due to its popularity in Southern California in the 1980s, this invention was named after the state. Many chefs claimed to have invented it: one claimed that Americans used to peel off the regional seaweed off typical sushi, while another claimed he used avocado to substitute fatty tuna, creating an early prototype. This was not even the case in the 1970s. Toshi said his California roll was an attempt to hide the nori seaweed as “Westerners did not like seaweed in the 1970s.” He was appointed as a goodwill ambassador for Japanese cuisine by the Japanese government in 2016.

California roll’s history is confusing at best, but its role as a western classic paved the way for sushi to become well-known and highly sought-after across the globe today.

Indonesia, made up of thousands of islands, is the second most linguistically diverse country, with around 740 languages spoken. There are also regional languages spoken: Javanese, Sundanese, Minangkabau, and Melayu. Most of these languages are indigenous and have affected the development of the country’s official language, Bahasa Indonesia which also incorporates elements of Dutch, Sanskrit, and Arabic. Indonesia has thrived because of its shared identity even though there are so many distinct native ethnic and linguistic groups.
GOING SOLO
Finding beauty in chaos

By Bhawna Sharma

If I could relive just one memory from my twenty-one years of existence, it would be my ten-day solo-trip to New York. Far from a lonely experience, I believe it’s the ultimate cocktail mix of bravery, confidence, and liberation: there is nothing more fulfilling than planning an entire trip from start to finish on your terms. Naturally, uninitiated solo travellers may feel anxious at the prospect of exploring virgin territory. After crossing that bridge, however, they’ll find beauty in the chaos of travelling, and create life-long memories. Excited but unsure where to start? Here are tips for you to kick-start your solo rite of passage:

Research, research, and research
Everyone likes to have an Instagrammable trip, but not everyone likes to plan. While it’s not necessary to have a full-fledged, day-by-day itinerary, simply knowing which places you want to explore and grouping them according to proximity saves you time and anxiety by reducing uncertainty. Research is also important for budget-strapped students: if you have a select number of attractions in mind, for example, it may be cheaper to buy a bundled city-pass. Through forums and blogs, you should also find out neighbourhoods to avoid, and be mindful of the fact that not every country is as safe as Singapore even if it is first-world.

Be culturally attuned
A single bad encounter can leave solo travellers discouraged and dejected, feelings that are compounded when one is alone in a foreign environment. That’s why it’s crucial to find out essential cultural do-nots before embarking on a solo trip: you will not only save yourself from embarrassment, but also befriend locals more easily. To illustrate, one do-not in New York is to avoid direct and prolonged eye-contact with commuters in the subway. Similarly, if you plan to visit religious sites, remember to respect their sanctity and customs.

Put your safety first
Independence can be exhilarating to the point where we lose sight and make reckless decisions. Solo travellers need to exercise extra caution precisely because they stand out from the crowd, and make for easier targets. Wherever you may be in the world, it’s imperative to constantly have situational awareness. If you’re out late at night, try to be in a group and avoid secluded alleys. Growing up in Singapore, some of us tend to take this skill for granted until a rude reality-check.

It’s unlikely that your first solo-trip will go exactly how you imagined it to be – there will be times when things don’t go according to plan, and improvisation necessary. Take those setbacks in your stride, and you’ll emerge stronger, more confident, and ready to take on the world.

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Surprise yourself
Solo travelling gives you complete control over your trip, and that means you can be whoever you want to be, even for a few days. Far from the prying and sometimes judgmental gaze of friends and family, this is the perfect time to get out of your comfort zone and do things you normally wouldn’t do back home (within safety limits, of course). Be spontaneous, be flexible, and build your international social circle, because when you look back at your solo trip, it’s those moments when you surprised yourself that are indelible.

Don’t make it about checking boxes
This last piece of advice is perhaps the most important: all too frequently, young travellers go for quantity over quality, and end up rushing their itinerary to tick as many boxes as possible. While this may seem like making the most of solo-travelling, you’re unlikely to really get a feel of the places you’re visiting. But thanks to Google Maps, one of the best ways to soak in cities is to simply walk from point to point, even if that means sacrificing time. Thoroughly enjoy a few places inside-out, instead of having a superficial touch-and-go memory of your escapades.

Daring to language differences, some people may remain prejudiced against music they cannot understand because they fail to see how it can be meaningful – or introspectively dance-worthy – they can be. But to those who have opened their ears (and hearts) to genres like K-pop and Reggaeton, they’ll find that music truly transcends geography and culture. Perhaps, in our bid to understand why these genres are popular in countries beyond Korea or the Hispanic world, we must realize that not everything needs to resolve around language.
There is no doubt that Airbnb has revolutionised travel convenience as it provides guests with more affordable accommodation, and it’s a great way for hosts to make extra cash. Since its establishment in 2008, the app has had 150 million users with properties in 65,000 cities available for rent. While most guests have been satisfied with the service, there are some who’ve had startlingly negative experiences that aren’t your usual last-minute cancellation.

FAKE AIRBNB LISTING SCAM
In 2016, a woman paid in advance for a luxurious accommodation in Whangarei, New Zealand for an astounding $5,000 for six nights. When they arrived at the destination, they were met with two confused new owners with no sign of the booking. It appeared that scammers had created a fake listing linked to a fake payment platform which the renter used when her payment didn’t go through Airbnb.

DANGEROUS HOSTS
When you rent an Airbnb, you’re living in a stranger’s house, which could be dangerous if you’re not careful enough. In 2015, two women in Budapest were tricked by a man who used a false identity (she was a ‘Mr’) who then persuaded them to drink with him. One woman obliged him with a drink, which was spiked – they had to run away while she remained drugged throughout the trip. In another case, a 19-year-old boy who rented an apartment in Madrid was locked in with the host. The host linked to scare him before sexually assaulting him.

RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION
Researchers at Harvard University have discovered that racial profiling is present in Airbnb renting. In the US, users with African-American guests were accepted around 16% less than Caucasian guests. In another case, an Asian-American woman’s booking was cancelled by the host who insulted her with “One weird spot it all. Asian. Meanwhile, dozens of listings in China openly bar Uyghurs, Tibetans, and other ethnic minorities from renting rooms. A number of listings in India don’t accommodate couples of the opposite sex unless they are married or are close relatives (often requiring documentary evidence).

US-WIDE AIRBNB SCAM
Airbnb hosts have been known to cancel last minute on guests, but sometimes it’s more than just an inconvenience. In October 2019, VICE published an investigation into a scammer with multiple fake accounts that operated in eight cities across the US with over 100 stealing listings on Airbnb.

The scam involved a last-minute cancellation due to an ‘urgent problem’—a plumbing issue – then directing guests to another (more expensive) property of theirs in the same city. Guests had no choice but to book the new property where they were subjected to appalling living conditions, and were unable to get fully refunded when complaining to Airbnb later. A week after the investigation was published, Airbnb announced it would be making significant changes in its verification process.
Although Singapore thrives as an economic and cultural hub, the city-state has its fair share of environmental problems. Despite being highly educated, Singaporeans tend to lack an eco-friendly mindset; there is a prevalent consumerist culture where people prioritize money and convenience over the environment. Singapore could learn a thing or two from other countries about finding solutions to their biggest environmental concerns.

To put it straightforwardly, Singapore is bad at recycling. According to the National Environment Agency, Singapore only recycled 4% of its plastic waste in 2018. Although more than half of households recycle, the majority are putting trash in the wrong bin. The commonly-found blue recycling bins around the island are often wrongfully utilized and 40% of recyclable items are ultimately sent for incineration because of contamination.

Japan’s complicated yet strict trash separation system has been successful in indoctrinating an eco-friendly mindset in residents. All households must separate their garbage into the following categories: combustibles, non-combustibles, recyclables, PET bottles, and large items. The government produced flowcharts that explain what materials fit into which category, and as a result of this system, less than 10% of garbage end up in a landfill.

Singapore literally has a mounting trash problem – the only landfill site, Semakau island, is projected to be filled by 2030, making the reduction of waste an urgent matter. In 2018 alone, Singapore threw out 7.7 million tonnes of waste. Comprising ash from combustible mixed waste, Semakau encompasses 350 hectares of space between two offshore islands, and according to the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, there is simply no space for another landfill.

One solution is to reduce trash from being sent to the landfill in the first place. Since 1995, South Korea has implemented a volume-based waste fee system to generate less waste and ensure maximum recycling. Residents tap their IC on the public garbage bin, which will then calculate the weight of their trash and send a garbage disposal bill. The result? The country now recycles 95% of its food waste compared to just 2% in 1995.

In 2018, Singaporeans generated 760,000 tonnes of food waste – it’s a 30% increase over the past decade. Only 17% of food waste was recycled in 2018, mainly through community initiatives. A large proportion of food waste is generated before it reaches our plates because they’re either expired, or left to rot. Singapore has generally succeeded in reducing food waste, highest Singapore’s already present landfill problem; food waste also contaminates recyclable items and hinders recycling efforts.

While countries like France, Australia, and Denmark have policies in place to ban edible food waste via the food supply chain, the US city of San Francisco has implemented mandatory composting for residents since 2009. Under the law, everyone, from residents to tourists, has to separate their trash for compost. The law is currently being rolled out across the US, with Vermont enacting the law this year.

Singaporeans have an addiction with disposable plastic: in 2017, plastic waste weighed 800,000 tonnes. The food delivery sector is a huge contributor to this issue as packaging waste accounts for one-third of domestic waste. Consumers seem to prioritize convenience over environmental damage – efforts to reduce plastic bag consumption have been thwarted upon and supermarkets concluded that a ban would just turn away customers. In 2016, Morocco fully banned the use of plastic bags, including the import and production of them. Failure to adhere to this law will incur fines ranging from $10,000 to $50,000. The government has made plastic bag accounts for nearly half of domestic plastic waste.

In 2020, Singapore entered a policy to ban all single-use plastics by 2025.

Lessons in Going Green

By Lindsay Wong

International Solutions for Local Problems

RECYCLING

To put it straightforwardly Singapore is bad at recycling. According to the National Environment Agency, Singapore only recycled 4% of its plastic waste in 2018. Although more than half of households recycle, the majority are putting trash in the wrong bin. The commonly-found blue recycling bins around the island are often wrongfully utilized and 40% of recyclable items are ultimately sent for incineration because of contamination.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

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EUROPE'S FEMALE URINALS

We may be familiar with the “pee funnel” for women to stand and pee, but there have been many designs and implementations of female urinals. It can be found in cities across Europe, like in Winterthur – the urinal is designed so that a woman uses it by getting into a “skiing position” with her back against the wall.

No matter where you travel to, you'll always need to use public washroom facilities. Depending on where you are, the quality and experience can vary greatly from what you're used to at home in Singapore – some are super advanced, while some are simply sh*t holes. Here are some facilities around the world that you may not have noticed.

FRENCH PISSOIR

A French urinal structure created in 1830, called the pissoir, is still widely used in Paris – and they’re actually placed in public places with no doors or walls. Men simply stand facing the pissoir which has just enough of a structure to cover the important bits, leaving the rest of the body in full view of passers-by.

AMSTERDAM'S DE KRUL

Public urinals called De Krul in Amsterdam are small, curved structures located near canals. Usually big enough for one person, the piss usually goes directly into the canal (ew). Unlike the pissoir, De Kruls offer a degree of privacy with its latticed walls.

AMSTERDAM'S URILIFT

Streets of Amsterdam are also peppered with the more modern Urilift – urinals that actually rise from under the sidewalk at night like a secret toilet (it rises and descends via a remote). Some Urilifts are for men (it only has urinals where men's backs are exposed to the street), while some have women's toilets (with full facilities).

INDIA'S HYBRID TOILET

Are you a squatter or a sitter? India has toilets that are unique because they cater to both squatters and sitters. These hybrid toilets look like regular bowl toilets in that they're raised off the floor, but with the major difference being that the lip of the bowl has ridged platforms for those who prefer to squat. For those who prefer to sit, simply pull down the seat cover and it looks like a wider version of the toilets you're used to.

GERMANY'S FLAT FLUSHER

In Germany, you may find that some toilets have the flachspeuler (“flat-flusher”) design, where the part of the bowl that is meant to receive your waste is flat and placed higher than the siphon hole which is towards the front of the bowl rather than the back. While it leaves your poop in plain view, it does have its advantages: firstly, it reduces splashing, and secondly, it allows you to check on the condition of your poop for any intestinal problems (think of it as a health check). This design can also be seen in Holland, Austria, and Hungary.

JAPAN'S HI-TECH BIDET

If you've been to Japan, you'll know that their toilets are high tech. Pioneered by Toto, these toilets often come with bidets – extensions that spray water (the temperature and the strength of spray are adjustable) to clean your behind. These days, many of them have added functions like a fake flushing sound (for those shy about their plops), play music while you do your #2, heat your toilet seat in the cold winter, and even deodorise your stink after a poop – all at the press of a button (some units have remote controls). Some toilets even have sensors that not only automatically flushes, they also open the seat cover(s) and light up the toilet. Plans are in place for these toilets to actually test your pee as a health screening!
Thailand is a popular travel destination for Singaporeans, since it’s not only budget-friendly, it’s got great food, friendly people, and hosts a wide range of landscapes and attractions that makes us want to go there again and again. Bangkok is a common gateway into the country, which is host to almost everything you can think of: night markets, nightlife, shopping, dining, culture, and more. But head out of the capital, and you’ll find more things to explore.

**Sabai Sabai**

**Thailand’s Regional Attractions**

1. **Chiang Mai & Chiang Rai**
   - **Mountains and Hill Tribes**
   - Sabai Sabai
   - This mountainous region in northern Thailand is not just famous for its beautiful Lanna temples, it’s also home to a large number of Hill Tribes, including the Hmong, Akha, and the famous Karen long-necked tribe. You can visit their villages on day-trips. Chiang Mai is the gateway, which is known for its night markets, while Chiang Rai is its quieter cousin famous for its art and crafts. Nearby destinations include the lush and remote hippie towns of Pai and Mae Hong Son.

2. **Ayutthaya & Sukhothai**
   - **Ancient Temple Cities**
   - Ayutthaya and Sukhothai are 2 UNESCO listed temple cities. The kingdom of Ayutthaya (1350-1767) was once one of the biggest and wealthiest cities in the East. Today its ruins showcase Khmer and Burmese architecture that include hidden chamheims, towering ornate chedis, and Buddha relics. There are also old French, Portuguese, British, and Dutch quarters. Sukhothai was the first capital of Siam (1238-1438), and the birthplace of Thai art, architecture, and language. Meander through the Old City’s chedis and Buddha statues punctuated by by ponds.

3. **Kanchanaburi**
   - **WWII History & Jungle Rafts**
   - Kanchanaburi is known for its WWII history, particularly since it’s home to the Death Railway and the bridge over the River Kwai – you can ride the railway all the way here from Bangkok (and cross this famous bridge). Ride the train further north and book yourself into one of the many jungle raft resorts. These rustic huts float idyllically on the river, with views of lush national parks in the area. You can swim in the river, explore the jungle, or simply enjoy the serenity.

4. **Andaman Coast**
   - **Island Hopping & Diving**
   - This region of Thailand is littered with limestone islands like Koh Phi Phi and Koh Lanta. With its warm clear waters crammed with colourful, tropical marine life, the Andaman Sea offers the best diving in Thailand by far. Explore the islands on your own, where you can visit uninhabited islands, enter sea caves, and explore hidden lagoons. The area is easily accessible from Phuket, including Koh Lanta’s Railay Beach which is a rock climbing mecca.

5. **Gulf of Thailand**
   - **Beaches**
   - Surrounded by nature, this is a quiet retreat not normally visited by tourists. Home to a number of national parks and verdant farms provides relaxing getaways. A seasonal attraction is the Red Lotus Sea (in January and February) when the Nong Han Kumphawapi Lake hosts the blooming of pink lilies that stretch as far as the eyes can see; take a boat ride to enjoy the scenery. With its military past, Udon Thani is also home to a large expat community.
Going overseas to study is an exciting experience, but it does have its downsides. Although you get to move to a different country and everything seems so fresh and new in the beginning, you are leaving behind a life that you are familiar with. Moving overseas is a huge step for young people and comes with many obstacles, such as culture shock, homesickness, and huge differences in teaching style and social life. These are just some of the unique problems that international students face when studying overseas.

**Culture Shock**

Initially, you may feel euphoric to finally studying overseas, but as time goes on, maybe after a week or so, you might start to experience culture shock as you come across unexpected differences – like climate, food, language, lingo, values, fashion, and etiquette – in your new country. The things you used to do back home can be frowned upon, and vice versa. Culture shock is commonly experienced by first-time international students as their new way of life can be overwhelming away from the familiarities of home.

**Adulting Chores**

International students can no longer depend on family members for basic things – it can be one of the biggest challenges for them, as they will need to learn how to grocery shop, plan meals between classes, buy necessities, do laundry, execute chores, and more. Despite this, there is a sense of thrill when you start to do everything by yourself; these #adulting skills will benefit you for the rest of your life.

**Social Life**

Making friends can be one of the scariest aspects of university, especially for international students who are in a totally new environment. Students cannot be shy, otherwise they won’t be socially active, but there are so many other students who are in the same boat. Throughout your university years, you'll find that shared kitchens are usually stocked with ingredients that you’re not familiar with. Plus, all the stray hairs you see will come in different colors and textures.

**Paperwork**

As if international students didn’t go through enough trouble getting student visas and unconditional offers from universities before arriving in their new city, there is still a lot of paperwork that needs to be done. Students also need to independently open bank accounts, buy health insurance, get mobile phone contracts, find accommodation if they haven’t done so already, and get public transport passes.

**Homesickness**

International students often feel homesick, which usually occurs in the initial move to a new country or in the immediate period after. Students may feel homesick after their first few weeks. However, keeping busy with classes and social events will make it easier to deal with homesickness. Luckily, apps like WhatsApp, Skype, and Facebook allow students to frequently keep in touch with family and friends back home.

**Budgeting**

Budgeting is an important part of living independently. Students should be aware of their spending habits, especially since they need to consider the exchange rate. Costs of travel, transportation, food, accommodation, and social events cost differently in countries. However, there are usually student discounts available for attractions, retail, meals, and transportation.

**Dorm Life**

Dorms, residential colleges, or halls differ by country. In the US, it is common to have a roommate when living in dorms while on the UK and Australian campuses, usually just two roommates, but share the bathroom, kitchen, and common area. As students are from all over the world, you’ll find that shared kitchens tend to be stocked with ingredients that you’re not familiar with. Plus, all the stray hairs you see will come in different colors and textures.

**Cultural Shock**

Interacting with the locals and students from across the world is a rewarding experience since you’re overseas for the first time. However, many international students like to group together with those who are from their home country or speak the same language. This is because they know how to mingle with locals, and some international students don’t feel ready to make the effort to understand foreign students, partially due to problematic stereotypes. International students can be either fully extroverted and not interested in the same background.

**Joining Cliques**

Making friends can be one of the hardest aspects of university, especially for international students who are in a totally new environment. Students cannot be shy, otherwise they won’t be socially active, but there are so many other students who are in the same boat. Throughout your university years, you’ll find that shared kitchens are usually stocked with ingredients that you’re not familiar with. Plus, all the stray hairs you see will come in different colors and textures.

**Social Life**

Making friends can be one of the hardest aspects of university, especially for international students who are in a totally new environment. Students cannot be shy, otherwise they won’t be socially active, but there are so many other students who are in the same boat. Throughout your university years, you’ll find that shared kitchens are usually stocked with ingredients that you’re not familiar with. Plus, all the stray hairs you see will come in different colors and textures.
WET, WILD, & WACKY

By Lydin Fung

BATTAGLIA DELLE ARANCE – BATTLE OF ORANGES
Where: Italy
When: Jan 19
Why: History & Cultural Significance

The city of Valencia celebrates the murder of a tyrant duke by a miller’s daughter in her wedding night by having a huge food fight with huge oranges. The day is famous for its blood soaked oranges, blood soaked streets, and blood soaked doughnuts (orange fritter) that flow like rivers down the streets. This event is celebrated in the streets of Valencia every year.

FROZEN DEAD COMIC DAYS
Where: Colorado, USA
When: Feb 1
Why: Attendance and Comic Culture

This event takes place in the frozen mountains where people gather to celebrate the end of winter with a frozen dead comic theme. People dress up as frozen dead comic characters and compete in a frozen dead comic competition. The winner gets to be buried in a frozen dead comic tomb.

COOPERS HILL CHEESE ROLLING AND WALK
Where: Devon, England
When: Apr 6
Why: Tradition and Comic Culture

This event takes place every year where people compete in rolling cheese down a steep hill. The winner gets to keep the cheese and the loser gets to be chased by the cheese. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

EL COLACOH – BABY JUMPING FESTIVAL
Where: Colacoh, Chile
When: Feb 14
Why: Tradition and Love

This event takes place every year where babies are jumped over a fire as a sign of their purity and innocence. The babies are dressed in traditional clothing and are taken over a fire to purify them.

KANAMARU MATSURI – FESTIVAL OF THE PHALLUS
Where: Japan
When: Feb 14
Why: Traditional and Cultural Significance

This event takes place every year in Japan where phallic statues are decorated and paraded through the streets. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

BORAYEUNG MUD FESTIVAL
Where: South Korea
When: Feb 16
Why: Tradition and Culture

This event takes place every year where people celebrate the start of spring with mud and water. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

BOTTLES – POT SHAMING TRADITION
Where: Greece
When: Feb 17
Why: Tradition and Culture

This event takes place every year where people decorate bottles with shame and hang them on trees. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

TINK – PUNCH YOUR NEIGHBOUR FESTIVAL
Where: Malaysia
When: Mar 1
Why: Tradition and Cultural Significance

This event takes place every year where people punch each other as a sign of friendship and goodwill. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

CHINA: Tasty Travel

By Zhiqi Wang

What is the best part about travelling? Definitely experiencing the explosion of tastes and sentiments of different food in various countries, and their cultural significance. Here are some interesting food cultures around the world.

KOREA: Daejun

Seoul is the capital of food - after all it celebrates Daejun-fest, which is a celebration of beer, wine, and rice. There are approximately seven million places to drink alcohol, and 40 per cent of people are social drinkers. No expense is spared during this festive season, with more than one million bottles of alcohol sold in the city. It is also a popular event in the area.

JAPAN: Sake

Japan is known for sake, a type of rice wine that is distilled from rice. There are approximately 40,000 types of sake in the country, with 10,000 different types of rice. The sake is usually served with food such as sushi and sashimi.

INDIA: Masala

India is known for its diverse and flavorful cuisine, with dishes such as curries, naan, and samosas. The cuisine is known for its use of spices such as turmeric, cumin, and coriander. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

VENEZUELA: Arepa

Venezuela is known for its arepas, a type of corn cake that is usually filled with meat or vegetables. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

What we know is what we know (or what we learn)

This event takes place every year where people compete in making and eating arepas. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.

BRAZIL: Churrasco

Brazil is known for its churrasco, a type of grilled meat that is usually served with sides such as salad and sauce. The event is celebrated every year and is a popular event in the area.
Everyone may be familiar with the ins and outs of sex, and some couples may even suffer from minor accidents from time to time. However, some couples have experienced more bizarre intercourse-related accidents that have landed them in hospital A&E rooms around the world (although these can happen anywhere, really). Love hurts, people.

In 2016, 17-year old Julio Gonzalez from Mexico City died from a stroke after being intimate with his girlfriend. Apparently she gave him a hickey that caused a blood clot that travelled to his brain, and he died shortly after paramedics were called to the scene.

**Killed by a Hickey**

In 2008, a 20something woman in Guangdong suffered from sudden deafness the day after a passionate kiss with her boyfriend in 2008. At the hospital, she was told that when he kissed her on the ear, he "pulled the eardrum out and caused the breakdown of the ear". While she made a full recovery, a "cochlear ear-kiss injury" can lead not only to permanent hearing loss, but other ear symptoms including ringing, sensitivity to sound, distortion, and aural fullness.

**Deaf from a Kiss**

In 2008, a Japanese woman reportedly experienced transient global amnesia (TGA) – a rare condition in which both long- and short-term memory suddenly and temporarily disappears – which occurred right after she had sexual intercourse. People in their 50s and 60s are most vulnerable; doctors say strenuous physical activity can build pressure in the abdomen and restrict blood flow to the brain.

**Mind Blown**

A 23-year old was having sex with his future fiancée in India when he felt a strange pain. He had ripped his banjo string (aka frenulum), which went on to bleed and soil his pants. It bled again the second time they did it, and after a visit to the doctor he was advised to lay off any sexual activity for six weeks or longer.

**Torn Up**

A woman in Australia suffered an excruciating headache after having sex with her husband. The pain – felt above her right eye – was so debilitating that she was rushed to hospital for an overnight observation as she was at risk of a stroke. What she suffered from was coital cephalgia, a kind of headache that builds up and intensifies upon climaxing. However, this phenomenon more commonly affects men in their 20s, and affects both the head and neck.

**Sex is a Headache**

A woman in Australia suffered an excruciating headache after having sex with her husband. The pain – felt above her right eye – was so debilitating that she was rushed to hospital for an overnight observation as she was at risk of a stroke. What she suffered from was coital cephalgia, a kind of headache that builds up and intensifies upon climaxing. However, this phenomenon more commonly affects men in their 20s, and affects both the head and neck.

**Going Blind**

In 2014, a young couple in central Italy decided to have sex in the sea, but once they were done, he wasn’t able to pull out of her – according to reports, the suction was so strong that even the doctor called to the scene couldn’t pull them apart. The medical term for this situation is penile captivus, when the muscles of the female pubic floor don’t relax enough, and that makes the man’s member even more engorged with blood – you can imagine the rest.

**Stuck on You**

In 2017, a 29-year old man from Southampton apparently went temporarily partially blind after a particularly intense climax. The man told doctors he had "vigorous sexual intercourse" the night before, which somehow burst a blood vessel in his left eye caused by a pressure build-up when he orgasmed. According to the British Medical Journal, men who tend to hold their breath before climax are more at risk from this type of injury.

**Turned Up**

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**Mand Blown**

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**BIZARRE BEDROOM INJURIES**

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