

Nomad's traditions

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- As far the bread is the main and the most respected food for Kyrgyz people one has to be careful with it. Never put it upside down. It is preferable tear it off with hands rather than cutting with knife. The bread is usually laid over the whole table so that everybody can reach. One a guest is seated he is to taste bread first and then proceed with other food laid on the table. Kyrgyz never throw the bread in waste; they either try to eat it till the end or feed dogs or domestic animals. They say “Kesir bolot” which mean “Famine comes”.
- While seated at the table of Kyrgyz family make sure you have tasted a little bit of everything put on “dastorkon”(traditional name for tablecloth), especially the butter for the same reason that it is considered to be one of the main foods after bread (not mentioning the fact that cow's melted butter is the first food that a new born child is fed by, preceding even mother's milk)
- If you happen to seat with the members of Kyrgyz family, and are offered a piece of food by them form their plate, don't hesitate to take it. It is considered to be impolite to refuse the food offered by older people because they give it only to ones who they like and want them all the best in their life. It is very common in Kyrgyz family when a very old grandfather gives a piece of meat out of his plate to his grandchild saying “Menin jashyma jet” which mean “May your life be as long as mine”.
- If you have eaten everything on your plate the hostess will insist on having more and most probably will put some more food, so if you think you are unable to eat another portion of food, try to leave something on your plate to show that you are done.
- Tea is one of the traditional drinks that are served during the whole course of ingestion. Therefore the hostess will always make sure that your drinking bowl is always filled with tea. Do not be upset when your bowl is filled only in half- that is one way of showing respect. It also allows you to drink fresh tea all the time, never hesitate to ask for more.
- It's been not that long since Kyrgyz people start using utensils therefore most of the food is supposed to be eaten by hand. However, make sure that your knife is not laid down on the edge. This equals to the loaded gun which is a bad sign of expecting enemy to come to this house.
- In Kyrgyz home people take off their shoes before entering the house. Make sure that your shoes are put together and not upside down. Otherwise it will mean that you wish unhappiness to the house you have come.
- If you are met by the older woman with a bowl in her hand do not be surprised by her actions. As she will ask you to spit on the bowl filled with water, and then turn it around your head and goes away to pour it out to the place never to be trodden upon by any human being. Water is believed to have clarifying properties, so once you spit on it you release yourself out of bad spirits and negative aura. Kyrgyz do it to people who have come from faraway trips to bless their safe homecoming and further successful traveling.
- Though Kyrgyzstan is a democratic, unitary, sovereign state much of the patriarchal system has been preserved in Kyrgyz culture. The position of woman in a family is if not inferior but underestimated.

There are several rules that each Kyrgyz woman has to follow:

1. She has no right to appear with an uncovered head in front of the parents and relatives of her husband.
2. She doesn't have to sit with her back turned to them.
3. She never has to put her both hands in her waist that shows her disrespect and willful act towards her parents-in-law. Another interpretation of this gesture suggests that it is a bad sign. This is an action when one tries to stop the pain in his kidneys as a result of too much crying.