

11 HEALTHY HABITS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



1. Eating Your Leafs, Nigeria

Many traditional Nigerian dishes include vegetables that are not only highly nutritious, but also full of intense flavor. For example, a bitter tasting leaf from the plant *Veronia amygdalina* is a vegetable used to cook onugbu (bitter leaf) soup that is popularly eaten in Nigeria. The leaves of this vegetable have antioxidant properties with several health benefits. Other vegetables like okra are routinely used to make traditional soups.





2. Cycling, The Netherlands

People don't just ride their bikes for fun in The Netherlands — they ride around to get to work or to run their errands. The European Commission found that Dutch people use bikes as their main mode of transportation more than any other European country. This form of aerobic exercise promotes cardiovascular health.

3. Using Turkish Baths, Turkey

As human beings we are undoubtedly filled with stress. Taking a Turkish bath is similar to that of a sauna, but is more closely related to ancient Greek and ancient Roman bathing practices. It starts with relaxation in a room heated by a continuous flow of hot, dry air, allowing the bather to perspire freely. Bathers may then move to an even hotter room before they wash in cold water. After performing a full body wash and receiving a massage, bathers finally retire to the cooling-room for a period of relaxation.



4. Cleanliness, Singapore



Singapore consistently remains one of the cleanest countries in the world. Littering is an offense taken quite seriously there. Improper disposal of waste can have harmful effects on our environment and may promote a breeding ground for germs, bacteria, and disease carrying rodents. A clean environment is imperative for maintenance of our overall health.

5. A Work-Social Life Balance, Sweden

It's not uncommon for workers in the United States to work 40-plus hours a week, but in Sweden, employees only have a six-hour workday. There are numerous research studies showing the overwork -- and the resulting stress -- can lead to a multitude of health problems. Sweden employees report being more productive, happier, and even sick less often, according to the New York Times.





6. Remembering Healthy Portion Size, Japan

The inhabitants of Okinawa Japan tend to have a longer lifespan than most others from various regions of the world. Their longevity is partly attributed to not only the kinds of food they eat, but also the manner in which they eat their meals. They routinely practice the habit of 'hara hachi bu,' that is eating until they are 80% full. This is a great healthy habit to practice to avoid over eating.

7. Using Spices, India

India is known for their rich use of different spices in their food, which not only adds flavor, but promotes good health as well. Consider adding spices like turmeric, ginger, and coriander into your cooking. These spices contain some anti-inflammatory properties that can also provide some great health benefits. Fun facts: Cinnamon helps with spiking blood pressure, oregano or ginger can help fend off stomach flu, nutmeg helps prevent cavities.



8. Getting Regular Massages, Thailand



A massage is considered a treat for most people, but in Thailand, regular massages are a part of a traditional routine. Massage therapy can give you more than just a hours of luxury. Some studies have found that massages can help relieve anxiety, problems with digestion, relieve insomnia, improve joint pain, and help heal wounds, according to Mayo Clinic.

9. Indulging In Treats, France

A study from the journal *Appetite* found that French people associate food with pleasure more than Americans, but they're more likely to have lower rates of obesity and cardiovascular disease. Allowing yourself a small portion of your favorite treat might be a good habit to pick up — in fact, studies show that indulging in a small bite of a desired food is just as satisfying as eating the whole thing, according to Cornell University.



10. Drinking Tea, China



According to data from Euromonitor, China is the biggest consumer of tea, drinking 1.6 billion pounds per year. Chinese people are believed to have enjoyed tea drinking for more than 4,000 years. A daily cup of tea can have numerous health benefits, including lowered risk of multiple types of cancer, reduced risk of neurological diseases, lowered cholesterol, reduced risk of stroke, and more, according to WebMD.

11. Eating A Mediterranean Diet, Greece

You've probably heard before that the ultimate healthy diet is the Mediterranean diet, but what makes this diet so impactful is that the Greeks don't shy away from healthy fats. Research from the journal *Clinical Interventions in Aging* found that increased intake of monounsaturated fats — found in foods like nuts, olive oil, and avocado — leads to a longer life expectancy, reduced blood pressure, and lower risk of heart disease.



Even if we can't travel the world, the more we can learn from other places, the more varied our healthy habits can be.

