Press release

**Bathroom customs around the world: Changing shoes to enter the WC or an absence of toilet paper**

**Prague 16 November 2017 – A spotless toilet and regular cleaning are a given in the Czech Republic. But bathroom conventions are not the same throughout the world. Calling attention to these differences is the main goal of the annual World Toilet Day, held each year on November 19. According to the World Health Organization, more than 2.4 billion people still don’t have easy access to a toilet. The theme of this year's World Toilet Day is “poo journey”. The main idea is to draw attention to the “call of nature” and disposal of bodily waste, which ultimately impacts the quality of sewerage.**

Bathroom etiquette varies from continent to continent. While in some places homes may have luxurious toilets with high-tech features, elsewhere people must make do with a simple hole in the ground. It’s similar with public toilets. The technically most advanced toilets are to be found in **Japan**. The toilets there have lots of functions and settings that Europeans may find difficult to understand at first glance. They typically have a **heated** **seat, automatic lid lifting and hands-free flushing**. And beware! Before entering the toilet, you are expected to change your shoes. Visiting a Japanese toilet can seem like a journey to the land of utter sterility.

In contrast, some places, even destination to which Czechs like to travel on holiday, have customs that many find hard to embrace. One example is **Greece, where it’s prohibited to dispose of toilet paper** **in the toilet; there is a special waste basket** **next to the toilet for this purpose.** The Greeks point out that it’s to prevent the plumbing, which is not of very high quality, from becoming clogged. Neighbouring **Turkey**, on the other hand, is known for its toilets consisting of **a hole in the ground** topped with a lid. This type of toilet has been “modernized” with ceramic slabs for positioning the feet. In public bathrooms, however, toilets are often separated into individual stalls by smallish screens but are without a door. So-called Turkish toilets can still be found in France and Italy.

There are also different rules of toilet etiquette in **India**. Just as in Muslim countries, **only the left hand** is used to wash up after using the toilet. A toilet consisting of a hole in the ground usually has a bucket of water next to it; as in Arab countries, toilet paper is not customary. The left hand is viewed as unclean, so the right hand is used for eating and greeting and it is almost inconceivable to be left-handed.

**A toilet worth millions and other oddities**

There are toilets in this world that are breath-taking – mainly because of their price. The solid gold toilet displayed by HangFung jewellery company in Hong Kong became famous as the world’s most expensive toilet, costing around 500 million crowns (about 20 million euros). However, due to a financial downturn, the business owner had the toilet melted down in 2008.

A see-through toilet? Yes, such a thing exists in London. The public toilet in a glass cube is, of course, transparent only from the inside looking out, but the feeling of performing bodily functions in view of passers-by is only for the courageous.

Students at one Brazilian university came up with a very modern conception for urinals. Installed above the urinal is the popular game Tetris, so users can position game tiles while eliminating.

**Local bathroom customs**

Toilet practices in the Czech Republic are on the path to becoming leading-edge. More and more Czech households are installing bidets. Nor do they shy away from investing in a toilet with a built-in bidet, which guarantees thorough hygiene while saving on bathroom space. A common theme here, as around the world, is the proper height for installing wall-mounted toilets and the correct way to sit on the commode. Modern households are increasingly choosing hanging toilets, the height of which can be modified. The possibility to adjust height is especially appreciated by older people or individuals with reduced mobility. ***“The*** ***usual recommended height of wall-mounted toilet bowls is 40 centimetres from the floor.*** ***If someone with a handicap, older individuals or very tall people are living in the home, it is advisable to add a few centimetres or choose a special toilet”,*** says Petr Štěpánek, a service technician for the JIKA brand. In addition to toilet height, another thing influencing efficient evacuation, stress experts, is body position.

## Meeting today’s most exacting hygiene requirements, the JIKA Mio Rimless wall-mounted toilet with no rinse ring allows a new standard of toilet cleanliness. More at [www.jika.cz](http://www.jika.cz).

**Healthy elimination**

In terms of efficient voiding, the previously mentioned Turkish toilets prevail over typical European toilets. According to experts, a classic squat is much healthier for our bowels. ***“When we sit on the toilet with*** ***our*** ***knees at a right angle, the muscle responsible for continence is only partially relaxed, so we are compelled to push.*** ***It is much more natural and efficient for the body to meet this need in a squatting position with knees at a 35-degree angle”,*** says Dr Rebekah Kim, who works at a hospital in the U.S. state of Virginia. To help improve our stance during excretion, various pedestals have appeared on the market to help people achieve a comfortable squat. Only time will tell if Czech households adopt these products as standard bathroom equipment.

**About the JIKA brand:** The JIKA brand is a leading Czech producer of bathroom ceramics and tiles. The company was founded in 1878, when the first European factory for sanitary ceramics and dishes was established in Znojmo. For its customers, JIKA is a symbol of tradition and quality. JIKA offers complete solutions for the bathroom, whether you have a large space or need to conserve every centimetre. For more information, visit [www.jika.cz](https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&prev=_t&sl=cs&tl=en&u=http://www.jika.cz/).