

55. Everything About Eating, Manners

Customs and good manners are important in Spanish-speaking countries:

1. Always begin by saying “**buena provecho**” (enjoy your meal).
2. Always keep your hands visible on the table.
3. Always use the silverware; unless you are eating tacos or some botanas and tapas, do not eat with your hands.
4. Cut your food: do not eat it in big pieces, with the exception of almonds and olives.
5. When you pass somebody the salt or pepper, just put it on the table in front of the other person and let him pick it up.
6. Please do not put your elbows on the table.
7. In Latin countries, it's really common to have an “after-dinner conversation” at the table.
8. In order to show that you are full, leave a little food on the plate.
9. Never make comments about the food unless they are good comments. When you try something that do not like, just leave it on the plate.
10. When you leave the table say “thank you” and “excuse me.”
11. If you have any doubt how to behave at the table, just try to imitate the rest of the people at the table!

Popular meals are different in each Spanish-speaking country. For example, the most popular foods in Mexico are tacos, tamales, and cakes. In Spain, the most popular foods are gazpacho, tapas, and Serrano ham.