

## Doc James Lounge Etiquette

they? Realize that people gravitate to what they like, with cigars or anything else. Leave room for those around you to enjoy what they choose.

**3. Know your audience.** When I asked the guys around me about cigar etiquette, two gave variations of "keep it clean." Sitting down and regaling the crowd with the previous night's sexual conquests in lurid detail, for example, may not be appropriate. If you float a controversial topic and it doesn't resonate, let it go. Trying to force it will not work in your favor. Likewise, if you find a crowd comparing their evenings in a way that doesn't sit well with you, realize that you're the outsider - and that this crowd may not be the right one for you.

**4. Talk on the phone—somewhere else.** Cell phones are now a part of life. Given enough people and enough time, you're bound to hear a few of them ring. Answering the phone isn't a big deal; just have the decency to take your call away from the lounge. Move to the back of the store, or step outside for a minute.

**5. Don't tell people how to smoke.** Cigar smokers have their habits, right or wrong. You'll irritate the hell out of somebody by telling him he cuts his cigar too low, shouldn't bite the cap, or isn't lighting his cigar appropriately. Some are open to the advice, others not. If you decide to become a cigar educator, be ready for a chilly reception.

**6. Buy from the shop where you're smoking.** This shouldn't even need to be said, but there's always an element that shows no respect for the establishment. Retailers don't have great profit margins, and when you bring a cigar into a shop from the outside, you are taking money from the store. If you like having a place to smoke, support it.

**7. Let the staff members do their jobs.** Cigar shops are social centers, and this does include the staff. You can't help but get to know your "cigar guy" or "cigar gal," and you'll come to enjoy talking to them. But when the smoke shop's employees are with customers, unloading boxes, or otherwise working, let them be. The first priority is the job, and you need to respect that.

**8. Be aware of the line behind you.** A good tobacconist won't rush you or show impatience, so don't challenge him to try. If you don't know what you want, stand out of the way while you look around, especially if there's a line forming behind you. Nothing is worse than hearing, "I came in last year and bought a cigar, do you remember what it was?" If you see a waiting crowd behind you, let them take care of their purchases while you find your way through the maze.

**9. Don't take over the TV.** The TVs are there for everyone's enjoyment. It is just bad manners to start changing the channels when the lounge has several patrons in it. If you really want to watch something, ask the employees and they will make sure that it is OK with the other customers to change the station.

**10. The lounge is for luxury-tobacco users.** The primary function of the lounge is as a place for cigar and pipe smokers to relax. No, I really do not care if someone smokes cigarettes and sits in the lounge area, but when the lounge is crowded, please move to the bar/table area.

**11. Have fun.** The lounge is there for your enjoyment. In order for everyone to have a good time, manners is the word of the day. I think we have proved that having a good time comes in many forms; enjoying a good cigar or pipe is one of the better ones.

Source: [www.tjcigar.com](http://www.tjcigar.com)

### **1. Don't be a conversation snatcher.**

If you walk into a lounge where a conversation is taking place, don't try to change it. You can wait for an appropriate time to weigh in and participate, but there's nothing worse than a newcomer who disrupts a discussion about politics or the economy with some unrelated remark about the Mets' bull pen.

**2. Mine's not better.** Cigar smoking is a matter of taste, whether you prefer an AVO Compañero or a cognac-dipped novelty stick. "Real" cigar smokers may not touch the latter, but not everyone chooses to be "real." And why should