

Leading the way in hygiene

WASHLET™ as part of everyday culture – Japanese manufacturer TOTO inspires the world to improve its standards of hygiene



“Japanese toilets are about as far beyond ours as our society is from the Middle Ages,” commented German weekly magazine “ZEIT” in its recent evaluation of the benefits of Japanese shower toilets, especially TOTO WASHLET™. The author of the article is not the only one who is convinced: The Japanese also know that they lead the way when it comes to hygiene when compared to other countries. And this is no coincidence.

When people use the toilet in Japan, they expect it to be clean and hygienic. For example, people change their shoes before entering the bathroom. Thoroughly washing one’s hands and leaving the bathroom clean for the next person to use are completely natural and commonplace parts of everyday life in Japan. Europeans are aware that using a Japanese toilet may involve a faux pas or two, and that there are a few things to learn.

The venerable Japanese company TOTO has been manufacturing WASHLET™ (name inspired by “let’s wash”) for the past 40 years and is the world’s leading producer of shower toilets. The shower toilet has since become part of nearly every Japanese household. In addition to cleaning the intimate areas with warm water, these shower toilets include several hygiene technologies that leave people with an incomparable feeling of cleanliness – and are well on their way to becoming a regular part of European everyday life as well. The ongoing pandemic is another reason why people are more focused on the topic of hygiene. There is also a greater willingness among homeowners to spend more on renovations and invest in shower toilets.

What’s different? – A journey to Japan

What’s different? Travelling to Japan makes this very clear. Most tourists who travel by plane will land at the Narita Airport in Tokyo – and experience their first

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contact with Japan's distinctive hygiene culture in the waiting area of terminal 2: Whoever wants to use the toilet here will encounter the impressive Gallery TOTO, spanning 145 m². This space invites people to explore and linger, with WASHLET™ in every stall. Travelers will then see WASHLET™ throughout their entire time in Japan. Whether at the hotel, on the train, at a restaurant, in a public washroom or at a cultural institution, people will find shower toilets everywhere.

Omotenashi – hygiene is part of Japanese hospitality

The term “Omotenashi” in Japan can be translated as “hospitality” or even “politeness”. But the word encompasses much more than that. The spirit of Omotenashi is found in small gestures and attention to details that may be expressed in a tea ceremony, for example. The aim is to create an atmosphere in which guests feel good and cared for. Omotenashi can be easily applied to bathrooms and toilets. It's important to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness, but also provide the greatest possible comfort. These ideas do not just resonate when using a WASHLET™, but also in consideration of the next person who will use it. It's just as important to leave it clean, tidy and hygienic. TOTO's technologies make it easy to ensure that the WASHLET is always clean and comfortable for everyone.

Cleanliness in public washrooms – “The Tokyo Toilet”

The principle of hospitality in Japan also applies to public toilets. This is why the wonderful Nippon Foundation project, The Tokyo Toilet, could only happen in Japan. Tokyo's Shibuya neighbourhood is home to 17 different public toilets, each of which a unique architectural work of art. These objects were designed by such high-profile architects as Shigeru Ban, Tadao Ando and Kengo Kuma. TOTO was able to contribute its products for the interior design. The main idea was to create toilets for everyone to use: for people with physical limitations and of all ages; for men, women, children and families. The result: public toilets in which everyone can feel comfortable and secure.

TOTO's toilet culture

TOTO has introduced several WASHLET™ models to the European market over the years. A new introduction for this year's ISH is the sleek, curved WASHLET RG, available in two versions. The RG and RG Lite look the same, include the hygiene technologies synonymous with TOTO, and can be descaled either manually or using an integrated descaling programme. The difference: In contrast to the RG, the RG Lite does not feature the Premist function or deodorizer – for a more affordable introduction to the world of WASHLET™.

Read more about WASHLET™: gb.toto.com/washlets/

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1 TOTO's shower toilet is at the heart of the company's "Cleanovation" philosophy. It elevates the standards of hygiene in the bath while providing a great deal of comfort. Photo: TOTO

2 Gallery TOTO in the new terminal 2 at Narita Airport is an extraordinary space to experience TOTO products. Photo: Daici Ano

3 Equipped with TOTO products, The Tokyo Toilets are creating a stir in the urban landscape. The photo shows the toilet pavilion designed by Shigeru Ban. The walls are transparent from the outside, and passers-by can see inside. Once someone locks the door from the inside, the glass changes colour to become an opaque wall, protecting the user from unwanted glances. Photo: Satoshi Nagare

4 In the recently opened vegetarian Hotel Paradiso Pure.Living in the Dolomites, guests will see that it is possible to design bathrooms that are very hygienic while still conveying a feeling of luxury and well-being. Photo: TOTO

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About TOTO Europe

TOTO focuses on people and their well-being, developing products that combine modern design and extensive expertise. The Japanese company perfects its technologies over decades, incorporating them into innovative products in an understated, easy-to-use way. Established in Kitakyushu, Japan in 1917, TOTO has been developing, producing and marketing its comprehensive high-end bathroom concepts for the European market since 2009. The company aims to create a new attitude towards life through regeneration, comfort and hygiene, integrating technologies into their product designs in a smart, nearly invisible way while prioritising hygiene and resource conservation. Japan's leading manufacturer in the sector, TOTO offers a comprehensive range of products including ceramic sanitary ware, faucets and accessories – all created in close collaboration with renowned designers. The company celebrated its 100th birthday in 2017. In 2018, the international market research institute Euromonitor named TOTO the “World's No. 1 Brand” in shower toilet sales. TOTO was also one of the first ten manufacturers to receive the seal of quality from Germany's Central Association of Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning (ZVSHK) along with the group's “Certified Manufacturer – Quality, Safety, Service” certification in 2019. TOTO employs 30,000 people world-wide.

Read more about TOTO online: gb.toto.com