



Café International

A tactical tile placing game for 2-4 players 10 or older.

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Translation: Jeff Goldsmith and Alta Vista's [babelfish](http://babelfish.altavista.digital.com) <<http://babelfish.altavista.digital.com>>

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Components

1 Game Board

100 Guest Tiles (48 ladies and 48 gentlemen from 12 nations, plus 2 Jokers of each who can sit anywhere)

Scoring chips (60 black (worth 1 point), 30 red (5 points), 10 blue (10 points))

1 Cloth Bag

These Rules

Goal of the Game

The game is about seating guests at the Café International. At the end of the game, whoever has the most points wins.

Prepare for Play

Carefully punch the guest tiles from their sheets. Put them in the bag and mix them up. Each player draws five tiles and places them face up in front of himself.

Seating Guests

The board has 24 tables for guests from 12 nations. At each table, 2 ladies and 2 gentlemen may be seated. They must be of the same nationality as the table indicates. Some chairs are shared by two tables. A guest of either nationality may sit there. Only one guest may sit in each chair. The joker tiles may sit at any table.

Apart from nationality, guests must sit so as to maintain proper gender balance. The same applies to the joker tiles.

At any table, one may seat only:

1 lady and 1 gentleman

1 lady and 2 gentlemen

2 ladies and 1 gentleman

2 ladies and 2 gentlemen

No other distributions are allowed. No single guest may sit at a table—he must belong to a group. A guest, once seated (at a table or the bar), may not move (*Exception*: Exchange of a Joker).

The area in the centre of the board represents the Bar at the "Café International". A guest who does not find a seat at a table must sit at the bar. At the bar, nationality and gender are irrelevant.

Play of the Game

The first player is determined in any way one sees fit. Play thereafter proceeds clockwise. The player whose turn it is must do exactly one of the following three actions:

- Seat 1 or 2 guests at a table or tables; or
- Seat a guest at the bar; or
- Exchange a Joker.

Seating Guests at Tables

If a player chooses to seat guests at tables, he may place one or two guest tiles on appropriate chairs at suitable tables. The seating constraints must be satisfied. The player must score some points by his play. If a player seats a guest at an empty table, he must, on the same turn, seat a second guest at the same table unless the first guest scores points. *Exception:* If the first player cannot score points, he may seat a single guest at a table. A player may play two guests at different tables, but they must then each score.

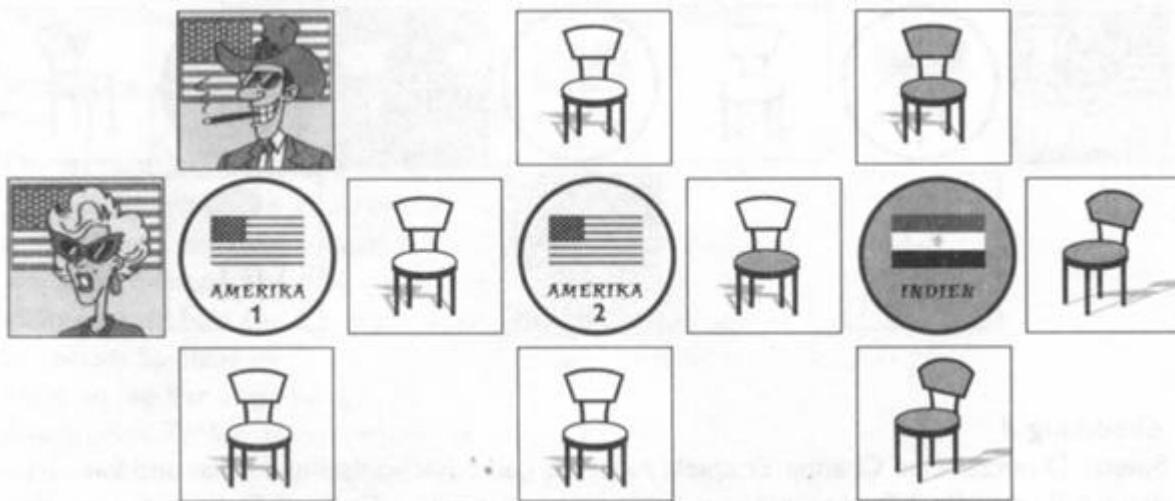
Scoring

The more guests at a table, the more valuable the table becomes. If a player seats a guest at a table during his turn, he scores points for the whole table as follows:

1 pair (lady and gentleman)	=	2 points
1 pair <i>of the same nationality</i>	=	4 points ¹
1 pair (lady and gentleman) + 3rd Guest	=	3 points
3 guests <i>of the same nationality</i>	=	6 points ¹
2 pairs (2 ladies and 2 gentlemen)	=	4 points
2 pairs <i>of the same nationality</i>	=	8 points

When seating a guest between two tables, one may score for each table. One may also score with each guest seated. See the example in figures 1 through 4, below.

Figure 1



Player A seats an American gentleman at the first American table. He must seat a second American guest as his second tile placement, since the first placement did not score any points. The American lady scores 4 points.

¹ This scoring rule appears only in later editions of the game.

Figure 2



Player B plays the Indian gentleman and Indian lady and scores 4 points for the Indian table. There is only one guest (the Indian lady) at the second American table, but since that guest scored, the tile placement is permitted.

Figure 3



Player C plays the American gentleman at the second American table and receives 2 points.

Figure 4



Player D was lucky. First, he plays an American gentleman between the two American tables and scores 6 points for the first American table and 3 points for the second American table. Then he completes the first American table with an American lady and scores 8 more points for it. On this turn, player D scored 17 points.

Replacing Tiles

After a player is done placing tiles, he refills his hand to five by drawing randomly from the bag. The only exception is that if one fills "Single Nation" table, one draws one fewer tile, reducing one's hand size permanently. This is useful as at the end of play, each tile remaining in a player's hand costs -5 points; jokers costing -10.

Seating a Guest at the Bar

The bar has 20 spaces (stools). They are filled in ascending order (see the small numbers at the top left of each stool). A player may (or must if it so happens), instead of seating a guest at a table, seat a guest in the next empty stool at the bar. One may not play more than one guest to the bar in a turn. Jokers may not be seated at the bar. The player gains (black scores) or loses (red scores) the indicated number of points for seating a guest at the bar. If one cannot pay, one is out of the game [I think. —Jeff]. Refill one's hand after playing, as usual.

Exchange of a Joker

There are 2 female and 2 male Jokers. They can represent a guest of any nation and score points as if they were.

- A Joker can be used at a "Single Nation" table.
- When scoring at two tables, a joker may not switch nationalities.
- A player may replace a joker with the appropriate nationality guest and take the joker into his hand. No points are scored for this.
- Jokers may not be seated at the bar.
- Unplayed jokers at the end of the game cost -10 points.

End of the Game

The play ends as soon as one of the following 4 possibilities occurs:

- All 20 bar seats are occupied.
- All chairs around the tables are occupied.
- Only 4 guest tiles are left in the bag.
- A player "goes out" (has created 5 Single Nation tables and thus reduced his hand size to zero).

Players count points, subtracting for tiles in hand and high score wins.

Variants

Surprise Guests

If using this rule, each player keeps his hand of guests face down, hidden from the other players.

Tables Reserved for Regulars

If using this rule, a player may seat three or four guests at the same time, as long as they are all men or all women and are at the same table. (This is an exception to the seating rules)

Such a table is worth 20 points. If it's also a Single Nation table, it's worth 40 instead.