

Top 20 Travel Tips for Terrific Trips

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Proper preparation will make your trip more pleasant and less stressful.

Time is your most valuable resource. Plan in advance for both everyday needs and unanticipated problems so you don't waste precious hours.

#1 Create your packing checklist at least 7 days prior to travel. Only take what you really need.

#2 Mark your luggage with distinctive colors or stickers to make it easily identifiable to you and others. You can more easily spot it and others will not mistakenly take it. If lost, you can give a unique description. Consider shipping it to your destination.

#3 Use clear plastic zip-lock bags to organize small items, prevent liquids from leaking on everything, and to keep clothing clean and dry. Bring additional empty bags for dirty clothing and items purchased along the way.

#4 Take a minimal amount of clothing that can have multi-purpose uses and that mix and match well with each other (to create various outfits). A lightweight jacket and soft hat that can be easily rolled up are critical!

#5 Take pants with plenty of usable pockets and wear your most comfortable shoes. Inside your luggage, a second pair of shoes can be stuffed with socks and small items to conserve space.

#6 Lightweight slippers or flip-flops are recommended for hotel rooms or just tired feet. Avoid walking barefoot outside or inside.

#7 Apply address labels to important items such as cameras and cell phones, for easier return if lost.

#8 Along with originals in your pockets, place a copy of passport and credit card info in carry-on bag and leave another with a relative at home. If something is lost or stolen you have back-up information.

#9 Spread your money among different bags and if traveling with a companion, share each other's bags - - - so if one is lost, you will each still have clothes.

#10 Bring some snack bars, nutrition bars, water, vitamins, and all medications you take regularly. Don't forget sun protection, lotions and lip balm!

#11 Take a travel alarm clock so you don't rely on the hotel or another traveler. Keep a compact flashlight with it.

#12 Pack a Swiss army knife (including screwdriver, corkscrew, scissors, knives) and extra batteries for cameras and electronics.

#13 Carry business cards to easily exchange contact information with people you meet, plus pens and a notepad to jot down notes, phone numbers, names and addresses.

#14 Take a mini-emergency kit including aspirin, antacid, Neosporin (pain relief cream), anti-itch cream, bandaids, scissors, sanitizing wipes, and even duct tape for temporary repairs.

#15 Don't forget a list of email addresses and phone numbers you could reach someone at in case of emergency or to pass along updates. Pre-print address labels to save time writing postcards.

#16 Be sure to get any recommended immunizations and consider travel insurance in case of hospitalization or expensive medical evacuation.

#17 Don't drink water unless it is bottled. This is no time to be sick!

#18 Lunches often offer better monetary value than evening meals, so think about making them your main meals.

#19 Obey local laws, be polite and courteous, and smile to everyone! They will be much more likely to help you or offer assistance.

#20 Travel packages may be cheaper than assembling your trip yourself. For example, combinations of flights, hotel and rental cars could be more expensive if purchased separately.

Travel safely!

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