

Overseas Travel Checklist & Tips

In an effort to help prepare you for your upcoming trip, it is our pleasure to provide you with these important reminders and tips:

Prepare Your Documents

- Make sure your passport is valid for 6 months past your return date (many countries require this).
- Make two photocopies of all your credit cards and your driver's license and passport. Keep a copy at home. Take a copy with you and carry separate from the originals.
- Get all your booking documents organized for the trip. I make a file folder with all my documents for each booking and keep them in the order we will need them.
- Print out the information from your country on what to do if your passport is lost or stolen:
 - US State Department (Lost and Stolen U.S. Passports Abroad) Check with the Transportation Authority to read the regulations for carryon items. Many of these changed recently.
 - United States - www.tsa.gov: Transportation Security Administration (TSA) **Make a Very Detailed Itinerary**
- Before your leave home, give a copy of your itinerary to a family member not going on the trip, so they can know where you are and get in touch with you at all times.

Make Sure Your Money Works!

- You do not need traveler's checks; most places stopped accepting traveler's checks a few years ago. Use your ATM card for cash on or Credit Card for purchases.
- Contact your Credit Card companies or bank that issued your ATM card and tell them you will be traveling so they don't put a freeze on your account when foreign purchases start being charged.
- Be sure your Credit Card or ATM card will work where you're going.
- Order foreign currency from your bank so you don't arrive without any cash; just in case you can't find an ATM immediately.
- Also travel with about \$500 of US currency (in \$100 bills) as emergency money.

Before You Leave - Reconfirm Everything!

- A couple of weeks before you leave reconfirm all your travel arrangements.
- Call the airline 72 hours in advance to make sure your flights have not changed, to verify your seating and request any special meals.

Odds and Ends not to Forget!

- Arrange care for your pet, lawn, and plants
- Let the neighbors know that you will be gone and for how long. Ask them to get the mail for you or contact USPS to put a hold on the delivery while you're gone.
- Put you're A.C on away so you can save money
- Consider turning off your water main to avoid any leaks while you're gone



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- Put your lights on timers to make your home look lived-in
- Make sure your bills are up to date. (Automatic bill pay helps)
- Make copies of your passports, itineraries, vouchers, etc, along with the numbers to call in case your credit card is lost or stolen (see below)
- Send a copy of your itinerary, including hotel phone numbers or websites to your family and interested friends

GOOD TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

EUROPEAN HOTELS

Europe and the Middle East's hospitality industry is centuries old and its hotels often reflect the varied traditions and standards of their respective countries. While comfortable, be prepared for differences and do not expect hotels to be the same as home. Single rooms in these regions are often smaller than in USA hotels. Also, when booking a triple room, the third bed may be a rollaway cot.

HOTEL CHECK OUT

Each time you check out of a hotel, check your room prior to leaving. Open every drawer, look under the bed and door, including the bathroom. The return of items forgotten is nearly impossible.

PASSPORTS

Carry your passport with you at all times to ensure against loss or theft in hotels. For added protection, keep a photocopy of your passport in your suitcase. Don't be alarmed if the hotel asks for your passport. Hotels are sometimes required to hold your passport overnight to comply with local regulations. You should ask when you could expect it returned.

PHONE CALLS

Almost all hotels will add a service charge to the cost of any phone calls you make from your room. This charge can be high, especially for international calls. Make sure you contact your cellphone company to find out if they have an international plan. Also, if you're not using an international plan on your phone, be sure to turn off Cellular Data to restrict all data to Wi-Fi so as to not incur unexpected expenses.

ELECTRICAL VOLTAGE

Electrical currents vary in Europe and the Middle East vary. Some appliances have dual voltage, but if not, it is suggested that you carry a converter for electric shavers, traveling iron, hair appliances and other small appliances. Also, pins, holes and plugs differ everywhere, so it is best to have a universal electrical travel adapter before you go to prevent accidents and damage to your appliances.

Note that laptops and cell phone charges will require a different converter than what you would use for a hair dryer. Please check the converter to be sure you have the correct one for your appliance. Otherwise, you risk frying your appliance.





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PACKING TIPS

Make sure you have your medications and a change of clothes packed in your carryon bag in case your luggage is delayed. Keep all copies of prescriptions, tickets, passports, etc. separate from originals in case of loss. Keep these types of important documents with you or in your carry-on bag - do not pack these in your luggage in case of loss.

Make sure your toiletries are packed in your checked luggage. (You can only take items that fit in a quart sized, zip-lock bag and contains less than 3 oz each of liquid, in your carry-on)

Rather than bringing one umbrella to share it is better for everyone to have his or her own fold up umbrella. If the rain occurs with mild weather it will eliminate the need to carry a raincoat.

Wear comfortable clothes, which are mixable with other pieces. Remember that your clothes are new to the other people on the tour who have never met you before. Mixing and matching helps to pack light. If you wear clothes that you are comfortable in you will be more relaxed.

There is nothing worse than aching feet at the end of the day. Make sure to bring a pair of comfortable, broken-in shoes for daytime walking. In many cities, parking is restricted, and you may have to walk several blocks to see the major sites. Remember, when you visit museums and other sites of interest, you will be on your feet for long periods of time.

Costume jewelry travels beautifully. You should leave items of monetary and sentimental value at home. This will allow you to be more carefree and doesn't encourage theft.

