



## TRIP TIPS FOR STUDENT TRAVELERS:

*Trip Tips provided by the Student and Youth Travel Association*

### **General Preparation Tips**

Purchase a waterproof hip-pack or neck-wallet (a chain with a small pouch you can hang around your neck). Place important items in the hip-pack (money, passport, etc.). The hip-pack should never leave your body or close vicinity.

When packing clothes for your trip, set out everything you plan to take and then take half! Pack clothing you can mix and match. This will minimize the amount of items you take while providing the best selection of outfits. Also remember to pack the essentials such as jeans, khakis, shorts and t-shirts, a sweatshirt or light jacket, a bathing suit, etc. For a more thorough list please see Packing Lists. Keep in mind that certain countries and tourist attractions have customs and rules regarding proper attire. You should know these rules and customs prior to your departure so that you will not be excluded from the action, feel self-conscious or worse yet, look like a tourist!

Leave expensive jewelry or anything you would be heartbroken to lose at home.

Wear an inexpensive, waterproof watch.

Pack a simple first aid kit containing such items as Band-aids, first aid cream, pain relievers and some gauze or cotton balls. For a more thorough list please see Packing Lists. For anything more than a minor injury, tell the tour director or chaperone immediately.

Bring disposable cameras. If you lose or break them, you've only lost a memory, not an expensive camera.

Pack an extra pair of prescription glasses and/or contact lens in case of loss or damage.

Use Travelers Checks rather than carrying around large amounts of cash. If your cash is lost or stolen it cannot be replaced, but Travelers Checks can! Remember to carry proper identification matching your Travelers Checks so you can use them or replace them if they are lost or stolen. Keep a list of the Check numbers in your luggage and give a copy to your trip leader or travel companion so that if your bag is lost or stolen you will still have the numbers.

Use a credit card to pay for larger purchases. Notify your credit card company, prior to your departure, of the countries you will visit so they can authorize your card for use in foreign countries. ATM machines can also be used abroad to get cash in the local currency. Find out from your bank which system their cash card is on (Star, Cirrus, NYCE, etc.) and ask if they have ATM locations in the country you are visiting. Look for that symbol on the ATM machine before using it.

Bring a photocopy of all current prescriptions (medication, eyeglass/contact lens prescriptions, etc.) so these items can be replaced if lost. If possible scan a copy of these documents before you leave and email them to your personal email address so you will be able to access a copy of them from a computer.

Do not forget to pack any prescription medication you might be taking and keep it on you at all times (or give it to your trip leader). Alert your trip leader or travel companion of any medication you might be on (they can help remind you to take it, arrange refrigeration, etc.).

Find out if your family's health care plan will cover you abroad. If not, ask the tour company about purchasing travel insurance (which also covers you in case of luggage theft and more). Most travelers insurance is inexpensive and well worth the minimal expense!

### ***Preparing for Travel by Airplane***

Pack any prescription medication and other important toiletries in your carry-on bag. You may also want to include a day's change of clothing.

Pack any valuables in your carry-on bag rather than in your checked luggage. Airlines are not required to reimburse you for loss of certain valuables (cameras, jewelry, cash, etc.) from your checked luggage.

If you wear contact lenses, bring glasses for the airplane. The recycled air on planes can dry out your eyes and make you very uncomfortable.

If you put a lock on your luggage, make sure you have at least two keys and keep them in a very secure place. If possible try to purchase a combination lock.

### ***Preparing for Travel Abroad***

Pack a photocopy of your airline tickets and your passport in your luggage (separate from the originals, which should be in your carry-on bag), plus bring an extra passport photo. If possible provide your tour leader or travel companion a copy as well, so that if you lose your bag they will still have a copy. In addition, you may want to scan these documents and email them to your person email account so that you will be able to access them from a computer.

Keep prescription medication in its original package and keep a photocopy of the prescription handy (some customs officials may question any drugs and you may need proof that it is a prescription).

Pack an electricity converter for hair dryer and/or other electrical appliances. Using a North American plug in an outlet abroad can damage your appliance, start a fire, or give you a shock.

Purchase a lock for your luggage, especially if you are staying in a youth hostel, dormitory or other situation where you cannot lock the door or will be rooming with a stranger.

If you are not traveling with an organized group, find out the address and phone number of the U.S. Consulate (or your home country's Consulate) in the country you are visiting before you go and keep it on you at all times.

### ***Motorcoach Tips***

Remain seated whenever possible. Most accidents happen when passengers are standing in the aisles.

Listen to the instructions and emergency procedures given by your trip leader.

Brace yourself when moving in the aisles.

Be careful when opening the overhead bin. Items can shift during flight and fall out when the overhead bin is opened.

### ***Airplane Tips***

Pay attention to the pre-flight safety demonstration and locate the nearest emergency exit.

Keep your seatbelt fastened at all times: it may be annoying, but if turbulence or a loss of cabin pressure occurs, you could be injured if you are not wearing your seatbelt.

If you have special dietary needs, order a special meal through the airline in advance of your trip. Airlines offer many choices such as vegetarian, low salt, low sugar, etc.

Be careful when opening the overhead bin. Items can shift during flight and fall out when the overhead bin is opened.

### ***Hotel Tips***

Never leave valuables in your room, put them in the hotel safe upon check in or keep them in your hip-pack.

Keep the door locked and chained at all times when you are in your room. Never open the door to strangers.

Do not give out your room number or phone number to anyone.

Never climb out of windows, over balconies, etc.

Look at the people in the elevator before getting in. If there is anyone in the elevator that makes you feel uncomfortable, wait for another elevator.

Do not enter your hotel room if the door is open. Call security immediately.

Avoid entering your room if you are alone and someone is following you down the hall. Let them pass you before opening your door.

Read the fire instructions on the back of the hotel room door and know where the closest exit stairwell is. In case of a fire, never use the elevator.

Keep any medication near your toothbrush as a reminder to take it when you brush.

## ***Touring Tips***

Stay with your travel companion at all times - don't stray from the group. As you could imagine it is not fun to be lost in a foreign country.

Keep the name, address and phone number of your hotel on you at all times.

Have the 24-hour hotline for your tour company (if they have one) on hand at all times: if you get lost or are in an emergency situation, call and ask for assistance.

Do not talk to strangers or give out your name, the name of your hotel, your hotel room number or any other personal information.

Keep a few small bills (one and five dollar bills) in your pocket to pay for small purchases like drinks or snacks. Do not open your wallet if a lot of money is visible. You will be a target for a pick-pocket or robbery.

The best place to keep your wallet is in a zippered pocket on the inside of your coat/jacket or in your front pocket. Never keep your wallet in your back pocket. Avoid carrying a purse, use a hip-pack and place the pouch of the hip-pack in front of your body.

Pay attention to the traffic when crossing the streets - the drivers may be crazier than those in your hometown. In addition, they may drive on a different side of the street and have completely different traffic laws.

Don't hitchhike or accept a ride from a stranger.

Don't walk back to your hotel alone at night.