

10 TRAVEL TIPS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1.) Pack light

It's OK to wear the same t-shirt a few days in a row. Take half the clothes you think you will need...you won't need as much as you think. Write down a list of essentials, cut it in half, and then only pack that! Plus, since you bought a small backpack like I said, you won't have much room for extra stuff anyways!

2.) Back it up

In the unlikely event of an emergency or accident, make physical and digital backups of important documents like your passport, visas, driver's license, social security card, and birth certificate. If you are traveling with your laptop, backup your files and photos to a hard drive before you leave.

3.) Take an extra bank card and credit card with you

Disasters happen. It's always good to have a backup in case you get robbed or lose a card. You don't want to be stuck somewhere new without access to your funds. I once had a card duplicated and a freeze put on it. I couldn't use it for the rest of my trip. I was very happy I had an extra and not like my friend, who didn't and was forced to borrow money from me all the time!

4.) Learn basic phrases in the native language of your destination

The locals will appreciate it and it will make your interactions easier. You don't need to master the language but learning a few things like "Hello," "Goodbye," "Thank you!", "Where's the bathroom?" will go a long way to endearing yourself with the locals. They'll like that you tried.

5.) Always get behind business travelers when in security lines

They move fast since they are usually in a rush and travel light. They know the drill. Line up behind them as much as possible. You'll speed through the line!

6.) Carry a basic first-aid kit.

Accidents happen so be prepared. I take band-aids, antibacterial cream, and ointments for minor cuts and scrapes. You never know when you're going to need it and you can't always get it when you travel.

7.) Try new food.

Don't ask what it is. Just put it in your mouth and see if you like it. If you put your guard up, you might miss out on some unusual and delicious local cuisine.

8.) Take free walking tours

Besides being free, these tours will give you a good orientation and background of the city you are visiting. I love, love, love taking walking tours when I travel. You pass the time, you get to pepper the guide with questions, and you get to learn so much about where you are! Take a walking tour when you travel!

9.) Go with the flow

Let your days unfold naturally. Schedule two or three things and let the day fill in the rest on its own. It's less stressful, and letting the day just take you is one of the best ways to travel... :)

10.) Get out from behind the Camera

Yes, we take a lot of photos... and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that! Everyone wants to capture memories. But just remember that traveling is not about "getting the shot." Once you click, step back, put the camera down and relish in the view. Sometimes memory serves best.

- You Are Where I Go