

Holiday Travel Tips

Now that Labor Day has come and gone, the holiday travel season is right around the corner. By planning your holiday travel now you can stretch your budget further than you think. Here are some cost-saving tips to keep in mind as you're planning your winter travel.

Fly when no one else wants to.

Airline ticket prices rise and fall with demand, so you'll get the best deals when few other people are traveling. During the holiday season, this means the best prices are on Tuesday and Wednesday, or on Saturday afternoon. For example, if you're taking a week-long trip and leave on a Saturday and return on a Monday, you can save up to 16 percent on your airfare. Early morning and late night flights are also typically less expensive and smaller airport crowds at those times can mean you'll get through security lines faster.

Know your travel insurance options.

When you book a vacation, you may be asked if you'd like to purchase travel insurance. Before spending the extra money, familiarize yourself with what travel insurance options are available to you. Travel insurance can cover trip cancellation, accidental death and dismemberment, loss of luggage or personal possessions, and/or protection against the bankruptcy or default of your cruise line or tour operator. However, many homeowners' and renters' policies provide coverage for theft and other losses away from home, and your medical and auto insurance may cover you while you're traveling. Check with your insurance agent to see if your current policy will provide you with similar coverage to the travel insurance you're considering. Keep in mind that airlines must reimburse you if they lose your bags.

Create your travel budget now.

Even though you may not purchase your airline tickets for several weeks, depending on price fluctuations, create your travel budget and start saving now. If you plan your entire vacation in advance, you will have an accurate picture of the cost of accommodations, travel and planned activities. Build up your "holiday fund" savings now to avoid the stress of needing to pay for the travel afterward, when you'll also be paying for gifts and other holiday expenses.



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