

Money

Remember these three key words:

Cash, credit and checks.

- Plan to use credit cards for major purchases such as rental car, hotel and restaurants.
- Carry enough foreign currency to cover your first days expenses such as transportation, tipping & immediate cash needs - about \$200. Helpful Hint: Getting this money prior to your departure will eliminate long lines at the airport (and you may find better exchange rates.)
- Convert your travelers' checks to cash on an as-need basis. Banks will usually give better exchange rates than hotels, stores or private exchange booths.
- ATM's (Automatic Teller Machines) on the Plus or Circus networks are a fast, easy way of getting cash abroad. They give you the best exchange rate. Your bank at home will charge a flat fee for each transaction. Helpful Hint: Networks abroad only accept four-digit personal identification numbers (PINs).
- Plan how to carry your money safely. Be sure to wear your money belt, ankle or neck safe at home for a few days to test the comfort factor.
- NO FEE Travelers Checks may be obtained from GERACI TRAVEL.
- You may also purchase foreign currency through GERACI TRAVEL for a nominal fee.

HELP! Numbers to know

Should anything go wrong - heaven forbid - here are numbers you should keep with you at all times.

- U.S. Consulates and embassies phone numbers in the countries you'll be visiting.
- Phone numbers to each of your credit card and travelers' check companies. All account numbers and check numbers should be kept separately in a safe place.
- Your insurance policy number(s) and the company's phone number

Packing

Luggage:

- Your luggage should always have locks - carry on and check-in, but especially check-in luggage. (Small combination lock is best.)
- Divide your belongings into smaller suitcases rather than having heavy ones which are a strain to carry.
- Don't underpack or overpack. Overpacking will cause you luggage to break and tear; underpacking can make your luggage vulnerable to ripping or denting.
- Check specifics regarding luggage size and weight limitations and number of pieces per person permitted. This may vary by destination and carrier.

What to Pack: Make a list of articles you need first. Pack according to climate, geographical location and your schedule or activities during your trip. Everything you need will fit into one of the following categories:

- Clothing: casual, formal, specialized, rain gear, hat, undergarments, night clothes, comfortable shoes. Coordinate so that you can mix and match articles, thus packing fewer clothes.
- Minimal jewelry and accessories.
- Toiletries and travel accessories such as clock, electric shavers, hair dryers, etc. Helpful Hint: Most countries use a different electrical current and plug configuration. If you take small appliances, you'll need an adapter kit which is available at most electronics or hardware stores.
- Medical/dental kit - waterproof and compartmentalized for easy access. Includes such items as:
 - Toothbrush/toothpaste
 - Emergency dental supplies (topical ointment,
 - Aspirin, cold remedy, antidiarrheal
 - Thermometer
 - Extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
 - Water purification filter or tablets
 - Antibacterial and antifungal skin ointment
 - Motion-sickness medication
 - Insect repellent
 - Sunscreen

Packing (continued)

In-flight travel kit (kept with you at all times) should include:

- Prescriptions and medication clearly labeled
- Legal and medical documents
- Personal address book with phone numbers of doctors, destinations, emergency contact embassies and consulate.
- Nonperishable, nutritious snacks (safe food may not always be available.)
- Valuables such as jewelry and cameras.
- *Optional*-inflatable neck rest

Preparing your home

- It is best to ask a neighbor, friend or relative to watch your home, water the lawn, remove advertising circulars and pick up mail. (If no one is available, have mail and paper deliveries suspended.)
- Leave a detailed itinerary with that person along with phone numbers to each of your destinations. Let them know where your spare photos and passport copies are should you need them.
- Arrange boarding for any pets far in advance, especially during the holiday season. Cost for an in-home petsitter for more than one pet can be comparable to boarding rates and many will also provide housesitting services.
- If you decide to hire a house sitter or petsitter, interview the sitter in person; ask for several local references and talk with those references. Make sure the sitter is licensed, bonded and insured.



International Checklist

Travel Tips for Travelers...

...The key to an enjoyable worry-free vacation

"Serving Southwest Florida Since 1959"

Ft. Myers - College Plaza - 8595 College Parkway, Ste. 55
(239) 433-5223

Ft. Myers - Corporate Headquarters - 1400 Colonial Blvd., #259
(239) 277-0719

Cape Coral - New! Orchid Plaza - 4307 Del Prado Blvd., Ste. 1
(239) 542-0111

Cape Coral - Camelot Isles - 1616 Cape Coral Pkwy. W., Ste. 103
(239) 540-2222

N. Ft. Myers - Merchant's Crossing - 15201 Cleveland Ave., #1210
(239) 656-0111

The key to a successful vacation lies in the pre-trip planning. This is not an unknown revelation. We all know that organizing ourselves makes a trip much more enjoyable. The trick is to actually do it! The following checklist will show you the major aspects of preparing for an international trip and once you are on your way, you need to do nothing more than enjoy yourself.



Passports

Because processing passports can take up to six weeks during peak-travel months, it is best to apply three to six months in advance and, if possible, during the light-travel months (September thru December). First-time applicants must apply in person as well as most renewals. Criteria for renewing by mail is listed below. Applications can be made at the U.S. Passport Agency, authorized post office, or courthouse. You will need the following:

- Form DSP-11 (Application for Passport), available where you apply
- Proof of U.S. Citizenship (a previous passport or a certified copy of your birth certificate. If you are a naturalized U.S. Citizen, you must present your certificate of naturalization).
- Two 2" by 2" identical photographs taken within the past 6 months. Helpful Hint: take two extras and leave them in the house in a safe place.

You may renew by mail if:

- You can submit your most recent passport.
- Your most recent passport is less than 12 years old.
- If you were at least 18 when you received your most recent passport.
- If you have the same name as your most recent passport or the appropriate paperwork to indicate a legal name change.

If all of the above criteria is met:

- Obtain form DSP-82 (Application for Passport by Mail) from a U.S. Passport Agency, authorized post office, or courthouse. Helpful Hint: Specifying your departure date will speed your processing of the application. If no travel date is listed, passport services assume no travel is planned and will process your passport accordingly.
- Are you leaving in a month or less? Consider express mail service and enclose a prepaid self addressed return envelope. When you receive your passport, sign it and make two photo copies - one to carry with you and one to leave at home in a safe place.

If your passport is lost or stolen:

- To secure a replacement you must apply in person, fill out Forms DSP-11 and DSP-64 (Lost Passport report which registers the loss with Passport Services.) Both forms are

Passports (continued)

available where you apply. Provide the same information a first-time applicant would provide.

- If you lose your passport abroad, immediately notify the local police authorities; get a copy of the police report and take it to the U.S. Embassy or consulate, which can help you get a new passport.

Research

Visas: We advise that you obtain information yourself regarding specific nations' visa requirements if visas are required. You can obtain visas only from your destination countries' embassies or consular offices in the U.S.

For a list of individual countries' entry requirements:

- Send a \$0.50 check or money order to Consumer Information Center, Dept. 456Z, Pueblo, CO 81009 and request Foreign Entry Requirements. (Check with a U.S. Passport Agency for a possible free copy.)
- Or you can log on to www.travel.state.gov/foreigntryreqs.html.

For a list of foreign diplomatic offices' U.S. address:

- Check your local library's government documents section for "Foreign Consular Offices in the United States."
- To receive a copy send a \$4.75 check or money order to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 and request by title and stock number 044-000-02372-5; or call 202-572-1800

Travel Advisories: The Citizens Emergency Center offers travel advisories that describe physical risks and serious health hazards abroad. (The center also works with U.S. Embassies and consulates abroad to like relatives at home with travelers abroad.) For current, up-to-date information call the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs at (202) 647-5225, or log on to www.travel.state.gov

Customs: You may want to investigate U.S. Customs regulations before traveling if you plan to do a lot of shopping abroad. There are 3 booklets available in one package that give advice for returning U.S. Residents. Send a \$0.50 check or money order to Consumer Information Center, Dept. 454Z, Pueblo, CO 81009 and request Customs Tips for Travelers.

Immunizations

There are two kinds of immunizations:

Recommended- Vaccinations for the traveler's own protection that are optional and:

Required- vaccines primarily for the country's protection and to prevent transmission of diseases between countries.

- For requirements and recommendations by country immunization schedules and health hints ask for a copy of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's handbook Health Information for International Travel 2001 from the Government Printing Office, (202) 572-1800. The cost should be around \$5

- Contact a travel health clinic, of which there are more than a hundred available around the U.S. Staffed by doctors specializing in travel medicine. For a directory of these clinics, send a self-addressed stamped (\$1.55), 8 1/2 x 11 inch envelope to travel health specialist Leonard Marcus, M.D., Travelers Health and Immunizations Service, 148 Highland Ave., Newton, MA 02165

- A 24-hour hotline (404) 332-4559 is available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. You will receive updated recorded messages about requirements and recommendations for international travel. You must use a touch-tone phone to select from the message menu.

- According to the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Immunization Alerts maintains requirements and recommendations updated daily. A "Trip Report" is tailored specifically for you including State Department travel advisories. Fees are \$10 for the first country and \$5 each additional country. Write Immunization

Health

- Information books and guides are available at libraries and bookstores for you to research the altitude, climate, food and living conditions of each one of your destinations.
- Know your travel arrangements and sequence of countries: it is an urban or rural area, are you staying at five-star hotels or camping or; riding buses, trains, planes or boats and how much physical exertion is required.
- Make sure your routine vaccinations (tetanus, diphtheria, influenza, pneumococcal vaccine) are all current.

Health (continued)

- Check to see if these vaccines may react with any current prescriptions you may be taking
- Request ample supplies of prescription medication to cover your travel time and allow for unforeseen delays.
- If a medical condition does exist, ask if the physical environment of your destination might cause problems. (High elevations may be difficult for people with pulmonary or cardiac conditions; people with heart disease or those susceptible to dehydration shouldn't travel in certain temperature zones.)
- Have the doctor write a letter (on letterhead with the name, address and phone number) indicating your medical condition, medications you may be taking, blood type and any recommendations.
- Ask your doctor to recommend or prescribe medications you may need for diarrhea, motion sickness, nausea, congestion or constipation, as well as a general antibiotic.

Travel Insurance

At times having travel insurance can be a real blessing. If you should become ill while traveling abroad, for example, even if you have Medicare it almost certainly will not cover your expenses, therefore the insurance can save you a lot of money. On the other hand, overinsurance is a waste. For example, your existing homeowners policy or credit card protection is probably adequate to cover lost baggage.

The following is a list of available coverages.

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Emergency money transfers | • Trip Cancellation, interruption or Delay |
| • Baggage damage or loss | • Legal Aid |
| • Rental vehicle damage | • 24-hr emergency medical assistance |
| • Facilitation of prescription drug replacement | • Worldwide referral to bilingual physicians. |
| • Medical evacuation | |
| • Loss of travel document and Ticket replacement assistance | |

Helpful Hints:

- Make sure the policy does not duplicate coverage you already have.
- Make sure it covers all activities you will be engaged in (many policies exclude such "adventure" activities as scuba diving or skiing).
- Check for exclusions of preexisting conditions on health insurance.