How Not to Ruin a Perfect Girlfriends' Getaway

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Travel can make or break a friendship. Here are 10 quick tips for ensuring your next girlfriends' getaway is a smooth trip for everyone.

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Several times over the years, I have gone on vacation with very little money. Once, when I was in college, I went with a group of girlfriends to Fort Lauderdale for spring break with about $100. We had a kitchen in our small place and spent the entire week subsisting on canned pasta warmed up on the tiny stove in a dented saucepan. We didn't care what we were eating; we were 19 years old and wearing bikinis, and all that was important was that we were in Fort Lauderdale! For spring break!

It is possible to have fun on a girlfriends' getaway with very little money—afterall, the most important part of the getaway is the people you are with. However, it's nice to have enough money to eat something besides canned pasta every day. So, here are my tips on how not to ruin that getaway.

1. Take enough money

How much is enough? It's the amount that you all agree will be enough. Discuss everything you want to spend money on before you leave home so everyone takes enough. Like wine, shopping and spa visits? Plan accordingly.

2. Don't lose your identification

Make copies of your identification and all your credit cards, then email them to yourself or save them on a remote server. If you lose your identification, this will make it much easier to replace everything.

3. Don't take all your identification and money with you

Most nice hotels have an in-room safe. Use it. Take some identification and a little cash and maybe one credit card when you hit the town, and leave the rest in the safe.

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4. Don't take the family jewels on vacation

You might absolutely love that diamond tennis bracelet, but travelling is not the time to take it with you. Take costume jewelry—it can easily be replaced.

5. If you take expensive items with you, don't pack them in your suitcase

If it's expensive and/or you love it, it should be in your carry-on. This goes for prescription medicine as well.

6. Label your suitcase and put an itinerary inside

I put a page with complete contact information and a detailed itinerary about where I will be during the trip. It does not really help me if they send my lost luggage home when I'm in Saint Lucia now, does it?

7. Plan for the possibility of being sick

Purchase travel insurance and make sure any medical emergencies are covered. I plan for minor medical emergencies and travel with a small first aid kit that includes anti-diarrheals, bandaids, antacids, etc.—all of which have come handy many times.

8. Don't get lost

Use your phone, your GPS, even paper maps—just use something that will get you where you want to go and not ruin your trip in the process.

9. Don't over-plan

If it is remotely possible to over-plan a vacation, I will do it. I'm a type-A personality who likes everything extremely organized, and I sometimes get carried away with planning so much that I need a vacation from my vacation. Build some downtime into your trip and you will enjoy what you have planned the rest of the time so much more.

10. Talk it out

Money? What to take? Where to go? What to do? Talk it out with your travel companions and your fabulous getaway will go much more smoothly.

JAN ROSS

After a lifetime of travel, Jan Ross can pack a bag and hit the road with very little notice, although she will always have a little black dress and some snazzy shoes in there. She loves to travel with her husband of more than 35 years as he is a great photographer and she is often way too busy having fun to think about taking pictures. Active travel or relaxing, she is up for it all!

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