



How To Avoid Ruining A Perfectly Good Getaway

by TFB EDITORS on OCTOBER 23, 2012

By Jan Ross

A long, long, long, loooooong time ago (35 years this past summer, to be exact), my husband and I went on our honeymoon. My poor, travel-deprived husband had never left the state of Kentucky and had never seen the ocean. As a wordly, well-traveled person myself, I found this very hard to believe.

Are you ready for this? He was truly amazed at the saltiness of the ocean.



Seriously.

That was the amusing part of the trip. A not-so-amusing moment was yet to come...

On the evening of the first day of our honeymoon, in a lovely oceanside hotel, as I was making tentative plans for the rest of the week, I casually asked him how much money he had brought with him.

I've forgotten the amount he told me, but it was not much. Miniscule, in fact. Not even enough to pay our hotel bill.

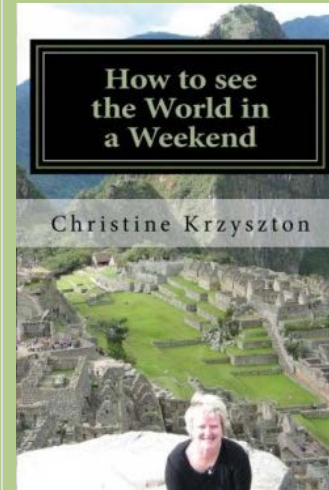
Over the years, I'd always depended on my parents — mostly my father — to handle all the financial arrangements for vacations. I'd assumed my new husband would do the same. But he was completely unequipped to do so. We had never discussed how much everything would cost or how much money to bring. And he had never been on a vacation. How could he know?

Somehow we managed to make our honeymoon work, thanks to a helpful grandmother who just happened to live at the beach nearby. But it could have been a disaster!

I'm sure this lack of financial preparations for vacations happens all the time. So I want to offer the following ten common sense suggestions so you can avoid potentially ruining your getaway. We all need reminding, right?



TFB'S OWN: CHRISTINE'S NEW BOOK!



BLOGROLL

[Boomer-esque](#)

[Boomer-esque](#)

[FlyerTalk](#)

[Free Frequent Flyer Miles](#)

[Freelance Tourist](#)

1. Take enough money.

How much is enough? It's the amount that you both agree will be enough, with a little extra tucked away so you can go shopping at that local outlet mall and he won't be upset that you're using the travel budget. At least that's what works for us. We don't drink wine, but if you enjoy it, be sure to plan accordingly and have the money to indulge. Just make sure you discuss everything you want to spend money on *before* you leave home.



2. Don't lose your identification.

There are pickpockets everywhere. The Eiffel Tower even has large signs warning tourists to be aware of the pickpockets – definitely a buzz kill from that awesome first experience at the [Eiffel Tower](#). Of course, you won't have to worry so much about having your pocket picked or your purse stolen *if you've made copies of your identification and all your credit cards*. If the originals are stolen, you'll just need to find a computer, call up those documents you carefully scanned, and emailed them to yourself (or save them in a remote server), then print them out. This will also make it much easier to get a copy of your passport and cancel your credit cards. Take the time to do it. You'll be so glad you did.



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

Most nice hotel nowadays have an in-room safe. Use it. Take some identification and a little cash when you hit the town, maybe one credit card, and leave the rest in the safe. Yes, safes can be broken into – there was even a case recently where thieves stole the entire safe – but it's much more likely that you will be pickpocketed than that someone will steal your in-room safe.



4. Don't take the family jewels on vacation.

You might absolutely love you diamond tennis bracelet or Aunt Bess's ruby tiara, but traveling is not the time to take these items with you – especially family heirlooms that are irreplaceable. I take tons of costume jewelry with me and would be upset if it was stolen, but I would not be inconsolable because it can easily be replaced.

5. If you must take expensive items with you, pack them in your carry-on.

I can't believe the number of times I've read about people who had had cameras, laptops, jewelry, etc., stolen from their suitcase. Seriously? Why in the world would you pack that stuff in a place where virtually dozens of strangers might see it – some of whom are just plain thieves? 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.

There's actually a place in Alabama where all the items from lost luggage that went unclaimed are sold? I try very hard to make sure my luggage never makes it to that store. For every single trip, I put a page in my suitcase with complete contact



[Just Another Points Travelers](#)

[Miles Momma](#)

[My Itchy Travel Feet](#)

[The Frugal Travel Guy](#)

[Traveling Well For Less](#)

[Travelzoo](#)

[View From The Wing](#)

[Wanderlust Wonder](#)

[Your Friend In Italy](#)

Google™ Custom Search

[Privacy Policy](#)

RECENT POSTS

[How To Avoid Ruining A Perfectly Good Getaway](#)

[MAKE MY MONDAY!](#)

[The TFB Week In Review: What Did You Miss?](#)

[A Gem Of An Island In Michigan](#)

[How To Shop For Miles and Points, Not Just Holiday Gifts](#)

[So Close And Yet So Far Away: Viva Cuba!](#)

[Car-Tripping to Phoenix, Arizona](#)

[MAKE MY MONDAY!](#)

[Question of the Weekend Gift Certificate Contest](#)

[Utah Family Ski Vacations](#)

[Sail On, Sailor!](#)

[Uruguay: Life In Eisenhower's America](#)

information and a detailed itinerary about where I'll be during the trip. It's not going to help me if my lost luggage is home when I'll be in Saint Lucia.

7. Plan for the possibility of getting sick.

As I trudged to the bathroom one more time to...um...*empty my stomach* in Nashville a couple of weeks ago, I was at least glad that it seemed to be a simple stomach bug that was gone the next day. If I had been going somewhere much further away for a much longer period of time, I would have purchased [travel insurance](#) and made sure any medical emergencies were covered. I plan for minor medical emergencies and travel with a small first aid kit that includes Imodium, bandaids, antacids, etc. That little kit has come handy many times.



8. Don't get lost.

We've been seriously lost twice in the last few months while traveling and both times were easily preventable. The first time, we ignored our cell phones, which were telling us we were walking away from the hotel. We assumed we knew better. The second time, I didn't carefully read the instructions about our Bed & Breakfast inn, which clearly stated we should use the map they provided and not our GPS, which wouldn't work correctly. Use your phone, use your GPS, but have old fashioned maps as backups.



9. Don't overplan.

If it is remotely possible to overplan a vacation, I will do it. A Type-A personality who likes everything extremely organized, I sometimes get carried away with planning — so much so that we need a vacation from our vacation! Build some downtime into your plans and you'll enjoy what you've 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 companion. Who knew my husband would like bike riding as much as me? He was willing to give it a try once we talked about it and now we're ready to go bike riding on every trip. Horseback riding? Not in a million years. He still tells the story about the one and only time he went horseback riding and the stable folks forgot to tell him that Ole Buck fell down a lot. True story. Funny story. One he told me the first night we met.

That's probably the main reason I forgave him for not bringing enough money on our honeymoon!



What other common sense suggestions do you have for helping all of us avoid ruining our great getaways? Please share them in the Comments section.

Tagged as: [carryons](#), [credit cards](#), [passport](#), [travel safety](#), [travel tips](#), [vacation](#)