



FULL WEEK SCHEDULE

Step Away From the Souvenirs!

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Let's be honest. No one needs another cheesy souvenir on their bookshelf. That ashtray from Cozumel? That shot glass from Punta Cana? Forget 'em and buy yourself and your friends back home something you'll all really want to keep.



STORY BY:
JAN ROSS
FOLLOW: @janross53

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I picked up a green glass ashtray emblazoned with the name of an iconic city in Mexico while browsing in the local Goodwill store the other day and chuckled inwardly. The person who picked that up in a shop in Mexico must have thought it was a great souvenir. After all, they packed it and brought it all the way back home and, I assumed, placed it on their coffee table. But at some point, it lost its appeal and ended up in a Goodwill donation box. Not so great after all. But what is the perfect souvenir? It's one that you love or you know the recipient will love. One that you/they will treasure, talk about and show to everyone.

Here's what to consider before you make your next souvenir mistake.

Step away if it has the name of the location placed anywhere on it

No matter what it is, no matter how the name is placed upon it, this is never a good choice and you will regret it. The person you are considering buying it for will regret it even more. That shot glass from Cozumel you think is just so fabulous? Just a dust catcher to the recipient.

Step away if it's a cheap t-shirt

Those signs that say, "Three t-shirts for \$10"? You might as well go ahead and buy one for your cat because that's who it will fit after you wash it once.

Step away if you turn it over and find a label indicating it was



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made somewhere other than the location you are visiting

A beautiful straw basket in Jamaica, a lovely glass-blown fish in Bermuda, a piece of pottery in Mexico? All might actually be made in China. Check carefully.

Step UP if it's actually a locally made item

A larimar bracelet in the Dominican Republic? A fire opal necklace in Mexico? Wooden carvings in Jamaica? Concentrate on items that are more than likely local and you will have a lovely souvenir or gift. Ask for help from someone you trust to locate these items. I have several pieces of larimar jewellery that I bought in the Dominican Republic with the help of a local tourism friend, and every time someone compliments me on them, I can mention where I bought them. And believe me, I do mention that. I might possibly bring it up even if someone does not prompt me.

Step UP if it's something you have been looking for and will actually use

A friend of mine bought several beautiful tiles with Maori symbols on them when she was in New Zealand, then incorporated them into the tiles in her kitchen. Beautiful and a great conversation starter, those tiles were the perfect purchase.

Come to think of it, there is not a "perfect" souvenir for everyone because everyone is going to love something different. If you think you'll adore that horrible green glass ashtray from Mexico and give it a place of honour on your coffee table, go ahead. Just think twice before you buy.

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- [5 Extraordinary Souvenirs to Take Home from Turkey](#)
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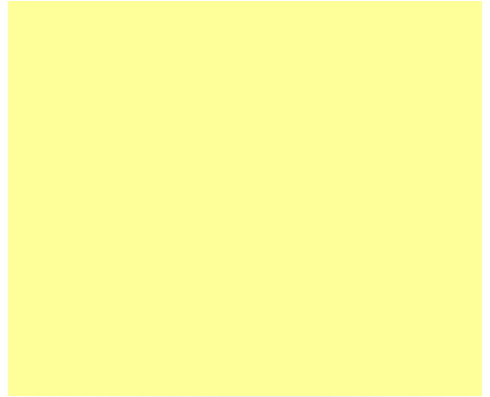
JAN ROSS



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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