

# How to Prepare for Your Trip?

## Practical Tips and Hints

- ✓ Make three photocopies of passports, international and U.S. Drivers Permits, visas, travelers checks and credits cards, and the itinerary. Leave one set at home, put one in the carry on luggage, and one in the stored luggage.
- ✓ Call and verify that your insurance company will cover medical care received in other countries. Medicare, generally, does not. Also, keep an extra copy of any prescription you bring in your travel documents, and always have a Latin translation - Latin is the official pharmaceutical language in mostly all places over the world.
- ✓ Check some of the many weather sources (some included in our Useful Links page) for forecasts.
- ✓ Keep in mind that other countries may use a different AC voltage, and differently shaped plugs. To use your electrical devices, you may need voltage converters and plug adapters.
- ✓ Expect to be searched by airport officials; it serves your own safety. Never at the time of a security check, nor at any time in the airport, should a passenger make jokes about guns, bombs, or hijacking.
- ✓ Take a brochure or business card from the hotel when you go off on your own, in case you get lost later on!
- ✓ Women traveling with handbags should only travel with those that zip completely shut and should carry them across their chest or under a coat or sweater. Men should always keep their wallets in their front pocket or use a money belt. A pouch worn around the neck can be helpful for anyone. Never keep your passport with your money! And never relinquish it to anyone, except at hotels where it is standard practice to verify your identity.
- ✓ Cash usually needs to be exchanged into local currency for most store purchases. When using Travelers Checks or credit cards, this is automatically done. Most major credit cards are accepted in the major hotels, large restaurants and many cosmopolitan boutique shops, but - depending on where you go - they are not used as extensively as in the U.S. Travelers Checks are widely accepted by banks and exchange centers. Although these are the safest ways to carry money, you will want to have some cash with you in case of emergency.
- ✓ To stay safe, avoid flashing large bills in public. Try to travel in pairs to exchange money, and exchange smaller amounts at a time (this will also save you the worry of exchanging leftovers back). Be aware of your surroundings when you leave the bank or exchange office, and make sure that your money is secure in its pouch upon leaving the teller's window. Never exchange money on the street!
- ✓ The amount of duty free you can bring home ranges from \$200-\$1200, depending on the destination. Check out applying customs regulations online, to know before you go! A link is listed at our Useful Links section. Keep receipts for all items you plan to bring back home with you.
- ✓ Last but not least: keep in mind that you will be traveling as a group, so tolerance, respect and punctuality will be essential to make it a smooth experience for all.