

# *Travel Tips*



*By Linda Thompson*

Dear Traveler,

Wade and I have had such a great time traveling the world preaching the Gospel and carrying His light. But one of the things I quickly found is that there are ways to make traveling easier and therefore more enjoyable. Why suffer when you don't have to?

I have put together a little booklet that contains some of the things that I have found helpful as I traveled. It started out as a list to remind me of the items that needed to be packed each time. Then I began journaling the things that were helpful and the things never to do again. As I shared some of the things I had learned people began asking me to share them – thus this little booklet.

It is by no means an exhaustive list. In fact, as you read along it may prompt you to remember things that have been helpful in your travels. I would be honored if you would share them... I will add them to my list and save us all some hassles. You can email them to:

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or our postal address is:

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We have a great task ahead of us – but one that comes with a promise of an easy yoke. I rejoice if this publication helps make your travels a little easier.

Love,

*Linda*

p.s. Feel free to make copies of this booklet to hand out to other travelers. AND don't miss the resource pages in the back – it has lots and lots of helpful websites for travelers.

## Travel Tips

### LUGGAGE/PACKING

1. Go ahead and spend the money for luggage with wheels. You won't always be able to use them (the wheels) but it will certainly be worth it when you can!
2. Also if you have older, heavier luggage, invest in newer, lighter luggage. The luggage weight restrictions are making it harder to pack even the bare essentials. Of course... the lighter the luggage the more you can carry in it.
3. Because the weight and size limitations are constantly changing, call (or check on the Internet) each carrier (airline) before leaving to check on the weight/size restrictions for both CARRYON and CHECKED luggage and any other policy change.
4. For a listing of items allowed in checked and carryon baggage please go to [www.TSATravelTips.us](http://www.TSATravelTips.us) You will also find a listing of the luggage locks that are approved by the Travel Safety Administration as well as other useful travel information. (You will also find a handy reference list of websites, phone numbers, etc. on the last pages of this booklet.) **As with almost everything connected to airline travel, this is constantly changing – so check each time.**
5. Tie large brightly colored ribbons or a piece of cloth on every piece of your luggage – including carryons. It helps to distinguish it from all the others on the carousel and if someone decides that they like your luggage and want to adopt it, you can spot it more easily. If you are in a group use the same color on everyone's luggage.
6. When in transit, never allow your luggage to be out of your sight. This is especially hard if you are traveling alone. One person should always be with the luggage – not just standing with it, but with an eye on it.
7. If you carry stuff to give away while you are there, you will have more room to bring stuff back.
8. Lock your luggage when leaving for the day.
9. I prefer the luggage locks that do not use keys. First, you don't have to keep up with keys and second almost any luggage key will fit into almost any luggage lock.
10. Many airports only allow TSA approved luggage locks. It is highly recommended that you secure your luggage with locks. (Please see resource page at the end of this publication for the Travel Safety Administration (TSA) website for approved locks.)
11. When attaching a luggage tag with your name and address try to use the type that has a concealed side. Put your name on the exposed side with all the rest of your info on the concealed side. That way anyone viewing the tag will not have access to the

address of someone that is going to be away from his or her home for an extended period of time. If you can't find that type, use a non-resident address, such as the address of your church, etc as a contact address.

12. Be sure you place your NAME and TELEPHONE NUMBER both INSIDE and OUTSIDE of your luggage.

13. I sometimes carry a purse in my luggage to use once I arrive in a country, but...

14. Be wary about bringing two carry-ons (many airlines will allow a carry-on and a purse, computer or briefcase). But some countries/airlines do not allow two. On one trip I had to check a carry-on once I arrived in India, because security was high during that time and they were strictly adhering to one carry-on. Thus I had to check some things that I really did not want to but had no choice at that point.



15. Here is what I look for in a travel purse: I want wide enough straps that it does not cut into my shoulder, a zippered top so I can close it completely and a color that is neutral enough to use with most everything. All that and as lightweight as possible!

16. Someone slashed my purse in the Calcutta (or Kolcutta, the new name) train station, but all the valuables I normally carry in my purse I had moved elsewhere. Therefore be cautious, but not fearful and listen to those little nudges from God.

17. Also be cautious about the size of the second carry-on if you decide to carry two – depending on the person checking and whether or not the flight is full they can be very picky about the size of the second carry-on. Make sure that it is actually purse or briefcase size or you may have to check it.

18. There are times that a backpack on wheels is the best carryon. You can find them almost all year, but just before school starts is when you will find the most variety and they are generally very reasonably priced. Some of them have lots of pockets – handy for getting yourself organized. In some countries the ability to carry it as a backpack will be a great convenience. Most of the time I just use a carryon with wheels because there are almost always lots of people ready to help.

19. My husband has devised, what I think is a most ingenious way of dealing with countries (such as India) where there are lots of people in a hotel anxious to help with every little detail. (Many times you will have one person bring the coffee, another person bringing the sugar and someone else bringing the milk!) He makes a list of all the bellboys and tells them that he will leave a tip with the hotel manager at the end of the trip. He then

gets hotel envelopes and puts each name on it with their individual tip, depending on how many days they were there, etc.

20. Make sure that you lock your hotel door at all times. Bellboys in India think they are a new member of the family and sometimes do not even knock when they enter!

#### THE FLIGHT

21. When buying airline tickets, get a seat assignment as soon as possible. Best case scenario is when purchasing tickets. If you arrive at the ticket counter without a seat assignment on an overbooked flight, you may get bumped off the flight and forced to take a later flight - which can be several hours or even a full day later. Some airlines are now allowing passengers to check-in over the Internet. At that point you can check your seat assignment. But BEWARE! What many people do not know is that once you check-in - whether at the counter or over the Internet - your ticket is considered used or spent. So make sure that you know that you are going to get on that plane before check-in. (There are incentives for Internet check-in, such as a coupon that you can print for free headphones, which you have to pay for on domestic flights.)

22. At the check-in counter: a) Check your seat assignment b) Make sure that your frequent flyer account is on the ticket c) Check your luggage to your final destination d) Make sure you see where the agent puts your luggage tickets.

23. If you have multiple stops (and you have the time) go the counter and ask them to check on your luggage. They will check to make sure that your luggage is where it is supposed to be.

24. Bring one of the horseshoe-shaped travel pillows. This really helps during long flights.

25. When flying, always carry whatever you will need for the first day or so on your carryon just in case your luggage gets lost. I carry:

- at least one change of underwear
- another shirt to wear with the suit that I have on
- toothbrush/toothpaste
- Bible
- teaching notes
- makeup (including a good face moisturizer - your face will be the first visible evidence of the dehydration caused by flying)
- airline tickets
- itinerary
- photo/video equipment
- prescription medication (in their original container to avoid security questions)
- passport

I once spent seven days in Honduras without my luggage but made it comfortably with just the above.

26. Avoid wearing contact lens during the flight.
27. When flying internationally *always confirm your flights 48-72 hours before departure (do not forget the return flight!)*. *Some airlines will cancel your reservation if they are not confirmed.* Some airlines say that is no longer necessary, but we do it anyhow.
28. If you are planning to take a one- or two-day stopover on a flight, try and check your luggage all the way through to your final destination, carrying what you will need for your stopover in your carryon. If that is not possible, many airports have a place to store luggage for a day or two.
29. Flying causes one's body to dehydrate, so drink plenty of water before, during and after a flight. It is recommended that you drink eight EXTRA ounces of water for every hour of flight time.
30. Nurse Rachel reminds us to get up and stretch on long flights. Periodically do shoulder rolls, head/neck rolls, lifting your legs toward your chest, leaning over and touching the floor, etc.

#### Motion Sickness

31. If you have a problem with motion sickness: when making your reservation, request a seat over or near the wing. (You can also change your seat assignment when checking in at the airport. Of course the earlier you check in the more likely it is that you will be able to secure the seat you desire.) Or place a wedge of lemon in your mouth. The strong taste will force your mind to refocus. Fresh ginger is great for nausea. In fact at the airports in China they sell fresh ginger in the waiting area.
32. Get plenty of rest before you travel. Weariness and exhaustion can make you more susceptible to other things that can bring on motion sickness.
33. Do not eat greasy or acidic foods for several hours before your adventure. This includes having coffee also. Heavy, greasy foods like bacon and eggs, sausage, waffles or pancakes with syrup, alone or combined with acidic juices like orange juice, can wreak havoc on your system and end up recycled as lunch for fishes. Consider less acidic fruits (apples, bananas, pears, grapes, melons, etc.), breads (muffins, croissants, and rolls), cereals and grains as alternatives. Milk, water, apple juice, cranberry juice and other low acid beverages are gentler alternatives to orange juice or grapefruit juice. Affricated beverages (including soft drinks) should be avoided as they are diuretics (make you urinate) which accelerates dehydration. The gas in carbonated beverages has negative responses in some, avoid them also.
34. Do not skip eating before flying. An empty stomach can be almost as bad as one with the wrong types of food in it. Give your stomach acids something to work on other than your well-being. Give your stomach time to begin digesting you meal. Get up a little

earlier if you must to eat relax and an hour or more before departure. Don't overeat and get bloated either. Easy does it.

35. Drink plenty of water. Even partial dehydration lowers your body's resistance to the stressful factors caused by the motion. Drink plenty of water or juice.
36. Do not drink alcoholic beverages. Alcohol tends to dehydrate the body. Its other symptoms are not desirable either. Alcohol can prevent the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) stage of sleep, the one in which you dream and your brain rests.
37. Avoid gasoline or diesel fumes. Stay out of direct sunlight as much as possible just before and even after your flight. Avoid becoming overheated and dehydrated.
38. If someone in your party is overcome by motion sickness, get away from them at once! Unfortunately, many of us can do fine until someone else loses it. Then we have a sympathetic reaction and succumb as well. It could be the sound, the smell, the sight, or a combination of them that triggers the same response in us. You don't have to be close to your buddy at this time. There is nothing you can do to help.
39. If you make a change on your flight itinerary make sure that you have proof of the change with you at all times. After discovering that the meetings in India went a day longer than we planned, we simply changed our flight home – but of course the ticket still had our original departure date. Because the security in the airports of India is tighter than even in the US, the guard was not even going to let us in the airport unless we could show proof that our flight had changed. Thankfully we had a faxed copy of the itinerary change and we were allowed to enter.
40. If you have you taken your shoes off to be comfortable during a flight, put them back on during your trips to the potty.
41. Always use the hand soap and a tissue or two to wipe down the airplane toilet seat, including that little 3-inch part in the front where the horseshoe doesn't come together.
42. On the return flight I take a Melatonin (an herbal sleep aid) when I would normally be going to sleep at home to begin getting back in a regular sleep pattern. I also take less than the recommended dose – you do not want to be groggy.
43. The Internet has wonderful maps of most airports. I have printed layouts of unfamiliar airports and taken them along, making changing airplanes much easier. Many of the in-flight magazines will have a map of the airport included (they do not mind if you take them).
44. If you are waiting to board a flight and it is suddenly cancelled, there will be a race to the next airline counter to try to get on the next flight. Instead of following everyone to

the counter, head for the nearest phone and phone the airline reservations system. You get the same result without standing in line.

45. Nurse Laura confirms why I always feel better on VERY LONG flights if I can find somewhere to lie down (sometimes it is the chairs in the waiting area of airports and sometimes it is behind the chairs in the waiting area). There are some things that your body just can't do unless it has some horizontal time. We sometimes travel for 35-40 hours straight – going from airplane to airport and back on a plane. The best bet on very long flights is to get a dayroom in the airport – but if not – find somewhere to lie down if only for a little while.



46. (I read this one but have not tried it...) Need to alleviate ear pressure when flying? Place a hot cloth in a cup and hold it over your ear.

#### BRING ALONG...

47. Always carry toilet paper in third world countries (oh excuse me we are supposed to say “developing nations”). To transport, take the core out and flatten. A few weeks before travel I change half-used toilet papers and bring two or three half-used ones rather than one large one.
48. Bring a sewing kit along with lots of safety pins.
49. I always keep two clothespins in my suitcase to use on hotel drapes that don't quite meet in the middle. It can also be used for a number of other things such as closing snack bags, hanging your clothes in the closet, clipping your receipts together, closing those plastic bags, hanging up wet clothes, etc
50. Some type of room freshener is helpful. I carry a couple of scented tea lights with holders.
51. Dr. David Williams says he never travels without Travelers Friend. It is grape seed extract, which is a powerful all-around antimicrobial product that is effective at killing dozens of harmful bacteria, fungi, yeast and other harmful organisms. To use as a disinfectant for contaminated water: add 15 to 30 drops in one gallon of water or three to five drops in a glass of water. After adding, vigorously shake container and let it sit (glass for 10 minutes; gallon for 20 minutes).
52. I always have a small amount of rope. It has come in very handy for clothes lines, etc. If you are traveling alone or have long layovers you can use it to rope all the luggage together and tie onto your person or a chair and be able to rest. Once we were stuck in

a layover with all of our luggage (that does not happen very often now days, but...) If you can not get a dayroom, it is hard to rest and keep an eye on the luggage. You can buy clotheslines in most travel departments (and many of the dollar stores have them also.)

53. Bring enough of the travel anti-bacterial hand wipes for the entire trip. Here is my equation: Take the # of days times four. Twenty-one days X 4 = at least 84 per person.
54. Bring a couple of extra Ziplocks – two quart and two sandwich size – they take up no space and come in very handy for a variety of things.
55. A 49-cent doorstop is a great anti-theft device. Mine kept disappearing when I finally figured out that the cleaning people probably thought it was theirs and were taking it. So I started putting it in my luggage or somewhere out of sight when I left out for the day.
56. Bring a travel alarm clock.
57. Bring earplugs. Always! Especially if you are going to be with a group. I bring along my own for the flight (especially domestic flights) because sometimes the airlines do not have them available (more and more budget cuts – do not think that just because they had them the last time that they will have them this time). Not only will they help with the noise but they also help to equal out the pressure and therefore cuts down on popping and pain in the ear. Here's how to put them in (I found out not everyone knows how!). Before placing it in your ear, squeeze the end that goes in your ear, rolling it in your fingers until it is compacted. Place it in your ear, allowing it to expand and conform to your ear.
58. Gold Bond Medicated Powder will prevent many chafes, if used in advance.
59. It is good idea to bring a small address book. Be sure to include phone #s as well as addresses. Do not depend completely on electronic devices – believe me, you need a backup of the essential names and numbers.
60. Bring a small notebook and several pens (mine seem to disappear!) to keep a travel journal – jot down notes while you are thinking of them so they don't fly away. Here are a few hints to remember while keeping a travel journal.

If you like to write up your adventures on the road, do your family and friends (and yourself) a wonderful favor by practicing good technique:

- In your first few paragraphs, create a scene that the reader will find compelling.
- Immediately focus the reader on a character.
- Then create a problem or conflict. Something should not go as expected. It can be large or small in scale, or even inside the character's mind. It is the resolution of this challenge that keeps people reading.
- Vary your sentence patterns.

- Get rid of passive voice (all conjugations of the 'to be' verb).
- Create several sentences that do not start with a noun.
- Add skillful metaphors and similes.
- Wake them up with shock value.
- Add humor.
- Place the emphatic, comic, or dramatic words at the END of the sentence.
- GET RID OF unnecessary words! Cut, cut, cut! This does not mean make your travel memoir short, but it means make every word work hard.
- Study examples of good technique - and practice.

61. I bring one washcloth, because no one but Americans seem to think they are important. You can also save your disposable makeup remover cloths and use them as a thin washcloth.

62. Or you can also buy a package of HandiWipes. Cut them in half, using one each day. Take one for each night of the trip. If sharing a room, use a different color for each person. You now have a soft, clean washcloth for each night of your journey. In the morning, wipe off shoes and toss out.



63. Instead of bringing a bulky towel consider bringing sarong. They are large enough to wrap around you, work almost as well as the real thing and best of all, they can double as several different things (sheet, bathing suit cover, curtain, robe, etc), if necessary.

64. A blow dryer can be used as a small, portable heater as long as you NEVER turn it on and leave it. I have two travel blow dryers – one for 110 current and one for 220.

65. Bring two or three plastic hangers (per person) to hang clothes on the night before wearing to get the wrinkles out. If you are able to shower, hang them in or near the shower and the moisture will also aid in reducing the wrinkles.

66. Having thank-you cards with you can be very handy.

67. Bring insect repellent. Avon's Skin So Soft seems to work in many cases, but I also carry a small travel-sized repellent with Deet in it. I know that it is not very good for you, but when there are lots of bugs in an area known to have Malaria, it is good to spray it on your socks and clothing. In trying to track down gentler ways to repel bugs I found several websites that said alcohol was a great repellent.

68. You can still buy a mosquito coil in the camping section. But do not light them indoors! We were in the jungles of Thailand with lots of mosquitoes in our room. So we thought

we could light a coil before leaving for several hours and all the bugs that our gecko could not eat would be gone. Well, when we returned our room was filled with insecticide smoke that did not want to leave.

69. I have read and been told that Bounce sheets in your pockets keep mosquitoes away. I wouldn't know if this is true or not.
70. Many travel stores or travel sections of your local department store carry mosquito nets that are easily transported. I just never figured out where I was going to hang it.
71. I use a dirty clothes bag that is cotton so that it breathes (acquired at a dollar store). The clothes do not get nearly as stinky. You can also use a king-sized pillowcase.
72. Stick one Sharpie in a luggage pocket – you'd be surprised how often you need it. Make sure you "click" the lid on or it will be dried out when you need it. I also keep one in my camera case.
73. Carry multiple photocopies of your passport. Hotels will ask for your passport to make a copy. The problem is the copier is not ever in the hotel – it is down the street somewhere. It not only is unwise to give up your passport – it is illegal. You are not to give your passport over to anyone.
74. Copies of your airline tickets are also a good thing. Keep both the copies of your passport and your airline tickets in a place separate from the original. (I also leave copies of our passports, airline tickets, the emergency numbers for ATM/credit cards, and travel insurance information with a trusted friend or family member at home – especially useful if you have their phone number memorized!).
75. *Always have a small flashlight available.* I carry mine in my purse or backpack, which is with me almost all the time.
76. Carry extra batteries for everything that needs batteries. I lost everything in my PalmPilot because I tried to use batteries from Mexico.
77. If you have prescribed medicines, always bring extra – kept in a separate location. Also bring a prescription with you if it is vital. If you have to carry a syringe for diabetes or allergies, it is wise to have an official letter from a doctor to avoid problems at the border.
78. To avoid scuffing, carry your shoes in a sock. To save room and help to keep your shoes in shape you can pack a pair of socks or something else inside your shoes. Always bring two pairs of comfortable shoes.
79. Emergency care items:
  - ✓ Band-aids and antibacterial ointment for minor cuts and scrapes
  - ✓ pain reliever

- ✓ antacid
- ✓ antihistamine
- ✓ decongestant
- ✓ extra prescription medications in their original container
- ✓ diarrhea remedy
- ✓ laxative
- ✓ antiseptic creams/wipes
- ✓ motion sickness aid

80. Individual packs of wet wipes are very handy, as are the carry along packs of Shout wipes.

81. Always take products out of their original box and store in something that does not take up so much room (Ziplocks?).

82. A twin-sized, prewashed flannel sheet or (a plain cotton sheet for hot climates) takes up very little space, but could make the difference between sleeping and not sleeping on a cold night or on a bed that is not clean.

83. A rain poncho is great for many different things, including a lining under your bedding if your accommodations are too gross even for your flannel sheet. They are available in tiny little packs (that is until you open them and take them out – but as I learned from Martha they can be dried out and put back into the package) in the camping section. I always carry several. They are also wonderful for covering sound equipment when it starts raining!

84. You can find many of the travel items that are needed in the camping section. Also stores that carry backpacking supplies have lots of interesting travel items.

85. If you are carrying large amounts of money – carry it on your person, with smaller amounts (what you will need for one day) in a place that is more easily accessible.

86. If you choose to bring credit cards only take major credit cards, such as, Visa, Master Card and American Express. Notify the card companies that you may be using your card abroad. The unfamiliar spending patterns might cause them to suspect that the card is being used fraudulently and delay your approvals. They will also be able to help you with such issues as the in-country phone number to use in case your card is lost or stolen. You may also need to get an in-country pin # to use as your US # may not work. Never depend on a credit card or ATM; assume that you will probably not be able use either then be pleasantly surprised if you can.

87. ATMs are fairly common in some countries – rare in others. You will have a small transaction fee but you can minimize that by making fewer and larger withdrawals. It is best to use the ATM during regular business hours. Safer and if the machine eats your card you will be able to retrieve it.

88. Check the expiration date of your credit cards/ATM card – ***make sure that they do not expire during your trip!*** Get replacements if this is the case.
89. I recommend money belts that are 100% cotton – they are cooler and can be washed easily. I bring along two so that I can wash one and wear the other – especially helpful in hot climates. I keep the money belt pinned or tied to my underclothing.
90. Try to keep small amounts of money for tips, water, etc separate so that you do not have to get your wallet out for these things or at least keep it in a different pocket from your daily money.
91. Do NOT pull large amounts of cash out of your pocket. This will catch attention, no matter what country you are in. Plan ahead as much as possible and take care of money issues in a private place.
92. Don't forget the wires for the cameras and video cameras. Nothing is as frustrating as having great equipment and not being able to use it because you can't charge it.
93. Charge or replace all batteries before leaving.
94. Keep a business card inside your camera case.
95. Buy film in US (do not forget to check the expiration date) ***and do not carry it in your checked luggage.*** The equipment used to scan luggage is much more powerful than it used to be and will damage your film.
96. When transferring shampoo, soap, etc. into smaller bottles, only fill them  $\frac{3}{4}$  full and squeeze out as much air as possible to help avoid leakage.
97. If you are going to a country with a different type of electrical current, do you need adapters or converters? Converters are very heavy so if the folks you will be with have plenty – use theirs.

#### CLOTHING

98. I have a pant suit that I call my flight suit. It is nice and loose fitting (generally acceptable in most countries), but still looks nice. It is made of material that does not wrinkle easily – but best of all it has huge, deep pockets in both the jacket and the pants. (The pockets in the pants are covered by the jacket and not easily accessible to anyone but you!) That is very convenient for flying. (“May I see your passport?” “May I see your passport and boarding pass?” “May I see your passport and boarding pass?”...well you get the idea – a traveler is constantly having to take very important things out and put them up. With everything that you have to keep up with... if it is not a convenient spot sometimes they can get left behind or put somewhere that is hard to find next time – which in many cases is five minutes later.)

99. If you do not have a “flight suit” force yourself to get in the habit of putting your passport and tickets/boarding pass in the same place every time. Designate one pocket of your carryon just for important documents – use it each time and do not put anything else in that pocket while you are flying. It will prevent one of those panic attacks that mature Christians never have.
100. My “flight suit” was over 20 years old and beginning to wear out. I brought material from the US (you might be able to find what you want overseas, but unlikely), and simply gave the suit and material to the tailor and asked him to make a new exactly like the old one.
101. For colder climates: buy silk long underwear (they are warm, but take up very little space). I found ours on the Internet at Lands End.
102. For very cold climates: buy one pair that is your regular size and another pair one size larger to layer.
103. Tights really keep you warm also.
104. Layering cotton, silk, or wool (or a combination of natural fibers) undershirts keeps you very warm and takes up much less space than carrying large overcoats.
105. I also have a wool poncho that my children smile at, but it takes up much less space than a coat and unless you are going to a very cold climate – that, combined with the layered underclothes keeps you warm enough. Plus it can be used as a blanket if necessary.
106. Some shirts (especially sleeveless tanks – which I wear with suits) can be worn backwards thus extending your wardrobe.
107. Each country has a different set of clothing “no-nos”. Yes, you could get on the “that’s religion” soapbox, but if we are so busy selling our brand of religion (did you get the gentle hint there – who says we are right?) then the people that we are ministering to will not hear the most important things we have to say – which is Jesus.

Here are some clothing taboos I have experienced, along with general info:

Most of the following is found in India (or any country highly influenced by the Muslim or Hindu culture):

- ✓ Do not allow your legs or ankles to show at all. It is more acceptable to wear loose fitting pants that cover the ankles with socks than dresses/skirts with the hemline even mid calf. Best: long dresses/skirts. I have several punjab suits (long dress-type tops with pants) that are great.
- ✓ Get prepared to give up your ‘personal space’. That is a concept that the Indians do not grasp.

- ✓ Be very careful crossing the street. We are accustomed to vehicles yielding to pedestrians – not so in India and many other countries. You are very responsible for yielding to cars, buses, rickshaws, bicycles, motorcycles, etc.
- ✓ Do not mention or slam other religions (Hindu, Muslim, etc – including other Christian groups different than your own).
- ✓ Cross-gender hugging is taboo. Although do not be surprised if a male Christian gives you a scriptural greeting of a kiss on the cheek.
- ✓ Shaking hands may be an unfamiliar custom to people of other cultures. Watch how other greet and then imitate them. In North India, put your hands together near your chin (similar to a child learning to pray) and say “Na-mistay.” That is hello or good-bye.
- ✓ Do not be alarmed by same gender handholding. It is a sign of friendship.
- ✓ The tipping or nodding of the head toward the shoulder is affirmative or yes.
- ✓ Married ladies need to get ready to become a non-person in some places. When your husband is invited to come and eat breakfast assume that you are invited also.
- ✓ Do not be surprised by people coming up and unabashedly listening to your conversations. Many people are learning English in school and welcome an opportunity to listen (and even laugh at your jokes). We have even experienced crowds gathering around, looking over your shoulder to watch you change money. It always helps to have a national host to be standing beside you.
- ✓ Do not give out the name of the hotel where you are staying. “I am not allowed.”
- ✓ Our policy is not to give money to the beggars. Do not even make eye contact. Many of the beggars (especially children) are a part of beggar rings. They never get the money. Also some parents will actually maim their own children so they might beg. Giving to them perpetuates this awful tradition. Lastly, in many countries if you give to one person you could literally be engulfed in a sea of beggars. The Word of God talks about giving to the poor – but it also says that we should take care of the household of faith first. So we find other ways of giving.
- ✓ We prefer on our team trips that you do not personally give or promise to give offerings directly to any national. Our team will be giving offerings. If you are very impressed to give an offering beyond what the team is giving, please speak to the leader and they will try and arrange a way that the offering can be given anonymously.
- ✓ In Latin-American cultures wearing conservative skirts/dresses is better (many frown upon pants). No upper arms showing.
- ✓ If possible, check ahead of time with a female that has been a long-time resident of that country for cultural no-nos, especially in dress.

108. For hot climates: loose, light colored clothing made of natural fibers is best. Cotton or silk (natural fibers) somehow keeps you warmer in winter and cooler in summer – even down to your underclothes. (Don’t believe the tag that says silk in other countries

– in some countries they have come up with a synthetic material that some are calling silk but it isn't. Remember most countries do not have labeling laws like you are accustomed to.)

109. Light-colored, loose-fitting clothes made of natural fibers are cooler.
110. Wearing socks helps when using the Asian toilet (a hole in the floor with a landing pad on each side) and wearing pants or "punjab" suits. When you are "going" tuck your pants leg in the sock – which should keep your pants leg from touching the floor.
111. Bring clothes that you can mix and match. Stick with one or two interchangeable neutral colors for your suits or skirts, with tees or shirts that will go with any of them.
112. Broom skirts work great. Just twist them and stick them in a Ziplock.
113. Consider bringing clothes that can be given away along the trip. Your luggage will get lighter and lighter as the trip progresses.
114. Jeans are much too heavy and take a very long time to dry.
115. Dress conservatively and try to blend in. If you are in an area with groups of people hostile to the United States, avoid clothing or other items that openly label you as a U.S. citizen.
116. Never bring uncomfortable or brand new shoes that have never been worn. Wear them for a few days before you travel. I traveled with someone that bought a pair of shoes that were just like a pair that she already had - they were very comfortable so she did not bother to put them on and wear them. When she got them out to wear them overseas they were two right shoes (no left). So be sure to wear your shoes before leaving for at least a little while. Comfortable, snappy-casual shoes that will go with everything are best. Bring two pair of shoes, so you can switch them out.
117. Pack in Ziplock bags. For Wade I pack what he will need for one day: underwear, a tee shirt, socks and a handkerchief. Many packing authorities (yes, there are books written on this subject and many have helpful info) say that wrapping the days clothing around the underwear pack saves wrinkling. I have done that and it does reduce the # of wrinkles, but if you are picked for random suitcase checks, it will be heck. Plus the reason that I started using the Ziplocks was because I hated having to repack every time I had to hunt for something that was in the bottom of the suitcase. Everything would get topsy-turvy and out of place. When everything is in the Ziplock, it stays in place.
118. ***Always pack several days in advance*** – I prefer at least one week ahead. If you know that you have an event going on the week prior to departure, pack two weeks ahead. Place your packed suitcase in an out-of-the-way place that is easily accessible; that way you can put in the last-minute items that you might have forgotten otherwise

and you will not be tempted to wear the clothes that you intend to take with you. You will not scurrying around at the last minute; life is much more peaceful that way.

119. Pastor Joycelyn has all of her clothes professionally dry cleaned before packing. She had her denim skirts starched and they looked great!

#### EATING AND DRINKING

120. Only eat fruits and vegetables that are cooked or that are peeled by you. Fruits and vegetables such as grapes and lettuce (these are foods that absorb water – and whatever is in the water soaks into the food) should be avoided.

121. You are the only judge of what is okay for you to eat (you are the one that will have to deal with the consequences). You can politely refuse water drawn from the village well. Remember this: if the reason you are in that another country is to preach the Gospel, and you are out for any amount of time because you are battling sickness, you are robbing others from the supernatural impartation of the Word.

122. Be careful not to have too much of a good thing – use moderation and wisdom in trying new fruits, etc.



123. I know some people that bring an ice chest full of food as one of their pieces of checked luggage. But I think that part of the cultural experience is the food – plus people from other countries are always honored when you to eat their food.

124. I do bring emergency snacks. Trail mix, raisins, dried fruit or jerky can make the difference between a long train or bus ride or a very long train or bus ride. I know a woman that brings individual packets of hot chocolate.

125. Our friends Ron and Christy carry everything needed for morning coffee: a French press, a device to boil water (remember most countries are 220 current – you may have to buy one there) and of course their favorite coffee.

126. They consider the individual coffee packets as substandard, but they are pretty good in my book.

127. An extension cord (220 or 110 connected to converter) is always a handy thing to have!

128. Carry water with you at all times. *And drink it!* Bottled water is available almost everywhere now. But never accept water that the seal has already been broken – even if a server says that they just opened it. Some people take old bottles and fill them up from the tap. You can politely ask for a new one.
129. Carry and use antibacterial squirt stuff before a meal, especially if you can't wash up (in some places even after you have).
130. When you are traveling abroad, don't forget that drinking another country's water can be dangerous. Stick with bottled or boiled water and carbonated soft drinks.
131. Remember that the ice in your drink turns into water, so order them with out ice.
132. Wipe off the tops of cans before you drink from them, or better yet, if you're really squeamish I would consider bringing your own straws to use for drinking. I have noticed that some places rinse the tubes (straws) out and reuse them. Same goes for chop sticks. If possible, only use disposable chop sticks.
133. Only brush your teeth with bottled water and keep your mouth shut when you're in the shower.

#### GENERAL

134. The new Ziplocks with the zipper-like top are easier to get in and out of, but the old style that you have to align with your fingers last longer.
135. Carry toothpaste and other gooey stuff with a screw on lid – the snap on kind come off too easily in transit.
136. The US Department of State offers helpful information for people living abroad along with various other helps. [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)
137. There is also a website to print a small foreign exchange “money cheat sheet.” [www.oanda.com/convert](http://www.oanda.com/convert)
138. For disease/health information for each country, please check the websites for the World Health Organization ([www.who.int/ith/](http://www.who.int/ith/)) and the Center for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/)).
139. Traveling with a guitar: The cheapest way to travel with a guitar is not to take one, and buy a cheap second-hand guitar at each point that you'll be not using air travel for a while. It's pretty easy taking guitars on buses, but carrying a full size guitar on a plane is a hassle. There are other options: a range of guitars specifically designed for travel that are available:

Martin Co, The Backpacker Guitar: an acoustic guitar designed for being as easy to travel with as possible. It looks more like a lute than a guitar to the untrained eye, consisting of a full size neck with 15 frets, and a small narrow bell-shaped body, of about 70cm by 15cm. Considering the size, its tone is great, but compared to a 'real' guitar it's tinny. It needs a strap to be played whilst sitting down, because the body is not shaped in a way that nestles on the thigh.

Wade has a regular-sized guitar that we have traveled with for years and it has stayed in pretty good condition but we have had to replace the case a couple of times. It always seems to be the very last thing on the luggage carousel – it is the only luggage that has been lost the last few years.

140. Stay in touch! Email and the Internet have revolutionized the travelers/missions experience! The cost of planning a trip and communicating with those on the field is almost nothing. We seldom have to pick up the phone and call.

You should set up a web-based email account before leaving. Here is a place to start: Hotmail - from Microsoft, Yahoo!, and Gmail from Google. Two of the most important factors are how many ad's you are bombarded with, and how long the account stays active between subsequent logging in's. Hotmail has a very short length of time before deactivating accounts. There are plenty of people ready to help first-time users.

Many people now take mobile phones on their travels. Wade has a quad-band phone that we use for emergencies only (It is the regular phone/service that he uses in the US. His service is with TMobile and does not cost any extra unless we actually use the phone in another country. The phone is Motorola). Technology and access is growing – we used to be able to use it only in the larger cities, but now we are able to make a phone call in many remote locations. Last year we got off the train in the middle nowhere in India and no one was there to meet us. We were able to call our contact pastor and find out what was going on.

You should be aware that not all mobile phones work overseas. You must have a tri-band or quad-band phone and international service with your service provider. And as I stated above, our service costs nothing extra unless we actually use the phone overseas.

It is also nice (and inexpensive) to be able to send a text message.

Another option is to take an unlocked phone, buy a local SIM card if you are staying for more than a few weeks. (A SIM card is the chip in the card that gives the phone its number and network, they are usually cheap to buy and often include some money for calls). You should only sign-up to a "pay in advance" or "pay as you go" account.

We have now purchased an inexpensive phone that we will simply change the SIM card out for each country. If you are a frequent traveler this is the way to go for in-

country calls. We purchased our phone overseas.

Each year technology advances by quantum leaps. Be brave and explore the different modes of communication. Do not be intimidated by technology!

Blogging – Welcome to the revolution! Travel blogging draws on the Internet and the travel revolution, taking it a stage further. Journaling your experiences during travel is nothing new, but blogging is one step further: your journals are published, alerts sent to your subscribers, and photos can be added, all presented stylishly and in an easy to use format. The best thing (or possibly the worst) is strangers will read your journal! - possibly thousands of them.

Start with [TravelBlog.org](http://TravelBlog.org) a travel blogging service – and it is free.

141. When in third world countries (sometimes even elsewhere), staying on the second floor (or higher) of a hotel reduces the amount of dust, noise and sometimes even the bugs. There are generally plenty of people eager to help carry luggage up the stairs.
142. You may ask to inspect your hotel room before a decision/payment is made.
143. **Protect your passport!** On the road it is one of your three most important possessions... the other being your money and/or ATM/credit card and last of all – your tickets. Do everything within your power to prevent these from getting damaged or stolen. Get an under-clothes wallet, and a watertight Ziplock that is slightly larger than your passport - with a piece of rigid (but thin) plastic or cardboard that is the same size - place your ATM card, credit card, tickets, rigid plastic and passport inside the water tight bag, and place all this in your under-clothes wallet. When we are with trusted friends we sometimes leave the tickets and/or passports in locked suitcases – but that is rare.
144. Pastor Lurie from Louisiana carries her passport and flight tickets on her person at all times.
145. There may be occasions when people will ask for a copy of your passport (in some states of India the hotels are required to get copies of the passports of all foreign visitors.) Rather than them taking your passport to the copy machine (which may be down the street) – I prefer to have my own copies to give them. That way you do not have to give up your passport to anyone else. (A common scam is for a policeman on the street to ask for your passport, say they have to show it to the authorities... they leave and you never see them or your passport again.) So carry several copies of your passport in a hidden place in your luggage.
146. Any important documents that you may need (scanned copies of your passport, important telephone numbers, scanned copies of your airline ticket, etc.), email it to yourself. Internet cafes are everywhere now.

147. Manufacturers have now designed a clear, around the neck carrying case for your ticket and passport while traveling.
148. Be very aware and cautious in places where there are large crowds of people. If possible have a man or someone that is not carrying a bag walk behind everyone else. While in the Calcutta train station someone slit two holes in the bag I was carrying on my shoulder. It was such a deft operation that I did not even realize it had been done until I was in the hotel room. (Because people were praying [see 2 Corinthians 1:11] the only thing they stole was some hand wipes because I had already moved everything of any value to another location.) Try to carry your handbags on the front of you. Also – carry bags with a zipper so that you can see the closed zipper pull.
149. Do not wear large amounts of jewelry in other countries – especially in such places as bus stations and other places that will be crowded. (In fact leave your expensive jewelry at home.) These are the types of places that pickpockets abound. So keep all valuables near you – but do not fear or look afraid. Be confident.
150. Save the see-through bags with zippers that your pillowcases and sheets come in. They are great for medications or snacks and they last a long time. I found that my digital video camera fits perfectly in the zippered bag that my pillowcases came in. Dust is very destructive for equipment; therefore I protect it from dust with the zippered bag but I carry that in a photo bag for the sake of the padding. When I am somewhere that I may need to grab a camera in a hurry I still keep it in the zippered bag for dust protection but I just leave it unzipped for easy access.
151. If you are returning to a third-world country bring copies of the photos from the last trip to give out as gifts. Photos are *very much appreciated*. People from the villages especially value photos.
152. A digital camera can help lighten the atmosphere and make friends almost anywhere. People love to see their picture. Take a picture (be careful of security-sensitive areas) and show it to the locals, being careful to keep it secured around your neck. Instant friends.
153. Carry photos of your family. People in other countries will be as curious about you as you are about them.
154. Ties make an excellent gift in third-world countries – they are easy to transport and many styles that are no longer worn here are still worn in many countries.
155. Guitar strings are also good gifts. We have found that even though they are available, the quality is many times very poor.
156. Make sure that your passport is valid for a reasonably long period of time. Many countries require that it have at least six months validity left.

157. Be sure to fill in the emergency information page of your passport before leaving.
158. When going out for a day in a foreign city, carry a matchbook or postcard with the name and address of your hotel, which you can show to taxi drivers or when asking directions.
159. *Travel Insurance* If you choose to use travel insurance be sure to have two copies of the coverage with you. (We require people traveling with us to have travelers insurance.)
160. Travel insurance is probably one of the most overlooked aspects of preparing for a trip. Getting the right insurance cover is very important. If you choose the wrong policy and if the worst happens you could find that you are not covered - do be aware of what is covered and what needs separate coverage.
161. It is getting harder and harder to use Travelers Checks. Cash is always welcome, although in China they did want to exchange a \$100 bill because it was creased.
162. Keep your stuff in as small an area as possible. The more you get spread out, the more likely you are to leave something behind. I do *not* put things in drawers, etc unless I am going to be somewhere for an extended period of time. One of the most common places to lose stuff is in the bedspread and in the bathtub behind the shower curtain (if you are fortunate enough to have a shower!). Get in the habit of not putting anything on the bed and always looking around one last time before leaving – always pulling the bedspread up if the bed is not made (don't forget to check under the bed!).
163. If you are staying in someone's home, bless it! Matthew 10:12 & 13 says, "When you are invited into someone's home, give it your blessing. If it turns out to be a worthy home, let your blessing stand; if it is not, take back the blessing."
164. Do what you can to increase your immune system during the month before leaving.
- cut back on foods that decrease your immune system, such as sugar and fat
  - exercise on a regular basis, but don't start the day before leaving!
  - do not be on any type of fad diet shortly before leaving
  - strengthen your digestive system by adding foods such as yogurt to your diet
  - get as much done ahead of time as possible so that you are not staying up late packing, typing teaching notes, etc
  - but most of all ***get plenty of rest, especially just before leaving.***
165. Be careful of the "crash and burn" syndrome after an especially long or powerful trip.
166. Reread this booklet each time you travel.

#### SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR WOMEN

167. Panty liners will help keep you feeling fresher, especially in hot climates.

168. I carry toilet paper in my bra so that it is always accessible. Although while in Thailand this time I found out this does not work in very hot climates. You end up with unusable wet toilet paper.
169. For makeup removal: I use the disposal makeup remover cloths before using my regular face cleaner. It keeps mascara and foundation from staining other people's washcloths.
170. Many of the items that you may forget are available in other countries (soap, shampoo, clothes washing powder) – but I have noticed that some types of feminine hygiene products are hard to find.

#### GROUP Travel

171. Tie brightly colored ribbons on every piece of your luggage – including carry-ons. It helps to distinguish it from all the others on the carousel and if someone decides that they like your luggage and wants to adopt it, you can spot it more easily. If you are in a group use the same color on everyone's luggage in the group.
172. Tape everyone's name on the back of the passport for ease of use.
173. Remember also that if you are with a team you will be together much of the time for the majority of the trip – basically living together. Try and have a greater regard for the welfare of your teammates than you might if you were in your home country. Put a guard on your mouth and refrain from criticizing or complaining even to close friends (and especially about friends!).
174. Be extra careful the last few days of the trip because that is when most people start letting their guard down. It does not matter whether your trip is six days or six weeks the last few days can be tough.
175. Iron sharpens iron. Yes, you will be sharpened by contact with others, but just remember that you will be sharpening someone else too!
176. Don't plant something that you don't want a harvest on.
177. Last few days before leaving:
- Check all your paperwork - tickets, passports, visas, is everything in order?
  - Is your email account working? If not get a replacement and then redistribute your email address.
  - Is your travel blog working? Have you tested it and are you happy with the way it works?
  - How are you getting to the airport?
  - Arriving late? - book a hotel or hostel in advance.
  - How do you plan to get from the airport or train-station to the hotel/hostel?

- Money - do you have some of the local currency? If you are arriving in a popular place in the middle of the day then you can get away without it... you'll be able to find a money exchange or an ATM easily. At each major airport you can generally find a money exchange booth. But to be on the safe side – change some money at the first opportunity. If you are not sure – check with your bank. If it is not an international bank, it may take some days to get it done. But almost all of the international airports have money exchange booths. It is most advisable to get money changed before you arrive in your country of destination.
- Have you tied up all the loose ends at home? Make sure! Plan ahead! Get them sorted out - you want to be able to enjoy the trip.

## CONCLUSION

Remember! You are an ambassador first and foremost for the Kingdom of God, but also for your country of origin. Do laugh and have a good time, but be careful that you...

### NEVER:

- ✓ Criticize the way people from a different culture do things
- ✓ Criticize the price of goods or services (remember – the economy it is not their fault)
- ✓ Laugh at the way others get tasks accomplished (many times they have to have much more ingenuity/original thinking to get a project accomplished because of the lack of resources)
- ✓ Laugh at or even comment regarding clothes, hair styles, old cars/vans, out of date technology, etc. (except to compliment)
- ✓ Compare your standard of living to their standard of living (“Being here with you and seeing how much you do not have makes me appreciate how much I do have.” NO NO NO).
- ✓ Exalt one country over another, even indirectly (“God doesn’t just love the United States.”)

### ALWAYS:

- ✓ Find something good to say about the culture, the people or the landscape
- ✓ Smile and care
- ✓ Treat others the way that you would want to be treated

HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU!

The following page is my “short list” for traveling.

## Short Travel List

### Carry on

Face cleaning/moisturizer  
Toothbrush/toothpaste  
Underwear  
Bible/Teaching  
Makeup  
Camera/Video/Wires  
Memory stick empty?  
Mini DVDs  
Passport  
Tickets  
Extra change of clothes or at least a shirt

Ribbons on luggage

Toilet paper

Anti bacterial

Ziplocks

Doorstop

Travel alarm clock

Earplugs

Gold Bond

Address book

Journal/pens

Blow dryer

Insect Repellant

1<sup>st</sup> Aid Kit

Flashlights/batteries

Ponchos

Money belts

Wade's

Mine

Ties to give away

Guitar strings to give away

Guitar/Strings

Travel Insurance

Check foreign money

Wade's machine

Copies of passport

Emailed to myself

Several with me

Copies of *tickets/travel insurance* with trusted friend

Bills paid?

Air/Heat/hot water adjusted?

### Team Trips

Manuals

Check list

Costume

Makeup remover cloths

**Make sure that you are packed at least one week ahead!**

## Resources

For a listing of items allowed in checked and carryon baggage please go to [www.TSATravelTips.us](http://www.TSATravelTips.us)

You will also find a listing of the luggage locks that are approved by the Travel Safety Administration as well as other useful travel information.

Need help with the kids? Here is a website that has travel games, tips, etc.

[www.momsminivan.com](http://www.momsminivan.com) They claim to have “101 Car Travel Games & Road Trip Ideas for Kids”

Here’s a website that lets you search for wireless hot spots by street address or ZIP code. So check it out at [www.freedomlink.com](http://www.freedomlink.com) and click "hot spots" before your next trip.

Taking your laptop? [www.roadnews.com](http://www.roadnews.com) for lots of tips

The US Customs and Border Patrol offers lots of helpful advice [www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel)

For disease/health information please check the websites for the World Health Organization ([www.who.int/ith/](http://www.who.int/ith/)) and the Center for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/)).

The Internet has wonderful maps of most airports. I have printed up copies of unfamiliar airports to take along, making changing airplanes much easier.

Many of the in-flight magazines will have a map of the airports that they service included.

The US Department of State offers helpful information for people traveling or living abroad along with various other helps. [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

There is also a website to print a small foreign exchange “cheat sheet.”

[www.oanda.com/convert](http://www.oanda.com/convert) This is always a good thing to have – just be sure to print it close to your departure date so that you have an accurate/up-to-date exchange rate.

There are lots of websites with helpful information – do a search! There are new ones every day. Here is one I found: [www.freetraveltips.com](http://www.freetraveltips.com) It has all sorts of things such as a currency converter (with printable cheat sheet), weight and conversion chart, Fahrenheit to Celsius temperature chart, a to-go checklist and much more.

Each of the airlines has detailed information regarding their baggage requirements, etc. such as Continental’s website: [www.continental.com/travel/policies/baggage/check.asp](http://www.continental.com/travel/policies/baggage/check.asp) Even helpful information such as what type of security checks to expect and how your bags get from the ticket desk to the airplane. This information would be especially helpful if you are traveling with children.

Southwest Airlines: [www.southwest.com](http://www.southwest.com) They have a page entitled Travel Tips/Airport Information. [www.southwest.com/travel\\_center/travel\\_center\\_tips.html](http://www.southwest.com/travel_center/travel_center_tips.html)  
The Internet is a great way to get information – take full advantage of it!

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