



# Travel Tips and a Travel Checklist

We at “Baci da...” know the difficulties of traveling; hence, this hopefully, helpful guide. So whether this is your first or 10<sup>th</sup> time abroad, feel free to peruse and print. And, we look forward to seeing you on a future trip with “Baci da...”

## Know Before You Go

- ✿ Most airlines will charge you for overweight luggage. You are allowed 50 lbs. per suitcase for domestic flights, and 70 lbs for international. Please check directly with your airline carrier for details, as these may change.
- ✿ Educate yourself on the laws of the country you will be visiting. Obtain information on visa requirements, health and/or safety issues, and driving regulations. General information can be found at [http://travel.state.gov/travel\\_warnings.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html).
- ✿ Check local weather conditions at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com). There’s a nice 10-day forecast on this website.
- ✿ Check exchange rates at [www.oanda.com/convert/cheatsheet](http://www.oanda.com/convert/cheatsheet). You can even print this out and carry with you when traveling.
- ✿ Be aware of what Customs allows you to bring back into the U.S: \$400 duty-free of goods purchased abroad for each person. After that, it’s a 10% fee for the next \$1000 worth of goods. Check the Customs website for up-to-date and accurate information: [www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation](http://www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation).
- ✿ Consider purchasing an insurance policy that will cover you medically when traveling. Or check with your current health carrier to see if you will be covered while traveling abroad.
- ✿ If you plan to rent a car, check with your credit card and car insurance companies to see what they will cover on a foreign rental which will save you from buying expensive, extra insurance such as CDW (Collision Damage Waiver).
- ✿ Computer cable ties are the best way to lock your luggage (found at any office supply store). Be sure to pack small scissors in an outside pocket of your checked luggage so you can cut the cable tie upon arriving at your destination. Airport security has the right to search your bags, and if you lock them, they will probably break the locks. TSA locks can be used domestically but foreign security might not be able to unlock them.

## Cash and Credit Cards

- ✿ Foreign Currency - It’s always a good idea to buy a small amount of foreign currency at the airport exchange booth. This will cover initial costs like transportation, local food purchases, etc. However, keep in mind that you do not get the best exchange rate at airports booths, hotels, currency exchange stores, or local merchants.
- ✿ For the remainder of your cash needs, ATM machines are readily available. You will get the most favorable exchange rate this way. However, check with your bank prior to leaving to see what fees they charge you for accessing your money abroad. You may be charged a transaction fee at the local ATM and your bank at home. Therefore, it’s advantageous to withdraw larger amounts, less often rather than smaller, multiple transactions.
- ✿ You can obtain cash advances on your credit cards at most ATMs. Again, check with your bank as fees can vary from 2% and up on your withdrawn amount. Also, remember your credit card company will start charging you interest at the time of your withdrawal.
- ✿ Make sure you know the PIN numbers for the cards you intend to use. PINs should be 4-digits long, as foreign ATM’s might not accept more than four numbers. And some keypads may not even show letters on the buttons.
- ✿ Before you go, find out your daily withdrawal limit for your bank and credit cards.
- ✿ Don’t take all your credit and bank cards with you, in case of theft or loss. Only pack the essential ones.

## Let’s be Prepared

- Insure your passport has not expired or will not expire prior to returning from abroad. <http://travel.state.gov/passport>. Some countries require that your passport be valid at least 6 months or longer beyond the dates of your travel. Check with the Embassy of the country you plan to visit.
- Photocopy the first two pages of your passport, along with a copy of your airline ticket or e-ticket confirmation. Carry these items separate from your passport and original ticket.
- Make two copies of your travelers’ checks and receipts. Leave one set at home and carry another set separate from the originals. In case of loss or theft, you are able to report the check numbers and amounts.
- Photocopy the front and back of the credit cards you are taking. Carry the copies separate from your credit cards. In case of loss or theft, you will have the account numbers and phone numbers.
- Give copies of your itinerary, including dates, names and phone numbers of hotels, to your family and friends.
- If you need to pack prescription drugs, carry them with you as carry-on. Do not pack them in your checked luggage. Keep all medications in their original bottles to avoid potential problems with Customs.
- Put your name and address on a labels outside AND inside your suitcases to aid in identification if luggage is lost.



# Travel Checklist

## Before Leaving Home

- Hold your mail. You can do it online at <https://dunsapp.usps.gov/HoldMail.jsp>.
- Hold your newspaper and other deliveries
- Lock all doors and windows
- Put lights/radio/tv on timers
- Close blinds and curtains
- Pay bills
- Water plants
- Unplug items such as computers, tv's, etc., that would be susceptible to power surges
- Clean out refrigerator
- Empty garbage
- Arrange for pet sitters
- Do yard work or arrange to have someone do it while you're gone
- Arrange to have someone periodically check on your house; leave extra key with someone. If you have a security system, notify them.
- Turn down your thermostat.
- Consider turning off your hot water heater
- Don't leave a message on your answering machine saying you are out of town.

## Carry-on (Please check any new security regulations at <http://www.tsa.gov>)

- Passport
- Airplane ticket(s), train ticket(s), car rental confirmation, etc.
- Driver's license if you are renting a car
- Cash: take small denominations for tipping
- Credit cards/ATM cards
- Travelers checks
- Bottled water *\*as of 8/10/06, some liquids banned from carryon luggage*
- Medication (carry in original prescription containers)
- Cell phone and charger
- Pen/pencil
- Entertainment items
- Snacks

## Consider carrying with you (Please check any new security regulations at <http://www.tsa.gov>)

- Kleenex
- Handi-wipes or mini anti-bacterial gel
- Jewelry (minimize the bling you wear as it makes you an easy tourist target)
- Camera and film
- Sunglasses
- Gum, helps with ears popping and fresh breath.
- Mouthwash or travel toothbrush/paste *\*as of 8/10/06, some liquids banned from carryon luggage.*

## Pack in your checked luggage

- Shirts and tops
- Jeans, slacks, shorts and skirts
- Sweater and/or jacket or coat
- Bathing suit
- Shoes – black, brown, sneakers, dress shoes, sandals. Shoes should be comfortable as you will be walking A LOT. (Be sure to break in new walking shoes before you go.)
- Belts
- Underwear, socks, and lingerie
- Nightgown/pajamas
- Toiletries – Shampoo, conditioner, gel/mousse, facial cleanser/moisturizer, soap, razor, toothbrush/paste, make-up, sunblock, washcloth (with plastic bag to store it in), etc.
- Eye glasses, contact lens and supplies including extra lenses, sunglasses.
- Hair accessories – blow dryer, curling iron, hairbrush, comb
- First aid kit, Pepto-Bismol, band-aids, aspirin/ibuprofen, cold/flu medication, diarrhea medicine, laxatives, alcohol wipes, motion sickness pills, insect repellent, vitamins, hydrocortisone cream, antiseptic cream, etc.
- Feminine hygiene products, if necessary
- Nail clippers, tweezers, small scissors
- Travel sewing kit
- Travel iron
- Travel adaptors and electrical converters
- Travel alarm clock
- Guide book/language book
- Extra, collapsible bag for souvenirs and gifts that you purchase abroad
- Umbrella
- List of addresses for mailing postcards