

hydrated and bring along a mild laxative we find useful at home.

- **Pepto-Bismol** can head off many problems such as upset stomach, heartburn, nausea, and mild diarrhea, before they become serious. It is also valuable in preventing travelers' diarrhea, often called "Montezuma's Revenge."
- A **triple-antibiotic** ointment such as Neosporin to treat minor cuts and scratches.
- **Band-Aids** in various sizes and shapes.
- A non-drowsy **antihistamine** since we may discover a new allergy.
- Our normal pain medication such as **aspirin** or **acetaminophen**.
- Motion sickness medication such as **Bonine**.
- A **cough suppressant**. I like to take sugarless breath mints for this.
- **Lip Balm & Sunscreen**, at least SPF 15 that has both UVA and UVB protection.
- **Insect repellent** containing 30 to 50% DEET or up to 15% picaridin (not for ticks).
- **Hand sanitizer**, either liquid or hand wipes.
- **Lubricating eye drops** in case we have dry eye problems.

Our Travel Map: courtesy of Trip Advisor



Map showing places we have visited in all US states and Canadian provinces and in over 90 countries on all continents

Bon voyage

Steve Henning, rhodyman@earthlink.net



Angkor Watt, Cambod.



Mountain Village, Fiji



Bora Bora, Polynesia

Tricks of Experienced Travelers

Mode: Car; Bus; Train; Ships; Planes; Independent 2
Suitcases: Lightweight Expandable Suitcase; Small Carry-on Bag 6
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Kyoto, Japan



Beijing, China



Guilin, China



Panama City, Panama



Mt. Kilimanjaro



Zambia



London, England



Lake Louise, Canada



Isle of Mull, Scotland

Tricks of Experienced Travelers

We started travel immediately after we got married and moved from Oregon to Pennsylvania. We both worked full time, so we always spent our vacation time traveling. We not only toured the East Coast, we eventually visited all 50 states and all provinces of Canada. We started foreign travel 5 years later when we took a chartered flight to Amsterdam and picked up a European Delivery Volvo which was later shipped back to Pennsylvania for us. We drove our Volvo through 13 countries (Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, West Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, France, Italy, Vatican City, and England) in 3 weeks. Now we have traveled to over 90 countries not including 4 countries that don't exist today (East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the USSR). Not only have we spent every vacation day traveling, we took a sabbatical where we traveled continuously for 75 days. Since we retired, we have gone to some of the more exotic places we hadn't visited before (Russia, the Black Sea, Easter Island, Israel, Turkey, Africa, and Antarctica) and we have gone back to some of our favorite places we had already visited (New Zealand, Japan, China, Galapagos, Norway, Iceland, and Scotland). Since we have been traveling for over 50 years, people often ask us for advice. Here is how we prepare for a trip and handle things we aren't prepared for.

Mode:

Some of the options are the mode of travel and whether it is independent or group travel.

Car: One of the best ways to travel usually is by personal car or rental car. Driving is relatively easy in countries that have the same alphabet that we do. It is even easier with a GPS. Many European car makers have a European Delivery program where you buy the car before you leave home, and pick it up in Europe, drive it, and then the car maker ships the car home. You usually save quite a bit on the car, and get the use of it in Europe. We have done this 7 times with Volvo and highly recommend the program.



Our European Delivery Volvo in Sweden

When traveling by car, it is usually best to book reservations in advance at

to be one.

- Always remember you are a guest where others call home.
- Respect all places you visit no matter how humble or elaborate.
- Expect things to be different from what you are used to. Adapt.
- If you don't understand something like how to flush a toilet, ask for help.
- Learn words in the local language, especially hello, excuse me, and thank you.
- Be aware, the locals can usually spot a visitor and are willing to help you.
- Don't expect everyone to speak English. Usually some do, but not everyone.
- When in a group, remember to respect others around you. Don't shout to friends.
- Ask before taking a photograph of a person unless you are far away.
- Help your fellow travelers take photos of themselves, especially at iconic places.
- Always be early for departures or meetings. Don't keep others waiting.
- Learn the local words for toilet and bill or check at a restaurant.
- Don't assume that there will be ATM's or banks readily available.
- Please don't use perfume or cologne or other strong smelling toiletries.
- Get to know your fellow travelers. Then you are traveling with friends, not strangers.

Toiletries and a Travel Medicine Kit

Most luxury hotels have common toiletries and tissues in case you forget something. However, many countries don't have the products you are accustomed to, so be sure to take ample amounts. I always make sure my deodorant is new, by taking the used one from my travel bag when I need a replacement at home, and putting the new one in my travel bag. I carry a couple small, travel sized toothpaste tubes and a spare comb. For a safer shower I always have lightweight cloth-free shower shoes that are easy to dry. We take small travel sizes of any bulky items. We always take tissues with us in case we must use a toilet with no paper. We also take extra tissues in our suitcase and replenish as we can. We keep our toiletries together in a pouch.



Lightweight Shower Shoes

Besides our own personal medications, we have some travel medicines such as:

- Antidiarrheal medication such as **Imodium**
- **Laxative:** constipation is a common problem, so be prepared. We stay

would have been very difficult without a travel agent. It saved a bundle on redundant airfares.



Easter Island



Antarctica

Shopping is seldom a prime concern for our travel. I do like to do birthday and Christmas gift shopping while on trips if possible so that I have something special. We do not try to buy something for everyone. Our gift is to bring back pictures to show our friends. I do like to make sure my wife has souvenirs of places where we travel, usually a piece of jewelry, since jewelry is small and doesn't take up much space, which she keeps reminding me. I like hand carved wood objects such as a boomerang or carved animals & birds. They are light weight and easy to carry.

When I was in India, I found 3 larger items, a folding chair, a camel saddle, and a silk carpet. Since I was with a reputable tour and the tour guide worked with me to arrange home shipment, I went ahead and got them. They arrived in excellent condition. The folding chair and camel saddle were packed in hand made aluminum trunks. You can't always trust merchants unless they can be held accountable.



Folding Chair, Camel Saddle & Silk Carpet purchased in India and shipped home.

Respect: Be respectful of the countries you visit, your fellow travelers and your guides

You may have heard of the "ugly American." We have seen them and try not

places that have parking available. Some older cities were not designed for car traffic. Cars are not a good option in large cities or for very long distances. Some cities such as London and Melbourne have restricted areas called Congestion Zones near the city center where cars are not allowed without special permits. Cars are also not useful in areas where roads are quite primitive.

Bus: Bus tours are the least expensive, but also most restrictive. People are always taking photos out the window because the bus doesn't stop. Window reflections and motion tend to make such photography very challenging. Tauck Travel has taken some of the unpleasantness out of bus tours by not filling the bus and rotating seat assignments so everyone gets to sit in the front and also we get to meet everyone on the bus as their seat assignment becomes opposite ours. Also, there is no rush to get back on the bus to get a good seat and no saving seats, practices that tend to get tedious on longer trips. Tauck also stops at the best hotels, so it is not cheap, but it is a good value.

Train: Train travel is very common outside the US. It is very relaxing and has more opportunities to take photographs than you get on a bus tour. You can even go to a platform between cars and take photos with no windows in the way. Most train trips don't stop very often to visit attractions.



Indian Pacific crosses Australia's outback.

One train trip that does make some stops and stops at hotels each night is the Rocky Mountaineer. It traverses the Rockies between Vancouver, BC and Banff, AB, and between Jasper, AB, and Vancouver, BC. It uses a bus connection between Banff and Jasper that stops at Lake Louise and the Columbia Glacier. One west-bound option goes through Quesnel, BC, and Whistler, BC.

A very long train trip is the Indian Pacific that travels coast to coast in Australia between Sydney and Perth. This trip has very few stops and takes 3 days. It does stop in Broken Hill, Adelaide, Cook, and Rowlinna where there are brief activities.

River Boats: River boats are a great way to travel. They usually carry between 60 and 130 passengers. They have the most stops. Not only are there shore excursions, you can often use a bike carried on the boat to tour or even, on



2 Tauck River Boats on the Rhine River

some boats, bike along the river beside the ship when it is moving. Some popular riverboat routes are the Danube River, the Rhine River, the Yangzi River, the River Nile, from Moscow to St. Petersburg, the Mississippi River and the Columbia River. One caveat with most river cruises is that if the river is too low the ships must stop at shallow spots, and when the river is high, ships must stop at low bridges. In these cases passengers are taken by bus past the impasse.

Small Ships: Small ships are also a great way to travel. They quite often only have 40 to 250 passengers, not thousands. The accommodations are very nice, though the evening entertainer may be the person who serves you meals or cleans your



Small Ship Le Soleal en route to Antarctica & Cruise Ship Marina en route to Polynesia

room. Small ships are slightly more expensive than cruise ships, but the personal touch is worth it. Usually the shore excursions are much more relaxed. Tauck Travel has an excellent selection of small ship tours. Some of the nicest small ship tours are in Alaska, the Galapagos the Mediterranean, Japan, and Antarctica where small ship travel is the best way to go.

Cruise Ships: Cruise ships are very large carrying 1,000 to 5,000 passengers. They offer all of the comforts of a small city or very large resort. Cruise ship travel is especially popular in the Caribbean, in Alaska, and through the Chilean Fjords and the Norwegian Fjords. Cruise ships don't stop very often and when they do stop, shore travel is somewhat problematic, first with the congestion caused by several thousand passengers trying to egress at the same time, and second with people wandering around trying to find the right shore tour. Then, it becomes a bus tour, or private-guide tour, or on-your-own tour.

route to Africa. The trip insurance kept us from losing all of our money, and we were able to rebook the same trip a year later. Trip insurance is best booked with a travel agent since it is usually least expensive if booked at the time reservations are made. I feel trip insurance is a part of the cost of travel. The trip cancellation insurance is important if you don't want to risk losing the cost of your trip due to something beyond your control.

Travel Agents: With all of the online sites purporting to offer cheap travel, many people choose to book their own trips. To take maximum advantage of such offers, you need to be flexible as to when and where you are going. You also need to be willing to take the risk of traveling with less reputable companies or too less reputable hotels.

We have a travel agent, Kathy at [KoKo Travel](#), who excels at arranging independent travel. She has access to many low price options that are not advertised to the public. For example, if we are tired of being packed in a plane like a sardine, our travel agent finds roomier options such as premium tourist class or budget business class. Our travel agent can book tours that are not available online and connect multiple tours from different companies together. Our travel agent booked our Africa trip with a tour in South Africa followed by a tour in Zambia and Tanzania.

The policy of the company she booked with was to run the tour if 2 or more people signed up. We were the only people who signed up so we had a private tour with our own driver and guide, or driver-guide. It was very personal and very flexible.



Icelandair Economy Comfort Seating

Connecting Multiple Tours: When traveling to far away destination, it is much more economical to combine multiple tours since the cost of air travel to the destination is the major expense. There are even special airfares that make very long trips very economical. The first one we took was a 21-day air ticket for the Caribbean to any place we wanted to go. We toured 7 different Caribbean islands on this trip. The second special airfare was a Circle Pacific fare that allowed us to fly around the Pacific Ocean stopping anywhere we wanted. We travel for 75 days to Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, San Francisco, and back home. We each carried our one suitcase and one small carry-on case.

Recently our travel agent booked a private tour of Easter Island and then connected that with a Tauck Expedition to Antarctica already en route. This

purchase items with credit cards if possible. They get an even better exchange rate. They also provide additional consumer protection. Cash is good for small items and vendors that can't take cards. We use up our foreign currency when checking out of our last hotel in a country. The currency exchange fees add up, so we avoid exchanging currency.

Travel Documents: We always carry two forms of identification: typically our passport and driver's license. We make sure we check to see if we need a visa. We also check to see if we should have any special vaccinations. We keep a record of all of our vaccinations. Our local hospital in Reading, PA, has a travel medicine department that helps us with this and knows which vaccinations we already have and which we will need. We always take a list of all of the email addresses for our family, friends and financial advisors. We had to pay a hospital bill before we were allowed to leave Chile and the hospital didn't know how to charge our credit cards. He had to have a bank person in the US that spoke Spanish talk them through charging our account. We always have spare copies of our reservations and the booking numbers stored in two different bags.

Important Details:

Trip Insurance: Trip insurance has two important coverages. First, medical coverage is important, especially if your own insurance will not cover you. Even if your own insurance covers you, you may want additional coverage such as emergency evacuation to a home hospital. We had an accident in Chile that required hospitalization and surgery. We elected to have it done in a Chilean Navy hospital in Punta Arenas, Chile, since the medical facilities were excellent and the surgeon had trained in Virginia. Our travel agent helped us submit the entire bill to our travel insurance, but before they would pay it they asked we submit it to our insurance. Our insurance paid the entire bill since it was "emergency treatment." They don't normally pay for treatment outside the US.

Second, trip coverage often covers losses of baggage and trip cancellation by either you or the tour company. It usually covers trip interruption by illness or injury, terrorist threats, or emergency travel home. We had a 4-week trip to Africa interrupted by a death in the family while we were in Amsterdam, en



Naval Hospital in Punta Arenas, Chile

One nice way to do a cruise is to have a travel agent arrange private guides for each stop and not use the more expensive cruise line excursions. The cost of the private tours is competitive and they offer more opportunities to stop and take pictures.

Planes: Plane travel is often necessary to get to a destination. However, it is also often the most convenient way to get around at the destination. Most China tours travel internally by plane since the country is large and the infrastructure is not always the best. Other large countries often include internal plane travel between the various cities or bus tours. Always travel with a reputable company that uses airlines with a good safety record.

Escorted or Group travel: Escorted travel means that you will have a tour director that goes with you and a local guide in places where you stop. Sometimes with a smaller group there is only a tour guide. Group travel usually involves buses and can also involve cruise ships, river boats, and/or



Budget group travel on a jugaad in India

local flights. These trips are the most relaxing since most of the planning is done for you. The down side is that you may spend 24 hours a day with your group and not truly experience the places you are visiting. The best group tours give you free time to explore on our own and let you have some of your meals in small groups at local restaurants. The one place where we appreciated group dining was in Thailand where the local fare is extremely spicy. Fortunately, our group dined in hotels that had what I call "tourist food". It was basically the same as the local fare but not nearly as spicy. However, our guide was Thai and he went out and ate the spicy local fare while we were eating our "tourist food".

Independent Travel: The most common form of independent travel is car or train travel where you go from place to place and create your own itinerary. Independent travel requires you to be prepared for the unexpected such as areas where they don't provide toilet paper. Also, it is handy to know the local word for toilet. Toilet is much more universal than bathroom, but not understood everywhere. Also, when traveling independently, you need to be prepared to find your own hotels and restaurants. However independent travel can also be done on ships, which simplifies things considerably:

One of our favorite trips was a good example of independent travel on ships.

We took the **Alaska Marine Highway** to tour Alaska. It is basically a ferryboat system, but the ships are ocean-going vessels that carry up to 1,000 people and have over 100 optional cabins. They have food service and US Forest Service guides. They stop at most islands of any size. They traverse between Bellingham, WA, and Skagway, AK, with stops in Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, Juneau, and Haines. We booked a B&B for each stop and stayed in each one a couple nights. Then, in Skagway, we rented a car and drove to White Horse & Dawson in Canada and on to Fairbanks, Alaska. Then we took the train to Denali for a stay at the Denali Lodge and then on to Anchorage. We stayed in B&Bs in each place we stopped except the Denali Lodge Hotel.

Another of our favorite trips was a partially independent and partially group trip on ships. It was an a la carte package on the **Hertigruten**, the Norwegian Coastal Mail Boat. It is actually a system of 13 ocean going ferries of varying sizes that carry up to 1,000 passengers and have up to 300 optional cabins. It is a 7-day cruise northbound or 6-day cruise southbound along the coast of Norway with stops at 34 cities between Bergen in the south and Kirkenes in the north on the Norway-Russia Border on the Barents Sea. They offer excursions during the extended stops at larger cities. You can stay over at any stop if you can find lodging and catch another ship on a subsequent day. The ships have comfortable accommodations and good meals, but are not resorts like cruise ships.



Norway's Hertigruten "Nordkapp"

Suitcases:

We love to travel and don't like lugging heavy suitcases around, especially as we get older. Whether traveling for a weekend or 10 weeks consecutively, we usually pack fairly much the same things. We usually have **enough clothing for 6 days**. On long trips we plan on doing laundry



My 26" suitcase & small carry-on bag strapped together with a dog collar

Safety:

Be Prepared: We always check the [State Department's website for travel advisories](#). This is even important when traveling back to a place where we feel comfortable. Things may have changed. In most destinations, the biggest threat is pick pockets. Men should carry their wallets in a front pocket with a rubber band around it so it won't easily slide out of their pocket. Women are advised to use "**fanny packs**" rather than purses. These "fanny packs" are small and are worn with the pack in front. Even with my wallet in my front pocket and a camera bag hanging over the pocket, I was pickpocketed. Thankfully, I had a spare wallet in my suitcase with a different set of credit and debit cards and photocopies of my IDs. We cancelled the lost cards and were able to finish our trip. My passport was in a different pocket and was safe.



Pacsafe Anti-Theft Fanny Pack

Cards: If traveling anywhere outside the US, we only take **cards with chips**. Most other countries only accept cards with chips. When choosing which credit cards and debit cards, we choose ones with the [lowest foreign transaction fee](#). Always read the fine print and see what the fees are. At airports we need our credit cards or passports to get our boarding passes.



The chip in a Chip Card

Spare Wallets and Cards: We always have **spare wallets** kept in our locked carry-on bag. When we are in a foreign country, we keep our US currency in our spare wallets. We have **two different credit cards** and **two different ATM cards**. We keep the spare cards in our spare wallets so that if we lose a wallet or get pick-pocketed, we have a backup. We also keep photo copies of both sides of our critical documents such as our passport, driver's license, credit and debit cards, and anything else we would have to replace. Of course, we immediately contact the card company of any card that is lost or stolen to limit our liability.

ATMs: When getting cash in foreign countries, the best exchange rates are at bank ATM machines. I say bank ATMs because they are the most reputable and less likely to have high fees or skimming devices. But it is best to

is to “**only eat seafood if you can see the ocean.**” In some countries, all meat and seafood is freshly slaughtered since there is very little refrigeration. One advantage of group tours is that they usually only go to places that have food and water that is safe. Never buy food from sidewalk vendors that don’t have places to wash their hands. Their food may look great, but it may not have been refrigerated for a long time and the attendant may not be able to wash his hands. The locals’ systems have adapted to things that we can’t tolerate.

If you have food allergies or restrictions, make sure your tour guide is aware of them. If you are traveling independently, carry a list of what you are allergic to written in the local language. You may want to pack some backup foods that are dehydrated and compact such as decaf coffee or tea, and artificial sweetener.

Be aware that even places that use English may use British English for foods such as *aubergine* for egg plant; *biscuit* for cookie; *coriander* for cilantro; *courgette* for zucchini; *crisps* for potato chips; *digestive biscuit* for graham cracker; *doner kebob* for gyro; *gammon* for ham; *mange tout* for snow peas; *paw paw* for papaya; *prawn* for shrimp; *profiterole* for cream puff; *scone* for biscuit; *sultanas* for raisins, and *tart* for pie. Also remember, table napkins are called *serviettes* in British English.

Hotels: It is always easiest to stay in large “American style” hotels such as Hiltons, etc. But our most memorable experiences are when we stay at smaller boutique hotels. We always check in guide books for a highly recommended local hotel. We get much more personal service and learn more about local customs. Usually someone at the front desk can speak English and help us plan our daily itinerary. They will even write out our itinerary so that a taxi driver knows where to take us and how to bring us back to our hotel.



Rubens at the Palace is one of London’s finest boutique hotels

Tipping: We always make sure our guide book has a section on local tipping expectations. If it doesn’t, we look up online to see what the local customs are. It is always appropriate to tip someone who provides us special service. In some places tipping is not expected. In other places, a service charge is included in our bill. In many places we are expected to always round the amount owed up to an even number; “keep the change.”

on a regular basis. We only pack things that are versatile. We always pack a rain parka so we don’t need to worry about walking in the rain. I pack **one sports coat** that can be worn to a nice restaurant, a concert, or under my parka to keep warm. We take a change of shoes and make sure we have a pair of **waterproof shoes**. I always have an **umbrella** in my camera bag in case of rain or even for standing in the sun.

We take one small to medium size suitcase with wheels plus a small carry-on bag that we strap to the suitcase with a dog collar so we only have to wheel one thing around. Both have TSA combination locks to keep people from going through our suitcase when we are not in our hotel room.

We distinguish our suitcases so they are easy to identify at the airport carousel and we can also tell quickly tell if someone else picks up our bag by mistake. We use two nylon straps: one in a contrasting color going around one way and one with a distinctive pattern going around in the other direction. The straps also act as backup if a latch on the suitcase comes open or the belt on my pants breaks, which has happened.

We like a **lightweight expandable suitcase**. Our light-weight 26” suitcases only weigh 6 pounds. There is no need to use up the airline weight allowance with a heavy bag. We don’t use the expandable feature when packing. We reserve the expansion for things we buy while traveling that we want to bring home.

Hints:

- Use [suitcase organizers](#), ones for pants, underwear & socks, and a [special one to fold and compress shirts](#).
- Have see-through pouch to keep small items together and easy to find
- In the **small carry-on bag** we pack meds, rain parka, umbrella, camera, electronic devices, spare wallet, photocopy of passport, small flashlight, travel alarms.
- Take extra meds in case you are delayed in returning.
- Put anything else that you would miss if your checked bag were lost into your carry-on bag.

Clothing:

Quick-Dry: For the most part, we only take cotton-free quick-dry clothes. Cotton is nice, but it is very slow drying and not suitable for overnight hand laundry where it must be dry in the morning. Wool isn’t much better for quick drying. Also, cotton clothing is usually heavier than the man-made fiber clothing.

SPF items are good not only for the sun protection but also because they are quick drying, light weight, and good for travel. Be careful, some have a sloppy appearance, but some actually look quite good. Microfiber pants look much dressier.

- [SPF quick-dry no-iron long-sleeve shirts](#)
- [SPF quick-dry & microfiber no-iron pants](#)
- [Quick-dry Travel Underwear](#)
- [Quick-dry socks \(REI Co-op Performance Crew\)*](#)



SPF quick-dry no-iron long-sleeve shirt

Sports Coat: Since packing a sports jacket takes up lots of space, I found a [Sports Coat with no shoulder pads](#) that packs compactly with my shirts and doesn't wrinkle.

Caps:



Tilley Hat from Canada is guaranteed for life



Outdoor Research's Seattle Sombrero



Waxed Cotton Flat Cap folds small enough to carry in your pocket

- Our **Tilley Hat from Canada** and **Outdoor Research's Seattle Sombrero** are rainproof and pack flat. The Tilley Hat has a lifetime warranty
- My **waxed cotton flat cap** is an all-purpose cap. It has a low profile and won't blow off, and is rainproof. Ones that are lined with the fold down ear protection are warm in cold weather. One really nice thing is that I can tuck the bill inside the hat and fold it up completely flat to carry in my jacket pocket without altering the hat's appearance.
- I also like a stocking cap since it is warm and I can wear it sleeping.

Jacket: We take a long-sleeved quick-dry fleece jacket to wear under the parka or separately if needed. If it is especially cold, I can wear the sports jacket under my parka and wear the fleece jacket under the sports jacket. The key is layers. In warm climates, I would probably only take a light jacket rather than the fleece jacket.

had to order it from Amazon.com since most stores don't carry it. I have to make sure I update the GPS maps before leaving on a trip. We only use it when traveling. When walking we use maps and a compass

Local Events, Concerts and Plays:

One thing that is special is to time our trip to catch a local festival, or to attend a concert. We like to see if we can attend a classical music concert, not always just for the music, but also for the venue such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Sidney Opera House, London's Royal Albert Hall, or the Santa Fe Opera.



Amsterdam's Concertgebouw

The London theater districts are great places to see plays, many at much less than the ticket prices on Broadway and, best of all, we don't have to wait months to get tickets. In fact at Leicester Square in London they have ticket sales for plays the same day at greatly discounted prices. We saw Mamma Mia in English in Hong Kong put on by an Australian theater company. We also saw a children's recital of Chinese Opera in Hong Kong. A Chinese couple that spoke English saw us and came over to ask why we were there since most people attending were family members of the children that were performing. When they found out we were curious about Chinese Opera and enjoyed watching the children, they sat next to us and told us the story behind what the children were doing.

Food & Lodging

Food: Some people have trouble adapting to food or water in different areas. Always **drink bottled water** unless you are sure of the local tap water. Even some tap water in the US is not potable. Some potable tap water may cause unpleasant symptoms if your system can't adapt to differences. When in doubt, **only eat foods that are cooked or peeled.** One sage saying

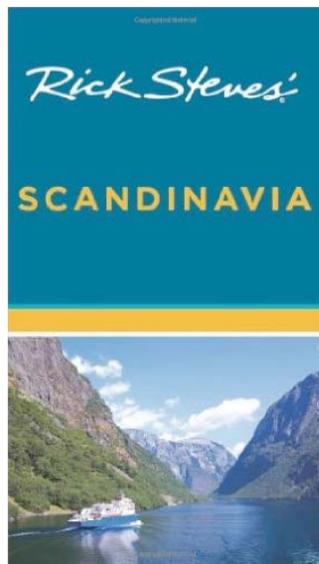


Travelers taste the world's best foods

wedding parties and ask if I can take wedding pictures along with everyone else. These are great to add to travel programs. I am not into taking photos of hotels or meals unless they are truly special and different.

Route:

Travel Books: Most travel books are good. We always pick one that is light. Some have beautiful pictures but seem like they weigh a ton. Most hotel lobbies have brochures with walking maps of the city and directories of shops and restaurants. We always have a map with us, either one from a brochure or one provided by our hotel. Also, we carry a card or other ID for our hotel to help us find our way back. If we don't speak the language, we ask the hotel to write down directions to give a taxi driver to get us to our destination and also back to our hotel. We ask locals about where we can find good restaurants. I like travel books like Frommer's and Rick Steve's that prioritize the more important sights.



Rick Steve's Travel Book

Any guide book can list off dozens of attractions, but the better guide books can point out the best attractions and sights and why they are better.

Maps: When traveling by car, road maps are important, even if you have a GPS. We have a store in King of Prussia, PA, called [Franklin Maps](#) that has road maps of just about every place in the world. Even if we are not driving we like maps of the area so we can follow along while we are traveling. When exploring a city it is important to have a city map. AAA carries some inexpensive popup maps of major cities. The maps in tourist brochures in hotel lobbies are good also.



Garmin Nuvi 2577LT with Maps of North America and Europe

GPS: When driving today, a GPS is an excellent tool. However, finding a GPS that covers different parts of the world is a challenge. Ours covers all of North America and Europe. It is unique and I

Rain Parka: We always take uninsulated rain parkas, with both a zipper and snaps, that rolls up to a compact size. The zipper is good in cold weather. The snaps are for warmer weather or if the zipper fails and the help insulate over the zipper in cold weather. I keep gloves in the pocket of the parka.



Uninsulated Rain Parka

Shoes: We take one pair of light walking shoes that look good enough to wear to a concert and a good comfortable pair of waterproof walking shoes that need not be as good looking to wear while touring. We pack one pair and wear the other. We pack the shoes we put in our suitcase in a bag that will keep other items in our suitcase clean.

***Socks:** If we plan on doing more walking than we are accustomed, we take good quick-dry walking socks, but also take the thin lightweight polypropylene or silk liner socks. They are excellent at preventing blisters. They are also easy to rinse out and dry quickly.

Laundry: Doing hand laundry is the key to traveling light. Things usually dry very quickly if the room is air conditioned. In humid climates with no air conditioning, only quick dry fabrics will dry overnight. If we are in a city for a couple days and there are local laundries near our hotel, they may be very reasonable priced. Hotel laundry service is notoriously expensive, often more expensive than the clothes they are cleaning.

If we are only in a hotel one-night, we need our clothes to be dry in the morning. First, we only take cotton-free, quick-dry clothes. After washing, rinsing, and wringing out by hand, we lay out the wet clothes on a large bath towel, roll the clothes in the towel along the long edge and wring out as much as we can. The towel gets soaked, but our clothes will be almost dry. We make sure we have a dry towel to use the next morning.

Then we hang our clothes either on clothes hangers or on a clothes line where there is plenty of ventilation. Some hotels have a retractable clothes line in the bathroom. It is always good to have our own travel clothes line and travel clothes pins.

If we are traveling by car we take laundry bags and try to find a coin laundry every once in a while. If there are no coin laundries, we use one of the plastic laundry bags hotels puts in each room to use in our bag if we have any dirty

clothes. My suitcase has an outside pocket that I like to use for dirty clothes to keep them separate from the clean clothes.

Devices:

Basics: An umbrella, day pack, travel alarm and compass are the most important devices. None are overtly electronic. I didn't mention cell phone because we don't use one. We may have one tucked away to call someone to pick us up when we get home, but that is it.

- **Umbrella:** We each take a small pocket-size folding umbrella.
- **Day Pack:** We also have a small light-weight day pack in which we can carry bottled water, a tour book, and a jacket when we are out during the day touring
- **Alarm Clock:** We take 2 small battery travel alarms. We take 2 in case we set one wrong or the batteries fail. Nothing is worse than oversleeping and missing a plane or prearranged tour. We like the [LL Bean Widescreen Travel Alarm](#). Many people use their cell phone and an alarm clock, but I recommend a backup to the cell phone.
- **Compass:** A compass is a basic necessity if you are going to do much exploring. My compass is a small one on my fob watch, which also has an alarm and a thermometer.

Internet: We take a device for Wi-Fi email and browsing. This is our preferred way of communicating with people back home, and it works well no matter what time zone we are in. We must always remember that Wi-Fi is not as prevalent abroad as it is back home. You can almost always count on the lobbies of better hotels for free Wi-Fi. Other than that, you have to be flexible and wait until you find Wi-Fi access. I prefer an iPad. For people that text while traveling in different time zones, they must be aware that the person that they are emailing may be sleeping.



Ultra lite Day Pack that folds into a pocket.



LL Bean Widescreen Travel Alarm

Chargers: Make sure all chargers are for 110-220v, 50/60 Hz. This avoids the hassle of having voltage converters, which are heavy transformers. I always take an extension cord. It means that I only need one plug adapter and permits me to plug multiple chargers in at one time. It also solves the problem when the outlet is not where you want to place your chargers.

Camera: I take a camera with a rechargeable battery and spare batteries. Many people just use the camera on their cell phone. My camera is a digital "super-zoom" meaning it has a zoom lens that goes from wide angle to long telephoto. It also is very sensitive and can take pictures in most lighting conditions without flash. It has a flash to use for filling in harsh shadows when photographing in direct sunlight. It has over four-times as many pixels as I really need, but they are useful for extra resolution when



Sony RX10 Superzoom

photographing large groups and I want to see everyone's face, or when using digital zoom to shoot something further away than what the optical zoom of the lens will reach. In doing so much telephoto zoom photography, it is necessary to have image stabilization built into the camera to avoid any blur, especially under lower light conditions or with a moving object. The lens is not removable, allowing the camera to be moisture and dust proof. I take a camera bag that will hold my camera, **spare batteries and memory cards**, my **sunglasses**, and a small umbrella.

Photography is a primary goal when I travel. I want to get lots of good pictures to use for programs at churches, camera clubs, garden clubs, and service clubs. I take a lot of flower close-ups. For these, the zoom and fill flash are super important. Two things will ruin a flower picture. The first is not being able to zoom in on a single bloom. The second is having to take a picture in full sun without fill flash to remove the harsh shadows. I often take two photos, one with fill flash and one without fill flash. Then, when I am editing my photos, I select the best one.

I try to avoid getting too many photos with people in them since I create programs about what we visited, not who we visited or where stayed. But I always try to take some photos that will be good on our Christmas letter. In very popular places where there are lots of people, I don't worry about the people in the picture since that is part of being there. I love to go over to