



passports
educational travel

Handbook *for* Travelers



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Introduction

This traveler's handbook is designed to help prepare you for your upcoming trip abroad. Please review this entire book before leaving the U.S. It will ensure smooth sailing throughout your trip, no matter what unexpected events may arise. *Take it overseas with you!* We hope it will also aid in organizing your thoughts and memories of your international adventure.

Part One deals with pre-departure preparation. It also readies you to embrace other cultures and conduct yourself like the international ambassador you are about to become.

Part Two deals with helping you keep a journal of events. It raises questions, and challenges you to recognize cultural similarities and differences. We hope this optional section enhances your learning experience.

Trip Preparation

Travel Documents

Travel outside the U.S. requires a valid U.S. passport and/or travel visas. Non-U.S. citizens should call their own consulates here in the U.S. to verify what is required. Your passport must be **valid for at least 6 months after your return date.**

Make 5 photocopies of your passport. Give one to your group leader, put one in your suitcase, put one in your carry-on, leave one with a parent (or a trusted friend) at home, and give one to a parent to keep with them when he or she is out of the house.

It is vital for you to ensure that you have all of your required travel documents up-to-date and **on your person before leaving for the airport.**

Planning

One of the most important aspects of traveling abroad is forethought; that is to say, planning for the pleasure of it all.

■ **Visit a book store or virtual travel site.**

Purchase or download maps and guides of all the areas you will be visiting, and familiarize yourself with them. Get a phrase books of the local languages.

■ **Be familiar with the language.** Listen to language tapes. **Practice!!** If you are not fluent, learn polite phrases. Even if you fracture the language, local people will appreciate your efforts and be far more helpful. Many Europeans speak English well and may like the chance to practice their English with you, but don't assume everybody speaks English. First say "Excuse me, do you speak English?" Speak slowly and clearly; don't use slang. Be patient and most importantly of all, **smile!**

■ **Get ready to walk long distances!** If you are not used to walking several miles, and a lot of

Americans are not, get your feet used to it by *walking for an hour a day for several weeks prior to departure.* Otherwise, your feet will suffer once overseas.

■ **Be prepared for lots of photos.** Take three times the amount of camera memory that you think you will need and many spare batteries — these can be expensive overseas. Be sure your charger is compatible with local voltage and that the plug is compatible with local outlets.

■ **Know that the electrical current in European countries is 220 volts as opposed to 110 volts in the U.S.** Battery chargers, hair dryers and other electrical appliances must be dual voltage or require a voltage converter.

Telephone Use

■ **Be aware of time differences when you phone home.**

■ **Pay Phones.** Overseas hotels charge an very expensive connection fee for using the telephone in your room. A better choice is to use a public pay phone; a phone card is invaluable as many public phones in Europe do not accept coins. For the best

The Ten Commandments Of Travel

- I. Thou shalt not expect to find things as thou hast at home, for thou has left home to find things different.
- II. Thou shalt not take anything too seriously for a care-free mind is the start of a good holiday.
- III. Thou shalt not let the other travelers get on thy nerves, for thou has paid good money to enjoy thyself.
- IV. Remember to take half as many clothes as thou thinkest and twice the money.
- V. Know at all times where thy passport is, for a person without a passport is a person without a country.
- VI. Remember that if we had been expected to stay in one place we would have been created with roots.
- VII. Thou shalt not worry, for he that worrieth hath no pleasure and few things are that fatal.
- VIII. When in Rome, be prepared to do somewhat as the Romans do.
- IX. Thou shalt not judge the people of the country by the person who hath given thee trouble one time.
- X. Remember thou art a guest in other lands and he that treats his host with respect shall be honored.

international rate, avoid regional phone cards and choose a pre-paid international phone card sold in kiosks, convenience and call shops. Be sure the card is for calls *from Europe to the U.S.*

■ **Cell Phones.** Europe's cell phone system is not compatible with many U.S. phones. And, a phone that *seems* to be compatible can run up **\$1,000+ in roaming charges — yes, thousands of dollars!** Before packing your cell phone, check with your service provider that your phone is compatible with the European GSM system, verify your international roaming rates for calls and data, and be sure to have a 220-volt charger for your phone.

■ **eKit International Phones.** **passports** in partnership with **ekit** offers low-cost pre-paid international cell phones and plans that allow you to call home from over 160 countries. The phone features free incoming text messages, 24/7 customer service in over 70 countries, and a free online travel journal and map of your trip. Visit **www.passports.ekit.com**

Safety and Security

■ **Share a copy of your itinerary** with the folks back home. Make sure they have **passports** contact information.

■ **Have the group's hotel list in your possession at all times.** In case of an unintentional separation from the group, be sure you understand your group leader's instructions for how to reunite with your group.

■ **Take copies of eyeglass and medical prescriptions.**

■ **Leave your valuables at home.** Some things should be left at home: all expensive jewelry, house keys, family pictures, all nonessential items in your purse or wallet. Use a little travel wallet. It's best to leave the big wallet, handbags and purses at home — they make easy targets for theft.

■ **Wear your wallet.** To avoid concerns about theft, use a wearable travel wallet such as a neck wallet that is concealed beneath clothing. This keeps your passport and money safe and your hands free for picture taking!

■ **Be your own security.** Buddy up with someone to count packages, bags, etc. Your passport is worth a lot of money on the black market. Protect it! There is some street crime in Europe, so be smart. Carry wallets in front pockets. Carry shoulder bags in front of you on the inside of your shoulder. In the subway, keep your hand on your wallet. Be especially careful when walking through turnstiles and in crowded subway cars. Be alert in any crowd.



Money and Budgeting

Plan to have at least \$50 of the country's currency you are visiting on hand before you arrive. It will be handy for buying newspapers or essentials like subway tickets when you arrive.

■ **Budget your spending money.** You will need spending money for lunches, beverages, some public transportation, personal items, tips and souvenirs. A reasonable amount is \$50 per day.

■ **Put money aside for your portion of the tips** for the courier and the bus driver as well as for spending on the return trip home.

■ **Use debit cards such as Cash Passport as your primary source of cash.** ATMs dispense cash in local currency and always have English-language instructions. If taking your bank account debit card, alert your bank that you'll be making withdrawals while traveling. If exchanging cash, go to a bank or exchange; avoid exchanging money at the hotel as you may get a poor rate of exchange. Familiarize yourself with exchange rates and be aware of when banks and exchanges are open. Take a small calculator so you can be sure of price equivalents.

■ **If you have two credit cards,** carry them in different places.

■ **Make copies of your credit cards,** bank cards and your airline tickets if you are carrying them. Leave one copy at home.

Packing

■ **Travel light.** Bring one medium-sized suitcase to be checked, and one *small* carry-on piece that fits in the overhead bins.

We recommend that you bring only the necessities: think about what you absolutely *have to have* with you: medicine, glasses, etc., and what you would *like to have* with you for your comfort and enjoyment.

■ **Limit your medium-size suitcase to 23-26"** to fit into travel lockers and bus storage spaces. Suitcase weight maximum is 44 lbs. (18 kilos), however you may want to allow space and weight in your suitcase to pack souvenirs.

■ **Carry-on measurements are limited to 22" x 14" x 9"** to fit in most overhead bins.

■ **Once you have packed, pick up all your bags and carry them for 300 hundred yards,** then ask yourself if you are prepared to spend the next week or so doing the same. If not, then you have over-packed! (Even if portage is included on your trip, porters are not always available).

■ **Fees for extra or overweight luggage** are exorbitant, and are your responsibility. **Stay within these luggage limits!**

Choosing clothes

Pack a couple of coordinating clothing articles so you can mix and match. It's no crime to wear the same item or outfit several times, and in fact there's no way around it when you travel. There is no need to try to impress each other with an incredible wardrobe. If you can afford to travel, you probably have great clothes. Don't drag all of them with you; *travel as lightly as possible!*

■ **Be prepared for any kind of weather** — be prepared for cooler or warmer than average weather. Pack a sweater, sweatshirt or other light, long-sleeved outerwear in case of cool evenings or cloudy days when you are traveling in the summer. Travelers to Europe in fall, winter or spring should pack a warm coat, gloves, hat, and warm, waterproof footwear. Layering clothing will keep you comfortable! Even on warm days, nights can be cold, and it's always cooler near oceans, rivers and mountains.

■ **Dress conservatively.** Shorts and tank tops should not be too revealing, and even then they are not always acceptable (be especially thoughtful about how you dress if you intend to visit the Vatican or any other religious site). High heels and dress shoes can be inappropriate as well as uncomfortable.

Shoes

Find the most comfortable pair of walking shoes *several months* before your tour — *and break them in!* Pack a second pair of comfortable sturdy walking shoes or gym shoes and bring a pair of neutral-color dress shoes for special occasions. NEVER bring new shoes. A blister can wreck your tour.

Gadgets

■ **Always bring a travel alarm clock** with a fresh battery, as wake up calls can be unreliable. Browse around a luggage store and check out the wonderful little gadgets available these days for travelers.

■ **Battery chargers, hair dryers and other electric gadgets** must be compatible with the European 220-volt system (as opposed to 110 volts in the U.S.) Some hotels may have hair dryers, but you can't count on it. Mismatched voltage will ruin your appliances *and* may blow the hotel's fuses. Purchase dual voltage (110-220 volt) appliances or pack a voltage converter, available for as little as \$10.

■ **Before you pack your laptop, electronic book or other items**, consider that during the tour you will be very busy and may have little time to use your electronics. Factor in the extra weight that you



Remember, after you have packed, pick up all your bags and carry them for 300 yards then ask yourself if you are prepared to spend the next week or so doing the same. If not then you have over-packed!

will be carrying 24/7, the equipment's battery life, the need for a compatible charger, and finally, the cost if your electronics are lost or stolen. Your group leader may have specific recommendations based on your tour.

Items to carry on your person

■ **Flight tickets and/or boarding pass**

■ **Passport and visas**

■ **Cash, bank cards and credit cards.** Carry all money directly on your person, not in your luggage.

■ **Glasses**

Items for your carry-on

Your small carry-on bag should contain:

■ **Photocopy of your valid passport.**

■ **Itinerary** with phone numbers and home phone numbers.

■ **Travel handbooks**, guidebooks, maps, etc.

■ **All of your valuables** such as jewelry (*leave expensive jewelry at home*), electronic devices with chargers or spare batteries with the terminals covered.

■ **Camera**, extra memory cards, and batteries.

■ **Foreign language phrase book.** You never know when you might need it: shopping, ordering in restaurants, asking for a bathroom.

■ **Chewing gum, candy or snack, and a bottle of water** — purchase water *after* you go through security.

■ **Toothbrush, toothpaste, contact lens kit and necessary toiletries.** Include lip balm, moisturizer, and toothpicks or dental floss. Any carry-on liquids, gels or aerosols must be in containers that are 3 oz. or smaller and all such items must be placed in a clear plastic 1-quart zip-top bag.

■ **Medicines and prescription** medicines *in original containers* with a copy of prescriptions.

■ **Travel alarm clock.**

■ **Books** and other items to occupy you on the plane. Choose one or two books that you've just been dying to read. These can be ideal for passing the time during flights, airport delays or long coach or train rides.

■ **One full change of clothes.** Why? Because if your checked-in baggage goes astray between flight connections, it may not be found until a day or two later.

Items for your suitcase

One 23-26" checked suitcase is allowed.

■ **Photocopy of your valid passport.**

- Small folding bag for shopping or beach, etc.
- Mini sewing kit: needle, threads, and safety pins.
- Compact umbrella
- Small flashlight
- Sunscreen and additional toiletries. Bring any over-the-counter medications you are accustomed to using; e.g. aspirin, air sickness medicine, etc. Most foreign pharmacies do not carry brands sold in the United States, and many medications are available only by prescription. **Toiletry items in checked baggage are limited to a total of no more than 70 ounces per passenger. Contents of each container may not exceed 16 fluid ounces.**
- Curling iron, hair dryer, shaver **with** electrical converter kit with necessary plugs
- Cotton or washable trousers, jeans, blouses, shirts, skirts, and shorts
- Extra shoes (wear your most comfortable pair on the plane)
- Underwear and cotton socks — nylon and synthetics are abrasive to feet
- One or two “dressy” evening outfits
- Hat, gloves, scarf and sweater for cool evenings, mountain tops, and unseasonable chilly weather.



Prohibited Items

- Fireworks, signal flares, sparklers, etc.
- Flammable liquids or solids such as matches, fuel, paints and lighters.
- Drain cleaners and solvents.
- Spray cans, butane, scuba tanks, propane tanks, self inflating rafts.
- Firearms, ammunition, gunpowder, explosives, mace, tear gas, pepper spray.
- Dry ice, gas-powered tools, wet-cell batteries, radioactive materials.
- Poisons, infectious substances.
- Knives, straight razors (pack nail files and nail clippers in your checked luggage).

Your Flight

Passports Flights

Groups traveling under the auspices of **passports** will enjoy scheduled flights operated by major national and international airlines. **passports** offers a large number of regional departures. This may mean that some groups will change planes either in the U.S. or abroad. Plan to arrive at the airport **at least three hours** before your scheduled departure time.

Many times, **passports** buys airline tickets in bulk. These tickets may not earn “airline miles.” Please see attendants at the airline desk upon arrival at the airport with any questions regarding “airline miles” or seating requests.

Heavy Air Traffic

Today’s skies are more crowded than ever, and during the spring and summer, air travel is at its busiest. The possibility exists that your group may experience flight delays. If you are delayed, it is important to remain calm and stay with your group leader. Look upon delays as another part of the adventure as well as an opportunity to shop, read, write, or people-watch!

Have a Comfortable Flight

On the airplane, wear loose, comfortable clothing. Get up and walk around once every hour and drink plenty of water. The air in planes is very dry, and you need to keep yourself hydrated: avoid caffeine, alcohol and most fruit juices, which are diuretic and can actually increase dehydration. Don’t take off your shoes, since your feet will swell and you may have trouble putting your shoes back on! Be aware of deep vein thrombosis, which can be a danger on long flights, even for relatively young, fit passengers; exercise can minimize this risk.

Luggage Tags

Luggage identification tags should be placed *inside* as well as on the outside of each of your bags, including your carry-on. Use the **passports** luggage tags provided.

Air Travel Regulations

The following prohibited list is not intended to be all-inclusive. For updated details visit the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) a few days before your departure: www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm

All medications in any form and associated supplies (syringes, sharp disposable containers, jet injectors, pens, infusers, etc.) are allowed through the security checkpoint once they have been screened. Liquid, gel and aerosol medications should be declared to a security officer at the checkpoint and must be labeled so they are identifiable. Have a copy of your prescription or a doctor’s letter indicating your name and the prescribed item(s).

Lost Luggage

One of the inconveniences that can be part of travel is damaged or lost luggage. When you claim your luggage at the arrival airport, check to see if there is any visible damage. If luggage is damaged or lost, it should be reported to the proper airline representative immediately and the appropriate forms completed. If lost, make note of the reference number on the claim, and use it whenever you contact the airline about the luggage. You will have to inform the airline personnel of your itinerary for the next week so they can forward it to you when found.

■ **Know your suitcase brand** and specific identifying features — many suitcases look alike and details are requested for lost luggage forms.

Your Arrival

Arrival Day

Upon arrival, there will be customs and immigration formalities. Your **passports** courier or representative will be waiting for you once you clear customs. If your group arrives early in the morning, it may not be possible for you to check into the hotel until rooms become available, typically 3 p.m. A courtesy room is usually available to store luggage. This is a good time to withdraw or exchange money and familiarize yourself with your surroundings.

High Season Contingencies

The travel year is seasonal. Spring and summer are the busiest times of the year. Occasional last-minute changes in schedules or services might have to be made to cope with these factors. Be prepared, and be flexible.

Hometown Groups

Many times your tour group will consist of different “hometown groups.” Groups may arrive overseas at different times: e.g. ten people arrive from Texas, six arrive from Ohio and twelve arrive from California, etc. This may entail some waiting at the airport or multiple transfers. An assistant may escort you to your hotel while the permanent courier is escorting a different “hometown” group.

Overcoming Jet Lag

If you have just traveled through time zones your body will need some time to adjust. The most frequent symptom of jet-lag is waking up in the middle of the night and not being able to go back to sleep (your body clock thinks it is 9:00 am!). Jet-lag can also make your brain very fuzzy and the effects can last several days, so be warned!

■ **Wear a watch and pack a travel alarm clock.** Reset them while en route. Do not constantly remind yourself of the time back home; otherwise, your jet-lag will last longer!

■ **Prevention is the best cure.** Getting as much sleep as possible beginning *two days before your trip* is the single best thing you can do to minimize jet-lag. Sleep as much as you can on the plane. Try to eat and sleep to your new schedule. On arrival day, take things easy: an brisk walk in fresh air will help you feel better and sleep better. Eat lightly, and go to bed at a normal bed time. If you absolutely have to take a nap, make it a *short* nap (not more than an hour). The next day, try to wake in the morning and go to bed at night when the locals do.

■ **Don't rely on medication.** NASA advises pilots against using medications or supplements as jet-lag remedies.

Where is the Bathroom?

Toilet customs contribute to culture shock. W.C. means water closet or washroom or restroom. Overseas toilets are sometimes these are co-ed. There is often an attendant who must be tipped a small amount.

Cultural Differences

Culture shock is normal and expected. It is experienced to some extent by all travelers, even veterans. Culture shock is a feeling of anxiety brought on by the temporary loss of familiar surroundings. The important thing in dealing with it is not to allow the initial shock of a foreign environment to create a feeling of hostility toward it. Of course, it is not necessary to accept everything that you encounter abroad without question. However, the best way to get over culture shock is to accept the foreign country on its own terms. Recognize that it is these differences you have come so far to experience.



Your Tour

Couriers

Most groups staying abroad will be accompanied by a **passports** courier. Couriers are chosen for their outstanding personal qualities, scholastic achievements, organizational skills, and their ability to identify with students. They are responsible for all operational needs and requirements, such as guiding, checking into hotels, transfers, briefings, announcements, ferry and train tickets, reconfirming meal reservations, and even planning activities during free time. Your courier takes a professional attitude toward those responsibilities and will be an integral part of a successful tour. Please be respectful and enjoy getting to know your courier. He or she will help you make the most of your trip.

Local Guides

Tours which have optional excursions or included highlights that require in-depth descriptions generally rely on local guides. Local guides are people who have been certified to guide groups through specific sights. Tipping is recommended for local guides in Costa Rica and Greece. In other locations it's polite to give a euro or two as a show of appreciation.

Bus Drivers

Local bus drivers are used for day excursions and local sightseeing. These drivers do not stay with the group, so it is very important not to leave any of your possessions on these buses. Many other groups use these buses, and retrieving your lost items may be impossible if any are left behind.

Long-distance bus drivers stay with the group day after day and play a much bigger role in your tour than a local driver. They work closely with your courier and often add insight that can enhance your road trip.

Tipping

Your courier and long-distance bus driver depend upon their tips in much the same way as waitstaff do in the U.S. Although couriers receive a salary from **passports**, tipping is a means of recompense for often (very) long workdays, the fact that they may be at the group's beck and call 24/7, must routinely work weekends, holidays and nights, and that they are often placed under great stress. Tips are also a means of encouragement to "go the extra mile."

Tipping Recommendations

passports Courier	\$4 per day (per person)
Euro Zone	€3 per day (per person)
United Kingdom	£2 per day (per person)
Long-Distance Driver	\$3 per day (per person)
Euro Zone	€2 per day (per person)
United Kingdom	£1 per day (per person)
Local Bus Drivers	included in program cost
Costa Rica courier and bus driver split	\$15 per week (per person)
Local Guide in Costa Rica and Greece*	\$2 per day (per person)
Other Local Guides**	tipping optional
Restaurant Gratuities	included in program cost
Lavatory Attendants	25¢ or €0.20

*In Costa Rica and Greece, local guides supplement the services of your courier by traveling with you on excursions and providing services above and beyond the duties of other local guides.

**For full-day excursions and touring days, it's nice to recognize an exceptional local guide with a little tip (€2 or \$3 per person, per day) at your own discretion.

■ **We strongly suggest that tip money be collected before your departure from the United States**, typically at your final group meeting. Your group leader will organize a greeting card for your courier and have everyone sign it. The envelope can be left open so participant have an opportunity to write personalized messages and contribute more money at the end of the tour.

Of course, tipping is always at your group's discretion. If you choose not to tip, or to tip less than the above guidelines, please let your courier or coach driver know why. It is your right to tip less, or not at all, if you feel that a complete tip was not deserved.

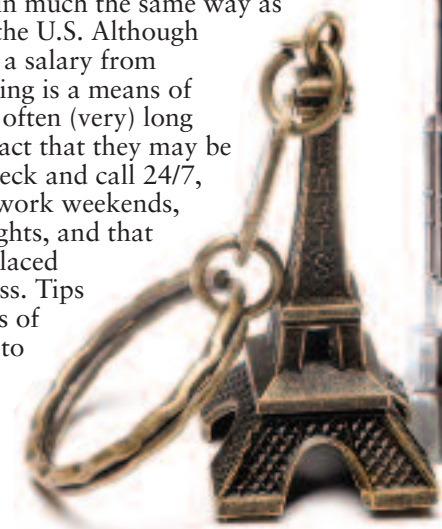
Your Itinerary's Pace

Different itineraries have different paces. Some tours have more bus time than others; some have more walking. Spend some time looking over your itinerary to develop a sense for the rhythm of your trip. Notice which day of the week you'll be in each city; plan the best time for such necessities as changing money or souvenir shopping.

■ **Travel-intensive itineraries**

concentrate on covering numerous cities and countries. This type of itinerary provides insight into a wide variety of places and cultures. Seeing a lot means a lot of travel, and a lot of travel means keeping to timetables.

■ **Less travel-intensive tours** allow more time to explore fewer cities and countries. Once again, though, the key



word is planning. Although several days in a city may seem plenty of time to see the major sights, you'll find that you have barely scratched the surface.

■ **Punctuality is an absolute must!** A delay of five minutes waiting for a person here and there can add up to half an hour, and that can mean a missed ferry or scheduled visit for the entire group.

■ **Get plenty of rest; some days start very early.**

Getting Around

■ **Be prepared for walking.**

Most **passports** tours include extended walking — it's the only way to get around in historic cities. Get in practice with a brisk one-hour walk every day. Increase the length of your walks in the weeks leading up to your departure.

■ **Be prepared to use public transportation in cities and to purchase your own tickets.**

Transfers to restaurants or museums, for example, are not included in the tour unless specified. If subway or bus tickets are included in the tour cost, you will be notified. Otherwise, it will be your responsibility to purchase them; the cost is usually minimal.

■ **Look both ways, twice, before crossing the street** when you're traveling in a country where vehicles are driven on the opposite side of the road (The British Isles, Australia, some Caribbean and some Greek islands).

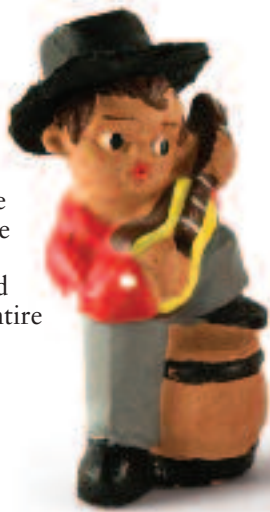
Sunny Days

■ **Bear in mind that a sunburn can ruin your vacation!** Apply and re-apply sunscreen at regular intervals. Soaring temperatures and low humidity can be deceiving!

A Good Attitude

■ **Be positive and realistic about international travel.** Don't expect to find things the same as at home...you left home to find different things! Try not to stereotype the people you meet overseas: ethnocentrism can prevent you from experiencing the unique culture of a country and its people. Treat your fellow travelers and the local people with consideration — it will be reciprocated. You will return with a truly satisfying experience if you travel with a positive, open attitude.

Some groups have a grouchy complainer or a latecomer. Don't let it be you! These people can ruin the trip for everyone. *Expect* culture shock. Don't make negative comments about your host country or about how great things are at home. If you want things exactly the way they are at home, stay home! Sometimes there are unavoidable delays in foreign travel. Relax. Enjoy the scenery, and make friends. You will have a wonderful experience and make memories for a lifetime.



MEALS

■ **Eat as much healthy food and drink plenty of water** during the flight and during your tour. Your body needs as much help as possible in order to withstand the strain of jet-lag, long, miles of walking, action-packed days, new surroundings and different climates.

Drinking Water

Check with your courier for the safety of drinking water. If necessary, drink bottled water and order beverages without ice.

Most western European countries' water supplies are chlorinated and therefore safe to drink.

Beverages

Breakfast coffee, tea or juice is included with your tour. For lunch, dinner and snacks, you are responsible to purchase your own water, soda and other beverages.

Meals on Tour

passports is known for the high quality its tours including its meals. Familiar foods, along with some not-so-familiar, will be served. Have an open mind: experiencing cuisines that are different is an integral part of the international travel experience. What's the point of traveling half way around the world, at considerable cost, only to seek out the nearest McDonalds at every opportunity (as, incredibly, some do)?

■ **Breakfast**

passports provides **expanded continental breakfasts** which include fruit, juice, cereal, yogurt, meat or other items in addition to tea or coffee, toast or pastry.

■ **Lunch**

Lunches are *not* included on most **passports** programs unless specifically mentioned in the itinerary. Occasionally, on full day excursions, a lunch may be provided in lieu of dinner that evening.

■ **Dinner**

Dinners are included as listed in the itinerary, however, dinner beverages are *not* usually included. And take care: beverages such as soft drinks or bottled water placed on your table will later be charged for if consumed. Waiters need not be tipped at meals served on **passports** tours.

Special diets

passports makes every effort to accommodate requests for special meals such as vegetarian, kosher, etc., but no guarantees can be made along these lines. Tell your group leader about your dietary requirement and food allergies 6-8 weeks before departure.

Code of Conduct

Your Role as International Ambassador

Given the large amount of time, money and effort you have invested in your trip we at **passports**, want you to have the best possible experience. Compliance with the Code of Conduct by all **passports** travelers helps ensure that this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is enjoyed by all!

The passports Code of Conduct

■ **I will do my best to make sure that the people with whom I am in contact during my stay overseas are left with a positive impression of Americans** by being courteous and considerate at all times.

■ **If I am under 21 years of age, I will not leave the group individually for any reason whatsoever during the tour.** During free-time activities I will remain in groups of four or more participants at all times and we will not leave the main group without informing our group leader of our intended destination and hour and place of return. I will obtain prior approval from my group leader and a letter of permission from my parent(s) or guardian(s) if I wish to visit relatives or friends separately from my group during the tour. Otherwise, I will participate in all scheduled activities unless illness prevents me from doing so. I agree to notify my group leaders and passports courier of my whereabouts at all times, and I agree to comply with their instructions throughout the tour.

■ **I intend to make the most of this valuable educational experience by making sure I don't miss anything.** This means being aware of each day's schedule by consulting with my group leader and taking note of any information posted in the hotel lobby. I will do my best to maintain a positive, responsible and cooperative attitude during the trip in order to enhance my experience and also that of other people in my group.

■ **I understand that food is an important part of any culture, and I look forward to encountering various types of local cuisine during my stay.**

Given that I can eat as much "American" food as I want once I am back home, I will try to keep an open mind and palette towards new culinary experiences and do my best to sample the widest variety of foods. I agree to attend all mandatory meals and functions.

■ **I understand that I need to respect local culture and customs**, that I need to dress appropriately especially when visiting cathedrals or other places of worship, and that I must be courteous, respectful and pleasant at all times, even if the group encounters inconveniences, crowds, or things that don't appeal to me personally.

■ **During the tour, I will listen attentively to the guide** because I want to learn as much as possible about the places I am visiting. On the coach, when being addressed by the courier, local guide or group leaders, I will stop any conversation immediately, so that my traveling companions may hear what is being said. I understand that I must ask permission before using headphones, audio equipment, or any other electronic devices, and that these are in any case only permitted during long drives (two hours or more).

■ **I will do my very best to be on time** for any tour activities because I want to neither waste other people's time nor my own.

■ **I agree to attend all mandatory activities.**

■ **I will abide by the curfew** set by my group leaders. I understand that leaving the hotel at night without permission is strictly prohibited. I also understand that for my own safety I must not leave my hotel room after bed check nor may I change rooms without prior permission from my group leader.

■ **I understand the importance of correct behavior while at hotels.** This means not forgetting that other guests staying at the hotel have paid for their rooms and, therefore, have the right to peace and quiet, especially after 10 pm. I will not run down corridors, talk in a loud voice or shout out of windows at any time. While in my own room, I will be considerate of guests in neighboring rooms who may be trying to sleep.

■ **I realize that there are certain things that I must pay for myself** while on tour that are not included in the program fee, such as subway or bus tickets, beverages at lunch, dinner and throughout the day, telephone calls made from my hotel room, other items billed to my room, and tips. My group leader has made me aware of these requirements prior to departure, and I have planned a budget for them.

■ **I will buy my own souvenirs** and not take hotel property. I understand that passports keeps track of room numbers and assigned occupants throughout the tour, and that I will be required to pay for any damaged or stolen property. I also understand that I may not be allowed to leave the hotel until I have paid for damages caused by me while on tour. The same policy applies to damage of a motorcoach or touring bus.



■ ***I will take care to look after my belongings at all times.***

This means making sure my suitcase is loaded onto the coach before boarding, and checking that nothing has been left behind in the bus or in my hotel room before checking out. I understand that any article left behind will be considered as lost and that passports couriers cannot be expected to retrieve such articles for me nor to pay for or arrange for their recovery. I

will pay special attention to my passport, airline tickets, money and other monetary tools because the loss of such things will not only inconvenience me but also those around me.

■ ***I understand that alcohol is prohibited for student travelers during passports tours.***

Some group leaders allow an exception to this rule under the following specific circumstance:

- I may sample one small glass of wine or beer at a mealtime or in a place where a taste of wine or beer is customary in local culture. Samplings or tastings may only take place when a group leader is present.
- If I am under 21, my parent/guardian must give written permission for me to sample wine or beer.

Alcohol consumption is never to occur in hotel rooms or during free time. I may not drink liquor or spirits under any circumstances. If my group leader chooses a no-alcohol policy, I agree to abide by that policy.

■ ***I know that the use or possession of illegal drugs is prohibited*** (as defined by U.S. government legislation, not by local laws). Likewise, weapons, or any article that may be considered as weapon-like, is of course prohibited at any time during the tour.

■ ***I understand personal misconduct will not be tolerated*** on tour including violent, hostile or offensive actions, physical, verbal or sexual harassment, or any actions which have the effect of threatening, intimidating or injuring another person.

■ ***I realize that failure to behave correctly during the tour or violating any of the rules as outlined in this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action,*** including the possibility that I might be sent home at my own expense or that of my parent(s) or guardian(s), and that this disciplinary action may incur the purchase of a new airline ticket in order to repatriate me back to the United States.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated! Everyone at **passports** hopes that you and your group enjoy your travel experience. Have fun!

Your signature _____

Parent/guardian signature _____



Your Personal Trip Log

Before You Go

What basic cultural differences do you expect to find?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What basic cultural similarities do you expect to find?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What stereotypes do you associate with the culture(s) you are about to visit?



3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

How close were your pre-arrival stereotypes?

What sight(s) are you most excited to see?

What sights most impressed you?

After You Arrive

What basic cultural differences surprised you?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

What basic cultural similarities surprised you?

1. _____

2. _____

What about you has changed, since your trip?

Day 10:

Day 11:

Day 12:

Day 13:

Day 14:



passports

educational travel

Group Leader's name _____

Group Leader's cell phone _____

Courier's name _____

Courier's cell phone _____

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