

totally orderly, llc

TRAVEL TIPS

Nothing brings a smile to my heart like the word “vacation.” That is, until I start thinking about the airport, and the packing, and the preparation, and the – well, you get the picture. Traveling is no cake walk, but it’s what we have to do to get from here to there, so let’s jump in with a few travel tips.

THE TRAVEL ZONE

Every house should have a travel zone, a location where all things trip-related are kept. Your luggage may or may not fit in the same space. I use a bathroom cabinet for mine, but a box in the closet would work as well. Whether you’re packing for an overnigher downtown or a week in Cancun, you won’t waste time searching the house for these little essentials. Here are some ideas for stocking your travel zone:

- Packing Lists (store on your computer, but keep a clean copy here)
- Travel Pillow
- Small Alarm Clock
- Travel Belts/ Money Holders
- Cosmetic & Toiletry Bags
- Daily Medication Boxes (one per family member)
- Travel Size Toiletries – restock these after your trip
- Flashlight
- Corkscrew
- Small knife or pocket knife
- Zipper Food Storage Bags (quart sized, gallon sized, and the super big –for laundry)
- Little Toys and Gifts (pick these up on sale and dole them out to the kids on road trips)
- Travel Games
- Luggage Tags
- Luggage Locks (get the TSA approved ones)

PACK LIKE A PRO

Packing is an art form, and the goal is to pack as little as necessary. But somehow, most of us pack suitcases straining against the zippers. A seasoned traveler knows there are some tried and true tips for closing that bag effortlessly. Try these ideas when you pack for your next trip:

- Plan your wardrobe around a color theme, such as black, white and khaki, to minimize the number of shoes and accessories you’ll need.

- ❑ Roll your clothes! If you've heard this before but have yet to try it, you'll be amazed at how much space it saves. It's especially recommended for jeans, t-shirts and casual wear. Even pressed items can be rolled with minimal wrinkling.
- ❑ Stuff your shoes with socks, underwear and swim suits.
- ❑ Pack sample size toiletries. Pack them in zipper food storage bags to protect your clothing from spills.
- ❑ Leave bulky hair dryers at home if the hotel provides them.
- ❑ Place a brightly colored identification tag on the outside of your luggage, and make sure there's one on the inside, too.
- ❑ The Carry On: money, photo identification, passports, jewelry, and life saving medications should all be packed in your carry on. In addition, pack a very light jacket. It's a good idea to bring a snack with you, as the airlines are serving fewer meals. Remember to check the TSA website (www.tsa.gov) for a complete listing of what is allowed in carry on luggage.

PINT-SIZED TRAVELERS

Traveling with small children can be a breeze if they are well-stocked with boredom busters and a few of their favorite things.

- ❑ Each child should have a small suitcase for his clothes and one carry on or tote bag to keep him busy during the trip.
- ❑ Pack children's outfits complete with underwear and socks in gallon-sized zipper food storage bags. The kids can grab a whole outfit and reuse the bag for laundry.
- ❑ Pack your own carry on with some surprise toys to excite the kids during the trip.
- ❑ If you're traveling by car, don't underestimate old-fashioned "car games" like License Plates (find them from different states), A to Z (find signs with words starting with A to Z), or "Would You Rather..." (Would you rather be a snake or a spider?).
- ❑ Include plenty of healthy snacks in your carry on or theirs. Cheese sticks, whole wheat crackers, fruit and a treat should keep hunger at bay. Don't forget wet wipes too!

SOUVENIRS

The perfect souvenir is hard to find. Most are expensive and meaningless once you return home – think plastic, glow-in-the-dark Statue of Liberty.

Set a budget for yourself and your children. This is a great opportunity for kids to learn about money and making good decisions.

Three souvenirs I recommend because they are fairly inexpensive and useful:

- Christmas Tree Ornaments - this is my favorite trip souvenir. It holds memories of the vacation, can be enjoyed year after year, and doesn't require any maintenance.
- Bookmarks – they are cheap, useful, and you don't have to dust them for the next five years!
- T-Shirts – they're a classic!

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