

How to Save Money While Traveling and other Travel Tips

By C. Faye Williamson

As a traveler, I have spent a lot of downtime in airports. When finding ways to occupy myself, modern terminals have improved their options. The store's rental space is expensive, and they feel they have a captured audience. Air travel is expensive enough these days, so being sensible is a requirement for most people.

First on the list to save money is to go to the airport on a full stomach, if possible. If not pack yourself a lunch and bring some snacks you like. Never, never, never buy bottled water at an airport store. You cannot justify paying up to \$5 for a bottle of water or any other canned bottled drink. The answer to this is to bring an empty water bottle and fill it up once you are through the TSA security check.

With time to kill in an airport, everybody wants to use their phone, tablet, or laptop. We continually check messages and emails, read, and get on social media. Some airports offer free WIFI, but only for a limited time. When your free time is up, they will ask you for a charge card at an outrageous fee. If you feel you "have to log on", look for non-password protected WIFI by sitting outside frequent flyer lounges or popular restaurants.

When walking through an airport, pretend you are a horse and put on your blinders when you get to the high-tech electric gadgets. They sell some items for up to \$130 more than you can buy the same product online. However, chargers can be bought for a few dollars at a Dollar Store. You

can even find some places that offer free charges for your high-tech stuff. So, to be extra careful, pack a charger in your carry-on luggage.

You've planned your trip and brought your new raincoat, backpack, and hiking shoes. Here is a really good idea: try them on before you take that trip. Break in those new shoes by walking here at home. Don't get a blister over there while on your trip and make yourself miserable. If bringing a backpack, fill it up with approximately the same weight and try to use it one day before you go. See how heavy it gets and how much you can tolerate. Make your adjustments here before you leave.

Before you go on a trip, read up on TripAdvisor or Trivago where you are going. The venue wants you to think it is the greatest place to be. However, you are wise to go to a third-party site where people who have spent money there will tell you how they truly feel, and you can decide before buying that ticket.

As far as ranking of airlines and who to buy that ticket from, the domestic companies in America are ranked as follows: # 2 United Airlines, # 8 American Airlines, # 19 Delta Airlines. The study was ranked using the following criteria by aviation airlines among 64 different airlines both domestic and International, based on according to on-time performance, the handling of compensation claims, customer feedback, dining, and retail options, and customer ratings.

Lastly, pack your "carry-on" very carefully. You will need your medicine, valuables, one change of clothes, and underwear in your carry-on, not your checked luggage. Put a copy of the credit cards you are carrying (both front

& back); helps when you lose them or if they are stolen. Be sure and let any bank cardholders know where you are going so they do not deny a charge. That is embarrassing. Happy Traveling!!