

7 BUDGET TRAVEL TIPS TO INSPIRE YOUR NEXT TRIP.

Holidays can help you relax and recharge, but did you know taking time out can make you a better employee too? Studies show that among other benefits, taking a break from work can improve creativity, lift motivation and boost productivity. Best of all, going away doesn't have to cost the earth either. Here are our top tips on how to travel like a star without breaking the bank.

1. Travel off-peak

Avoid travelling at the height of summer or during the festive season and you could save a ton of cash. Not only will off-peak travel help you save on flights and accommodation, but it also means shorter queues, smaller crowds and milder weather. If you really need to travel at busy times, you can save by travelling mid-week or going with a budget airline.

2. Book a B&B

Want twice the hospitality for half the price? Skip the big hotel chains and opt for a Bed & Breakfast (B&B) instead. B&Bs tend to be run by locals, so not only will you get more personal service, but access to insider tips for the best things to see and do off the beaten tourist track.



Australians' top 10 travel destinations

Australians are one of the most avid globetrotters in the world, but where do we go? Here are our favourite holiday destinations.

1. New Zealand
2. Indonesia
3. United States of America
4. Thailand
5. United Kingdom
6. China
7. Singapore
8. Fiji
9. Malaysia
10. India

Source: Allianz

3. Eat like a local

It might be tempting to stick to restaurants with multilingual menus and English-speaking staff, but you could be paying a premium for these comforts – not to mention missing out on some great local fare. Tell-tale signs of an authentic joint are small, handwritten menus in the local language. Seek out the town pub, fair or festival for an affordable and 'real' food experience.

4. Plan a picnic

Cash-strapped? Just \$15 will buy a great picnic lunch for two in Europe. Not only affordable, but picnics are also a great way to get a healthy dose of the outdoors while soaking up the local sites. Plus, there's no better way to get acquainted with a city than stocking up at the local supermarket. Sample seasonal produce and discover the weird and wonderful delicacies of that region without paying the premium of being at a restaurant.

5. Mine social media

This is your chance to use your social networks to your advantage. The average Australian has 338 Facebook friends, so chances are, you've got a friend or acquaintance that lives at your holiday destination. This is your chance to connect with them and score some great insider tips on the best local hangouts. If you're lucky, you could even wind up with a free tour guide or place to stay.

6. Skip the big cities

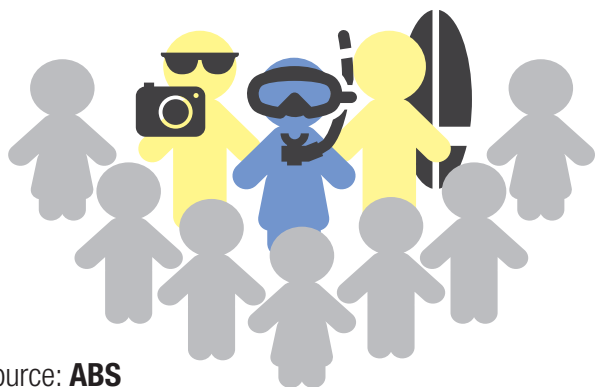
Going to Europe? Try Bari rather than Rome or Munich over Berlin. In Asia, opt for Hanoi over Ho Chi Minh or Chengdu over Shanghai. By avoiding the big cities, you can dodge some of the bigger price tags for food and transport. Plus, the smaller and usually underrated cities are often easier to navigate, with friendlier locals and a more laid-back vibe.

7. Sightsee for free

Think you need to spend big to have a good time? Think again. Finding free activities to fill your day is easier than you think. A lot of big cities like New York and London have free entry days to popular museums, as well as free outdoor festivals or concerts at certain times of year. Get the inside track by doing a little Google research before going away. The **Time Out** and **National Geographic** websites also have plenty of inspiration on free events at all the top holiday destinations.

Did you know?

3 in 10 Australians travel overseas every year.



Source: **ABS**

How to make economy feel like first class

Travelling economy doesn't mean you can't have a first class experience. Here's how to travel in style without spending any extra.

- Check in online: Checking in early means you get first dibs on the best seats. Look for window or aisle seats away from the toilets and as close to the front of the plane as possible.
- Plan your food: Most major airlines allow passengers to order special meals at the time of booking or check-in. Take the chance to explore your options – planning your meals in advance could mean you end up with something a little tastier to get you through the flight.
- Bring your own toiletries: Business and first class passengers are treated to amenity kits which make their trip more comfortable, so why not make your own? Pack a small pamper kit of travel-sized eye drops, lip balm, face cream, toothbrush and toothpaste.
- Invest in a good neck pillow: A good travel pillow can make all the difference when it comes to having a well-rested journey. Invest in an inflatable pillow that'll save luggage room but also give you plenty of neck support. An inflatable foot rest can also boost in-flight comfort.
- Don't over pack: Keeping your carry-on to a minimum will mean more leg room and space to stretch out, so just stick to the essentials such as headphones, a warm scarf and book packed in a lightweight travel bag.



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