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Business Travel Tips



A Basic Survival Guide

Travel is fun until you start doing it for profit and not for pleasure. Business travellers or “road warriors”, as they are called, travel for shorter periods of time and are under a great deal of stress. They know that flying in and out of cities, living in airplanes, at airports, in hotels and driving countless miles on rental cars is not glamorous. Here are some basic tips to make your business travel easier:

- Sleep smart. Dark circles under your eyes aren't good for business. Many road warriors know that you can only use a certain number of whiteout sticks to cover bags under your eyes to mask jetlag or poor sleep nights in strange hotel rooms. So carry eye shields and earplugs. The wax types are better than the little foam earplugs. Pillowsoft, non-irritating silicone ones are best. They are often sold as swimming accessories. They work well to mute noise, snoring and annoyingly chatty airline neighbours. Invest in a blow-up pillow to sleep soundly on planes. They also prevent your hair from being flattened as you sleep.
- Carry C Rations. The airlines are starving us! If your flight is delayed or has mechanical problems, you spend hours on the runway or circling in the air while your stomach is screaming. Airlines offer little more than peanuts or pretzels for short flights. Carry a nutritious and filling power bar and an apple in your briefcase.
- Don't Kill the Old Red Rooster. Hotel alarm clocks and wake-up calls can be unreliable. If a rooster isn't your pet of choice on the road, pack an inexpensive sports watch with an alarm and a stopwatch. The stopwatch is useful for your work-out on the stationary bike in the hotel fitness centre or to time your bubble bath. If you carry a pager, find out if it has an alarm function and learn how to use it.
- Pack Lightly. If you need to be dressed in business attire for a meeting the same day you travel, wear it on the plane. Always assume your luggage may be lost and be prepared. Don't put yourself in an awkward and expensive position of being dependent upon taxis and tip-hungry porters. Pack the least amount of clothes and shoes you think you can survive on. You can wear the same mix-and-match outfits day after day. Leave room in your bag for the shopping treasures you can't resist along the way.
- Take Dark Clothes. They don't show spots, wrinkles or dirt and work for most situations.
- Cut down on Shoes. How many shoes does the gutsy business traveller pack? Too many, usually! If the shoes fit, wear them. Don't carry them. Wear the shoes you need for business and pack one pair of athletic shoes for walking, jogging or informal occasions.
- Shop Guiltlessly. Spend some money on yourself and buy presents and cards for your loved ones' upcoming birthdays.
- Communicate Home Easily. It is unproductive to leave messages on answering machines. If you are travelling to a different time zone, you may awaken a cranky loved one in the middle of the night. The easiest and cheapest way to communicate home from most countries is via fax. Sending a fax costs less than a long distance call and you don't have to deal with time differences. Leave your hotel fax number with friends and family. If you prefer email, set up free email accounts for your kids and send them notes and postcards.