

# Travel Tips

## Deck The Halls With Stress-Free Travel

(NAPSA)—Investing a little time and effort when planning your holiday travel can pay big dividends when it comes to making your travel stress free and enjoying the holidays.

Here are some tips:

### Before the trip begins

- Contact a travel agent well in advance of your trip to secure the lowest-priced airline seats, hotel rooms and rental cars, which usually sell out quickly for holiday travel. Be aware that prices generally escalate during the holiday season, as demand is higher.

- Packing light saves time and energy. Some airlines place special restrictions during the holidays and allow only one carry-on, so less luggage is vital.

- Ship your gifts to your destination ahead of time. Allow at least two to three weeks for your package to arrive.

- Before leaving, be sure to secure your house. Lock all doors and windows and don't forget to set the alarm. Also, have a friend collect your mail, set lights on timers and don't leave the details of your trip on the answering machine.

### Flying during the holidays

- First, avoid peak travel days. As your travel agent will tell you, the busiest days to fly are those immediately before and after the actual holidays. The experts at the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) suggest booking flights for at least two days before and after Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's.

- Look for a nonstop flight or one involving the fewest connections and stops. Every time your plane touches the ground during peak travel times, the possibility



**Contacting a travel agent well in advance of your holiday trip can help to secure the lowest-priced airline seats, hotel rooms and rental cars.**

of delays due to inclement weather or air-traffic problems increases. Also, aim to book morning flights, which tend to be delayed less often than afternoon departures.

- Check in early. Domestic travelers should arrive at the airport two hours prior to departure, while international travelers should arrive three hours in advance.

- Do not carry wrapped gifts on a flight. With safety a priority for all airlines, security personnel will need access to all items. Pack collapsible gift bags to be used as wrapping upon arrival.

- Keep a positive attitude. Delays happen, and airlines do the best they can to keep their schedules on time.

The American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) is the world's largest association of travel professionals.

For more travel tips, visit [www.travelsense.org](http://www.travelsense.org).