

TRAVEL SMART TIPS

Five Ways To Travel In Luxury For Less

(NAPSA)—Yes, you can travel like a millionaire on a shoestring budget...if you follow a few crucial steps. American Express travel counselors offer five tips on how to travel in luxury for less:

1. Take a “repositioning” cruise. When cruise lines move ships between regions—for example, changing a ship’s sailing route from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean—those itineraries don’t have as many port calls and resulting cruise prices can be very attractive. A knowledgeable travel agent can help travelers who prefer cruise vacations find a great bargain by sailing on a “repositioning” cruise.

2. Look for newly opened hotels and resorts. Many properties—especially those managed by major chains—offer discounted or special “introductory” rates when they open a new location to attract customers. Checking for ads in travel magazines or searching online for new hotel and resort openings are good sources of information.

3. Share costs with a group. Traveling with family and friends can be a very cost-effective way to experience a suite or villa accommodation. By sharing the cost among a group, travelers can cut costs and enjoy a stay at a property they’ve always wanted to visit. And, traveling with family and friends is a great way to reconnect.

4. Choose the right moment. Most travelers already know this but a reminder never hurts. Avoid traveling during peak seasons when airline, hotel and resort rates are typically more expensive, such as during the spring break for students and the year-end holiday season. Travelers who can be flexible about travel dates, times and destinations can take advantage of special offers and deals, many of which occur during the “shoulder” season or slow



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time, as travel experts refer to it.

5. Invest to save. Travelers should consider investing in a membership or travel club, or in cards with access to benefits, services and protections that give them something extra. A standard trip can easily be turned into a luxurious vacation. The Platinum Card® from American Express, for example, offers 13 distinctive travel benefits and services that are worth more than \$8,000 in annual savings. Weigh that next to the annual fee of \$395 and you can see why many call the Card a great investment. Plus, you can use the benefits as often as you like, whether you travel once a year or more often. One of the key travel benefits offered on the Platinum Card is Fine Hotels and Resorts, which entitles Card members to special privileges at over 500 hotels and resorts around the world. Complimentary amenities include a room upgrade upon arrival, when available, a continental breakfast for two each day, a convenient late check-out time of 4 p.m. and a special amenity that varies by property.