

# TRAVEL NEWS & NOTES

## Making A Vacation Enjoyable And Affordable

(NAPSA)—When traveling, a little preparation can offer big benefits. Experts say keeping an eye on the bottom line doesn't have to mean less enjoyment when it comes to leisure-time travel.

Travel assistance provider Europ Assistance USA suggests the following tips for getting the most out of your next trip:

**Stay close:** Some of the best getaways can be just miles away. Research your state or region for attractions and accommodations that make for cheap travels.

**Pick the right day:** Avoid traveling during holidays and, if possible, over the weekend. Hotels and flights are often cheaper during the week.

**Make the drive:** Larger airports often offer more flexibility on flight times and carriers, giving you the chance to score a cheaper flight. Be sure to factor in the time and money spent on driving, parking and gas.

**Pack lightly:** Airlines charge for overweight luggage and additional bags. Check with your airline for its latest restrictions to be sure you don't face unexpected charges at the airport.

**Which way to the subway?:** Taxis and rental cars can add up quickly, so use public transportation when possible. Bus and rail systems are designed to get you where you need to go and cost much less.

**Load up at lunch:** Eat your largest meal of the day during lunch. Lunch menus give you a better chance to sample local fare at a more reasonable price.

**Pack a snack:** Request an empty refrigerator in your hotel room to fill with drinks and



**Cramming in that extra pair of shoes could cost you more in the end. Before heading to the airport, be sure to check your carrier's regulations regarding baggage size, weight and quantity.**

snacks from a local store to cut down on costs.

**Research free local attractions:** Take advantage of free museums, historical sites and other activities. Go for a hike, a swim or have a picnic at a park or beach for a thrifty way to spend the day.

**Go home empty-handed:** Avoid purchasing overpriced souvenirs that will end up in the trash. Pictures and memories are free—and are often the best souvenirs.

**Phone wisely:** Bring a calling card to avoid phone charges from your hotel. These charges can add up quickly and can wreak havoc on your lodging budget. Also, limit using your cell phone outside the country to avoid roaming fees.

"Travel is a way to relax, enjoy time with others and see the world," said Guillaume Deybach, CEO of Europ Assistance USA, provider of travel assistance services. "At Europ Assistance, we believe that smart travel makes for successful travel."

To learn more, visit the Web site at [www.europassistance-usa.com](http://www.europassistance-usa.com).