

TRAVEL SMART TIPS

Make Your Next Trip Enjoyable And Affordable

(NAPSA)—Going on vacation doesn't mean you have to leave savings behind. Experts say that with a little planning, it's possible to combine enjoyment and thrift on your next trip. Here are a few tips:

- A weak dollar doesn't have to wreck your plans. Opt for destinations where the currency is tied to the U.S. dollar or trips for which you can prepay in U.S. dollars, such as Mediterranean cruises or an all-inclusive resort.

- If traveling by air, book your ticket as soon as possible. If you must book last minute, remember, you have options. The key to securing the best deal is flexibility in travel dates—ask your American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) travel agent to check into special fares or consider flying into an alternate airport and renting a car.

- Arrive early. Difficult airport parking, long lines at security checkpoints and the possibility of the airline overselling the flight and bumping passengers should all be considered when deciding what time to arrive at the airport. Keep in mind that those who arrive earliest for an overbooked flight stand the greatest chance of staying onboard.

- Know your limits. Pack light and know baggage limits. Some airlines now charge for a second piece of checked luggage.

- Plan itineraries and arrange accommodations well in advance. Reservations for hotels, restaurants and rental cars get booked quickly during peak travel times. Your travel agent can help you get the lowest rate and make sure



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your rental car has room for your family, luggage and whatever souvenirs you bring home.

- If you're traveling by car, get a tune-up before you go. Make sure to have your oil changed and your brakes, fluids and tire pressure checked. The slightest deficiency in air pressure significantly reduces your car's gas mileage.

- Get an early start to avoid holiday weekend gridlock. Traveling during late-night/early-morning hours helps.

"The summer season is typically one of the busiest times for travel, but it doesn't have to be frustrating," said ASTA president and CEO Cheryl Hudak, CTC. "One sure way to make summer travel trips smoother is by having a travel agent take care of all your travel details."

For more information and tips, visit TravelSense.org, a consumer Web site with helpful travel advice and tips for travelers.