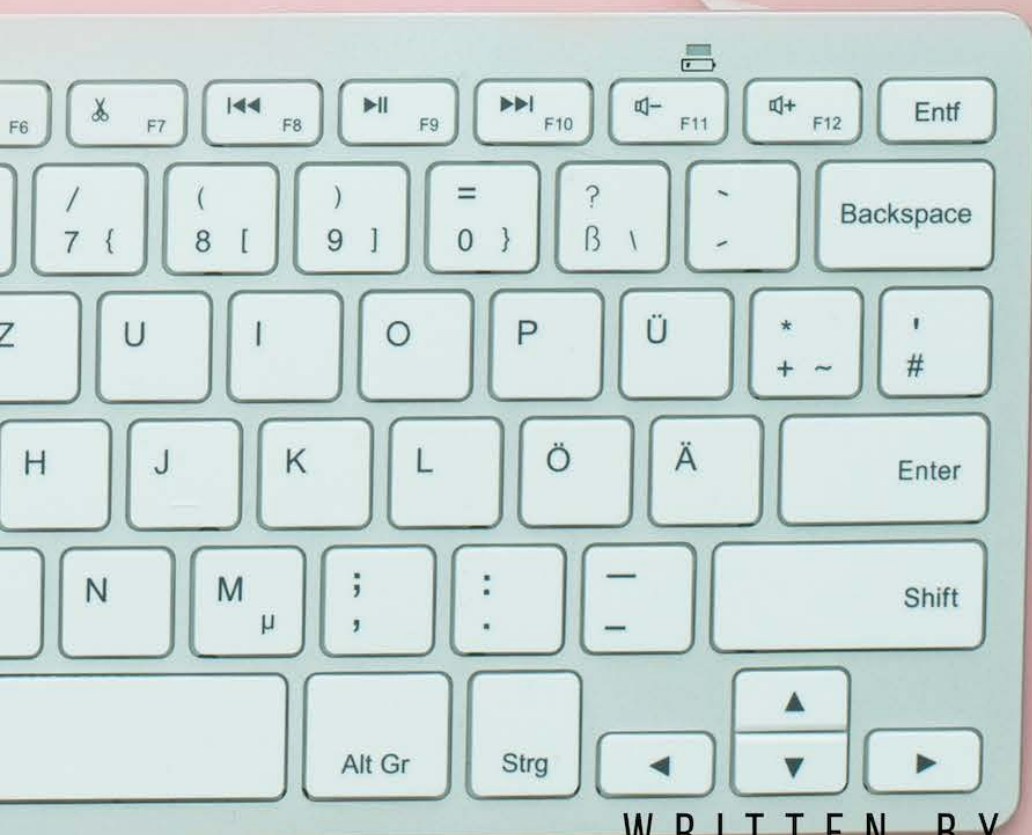


# BUDGET CONSCIOUS

## TRAVEL GUIDE



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## INTRODUCTION

We all want to set sail and travel large expanses of land, visit different cities of the world, experience different cultures, gain broader perspectives on life, and just breathe in all the goodness that accompanies variety. But not all of us can afford to go to these destinations, because of the expenses incurred. The question inherent to this is, how do we accomplish our travel goals without breaking our bank accounts, and, more importantly, how do we ensure we have something to fall back on when we return? This e-book presents a step-by-step process of how to achieve your travel goals using a budget, and how to reap the full benefits of the experience. It also gives you the scoop on which destinations are cheap, yet still fabulous to visit, plus useful tips for traveling, and how to get the best flights and hotel deals in every city.

## **WHAT IS BUDGET TRAVEL?**

It is fundamental economic advice to live on a budget. Living on a budget ensures people are focused on their goals, and are not swayed by unintended and unnecessary expenditures that arise. If you want to track your expenditures, and have your funds working for you, rather than the other way round, having a budget is the direction to go. If this is true, then it also should be applicable to traveling. So, what is budget travel?

Budget travel is simply traveling within the confines of a low-expense plan. It is far-reaching and covers many areas of travel. Budget travel includes getting great flight deals, and taking public transport or walking rather than hiring a cab. Budget travel means eating with locals in their traditional restaurants, rather than eating in high-priced tourist restaurants, and getting the best accommodation deals. In all, it only means keeping expenses low, while still having an amazing time during our travels.

## **BUDGET TRAVEL TIPS**

There are several tips to aid travelers on a budget. First and foremost is saving money on transportation, which sometimes seems to cost a fortune, especially if the means of traveling is by air. Flight fares are always cheaper during low seasons. Instead of planning a vacation to Paris or Dubai during the festive period when your dream city is brimming with people, why not wait till low season, when there are fewer people and enough space for you to breathe the air? You'll have enough time to get in every nook and cranny, without being told that all slots have been sold out, and more importantly, you'll be able to avail yourself of the best deals on flights.

Low season differs by region and country, so travelers have to be sure when low season occurs, in order to make that move. However, if you prefer not to wait for low season, or want to travel in the high season, then your best option is to check which days are the cheapest to fly.

It is also very important for a traveler on a budget to take advantage of booking flights and accommodation early enough to get the best deals. Avoid rush hour expenses, such as settling for the expensive last flights, or accommodation with an exorbitant price, because it is all that is left.

Once you've arrived at your destination, there are still opportunities to save money on transportation costs. By commuting as the locals do, or even walking, rather than hailing taxi-cabs. The advantage is a better view of the city, and money saved on the cost of transportation.

The best accommodation deals are usually found in hostel spaces, as opposed to their closely related and exorbitant brothers: hotels, resorts, and motels. Besides the advantage of being incredibly cheap, you are most likely to make memories in a hostel, and meet more people than you would staying in a hotel. Hostels always have a common room, and some even offer free classes such as yoga and dancing, plus free meals provided by the majority of hostels.

Another very important budget travel tip is to travel light. Yes, travel light! Traveling with just a few carry-ons and a backpack is just fine. It saves you from paying checked luggage fees, and you need all the money you can save, so why not avoid the extra load?

In the spirit of saving money, making extra income while exploring the culture and beauty of a strange place can also help boost your travel budget. As a matter of fact, it gives you more experience, and you get extra funds you could use to splurge. There are many opportunities for travelers to work and earn, ranging from jobs at hostels, bartending or waiting tables, or even taking online jobs. Online options include freelance writing, proofreading, graphic design and more. These all make for wonderful experiences and provide you with more income.

Eat the local food. Let your taste buds experience new dishes. As the saying goes, 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do', and this extends to the food. Save your money and give yourself a refreshing local treat. It will not kill you to refrain from eating pizza or your favorite non-local meals. These dishes will likely cost more, because they are often only be found in places where intercontinental dishes are sold, and will cost a whole lot more than the local delicacies.

Look for tourist attraction sites that you can visit for free. Many museums, libraries, and art galleries, among others, offer free admission on special

days, if not every day. Take advantage of the privilege of seeing the most beautiful parts of the city's rich heritage. There is also the option of visiting places on a group tour. This can be a more cost-effective means of exploring than going by yourself. Joining tour groups is mostly cheaper and you are more likely to get better discounts.

Perhaps one of the most important budget travel tips is to plan ahead. Travelers should evaluate their budgets *before* traveling. This has to be done along with research about the cost of living in the destination city. With a bit of research, travelers will be better informed on what their expenditures will be.

Finally, a tip that should always be on every traveler's mind through the duration of every trip: respect and value the culture of the local people. This is a sure way to have a much more memorable experience, and to warm your way into the hearts of the local people.

## **THE CHEAPEST COUNTRIES TO TRAVEL TO ON A BUDGET/ BUDGET TRAVEL DESTINATIONS**

### **Argentina**

Getting around the cities of Argentina is relatively easy and inexpensive, especially if you opt for a walk instead of hiring taxi-cabs. The food in Argentina is of different varieties and inexpensive, and foreign currency goes further than the local money.

Argentina offers tourists a fusion of European and native South American culture. Argentines are accommodating and willing to share their cultural heritage with visitors from other parts of the world. This sort of hospitality is common throughout the country, but is especially evident in the bigger cities. A low cost of living makes traveling to and around Argentina a lot cheaper than some of the other South American countries, and definitely cheaper than travel in Europe or Asia.

### **Spain**

Spain is an amazing budget-friendly country to visit. Certainly one of the most affordable countries in Europe, Spain has a rich cultural heritage, evident in the number of Catholic Churches, as well as the recorded history

of Muslims and Jews making their lives here. Travelers of all religious backgrounds will be able to appreciate the beauty and splendor of some of the greatest churches and cathedrals found outside of Rome. There are plenty of tourist attractions that are free or inexpensive, especially since Spain sits on both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, making it home to some of the finest beaches in Europe. There are a number of free outdoor concerts throughout the year, and the weather is great for several months out of the year. As a bonus, there are great hotels in Spain that will offer you a highly-rated stay for less than \$100 a night.

### **Vietnam**

Looking to visit Southeast Asia? Vietnam is the destination for you. Visit Vietnam and experience a rich cultural heritage on a minimal budget. There are free walking tours available, however, small donations help student guides improve their English language skills. The country is home to several free Buddhist temples that you can visit, many of which are ornately decorated and quite beautiful. Vietnamese history, ranging from French colonialism to independence, is displayed nearly everywhere you turn. Much of that history is free to enjoy and appreciate. As with other countries, there are published lists of free activities and tourist attractions to consult when planning a trip to Vietnam.

### **India**

India is a large and diversely colorful place to visit, and is one of the cheapest countries in the world to visit. With such an array of diversity, you are free to take advantage of the beach one weekend and mountain climbing on the next. There are a number of free festivals throughout the year, and Agra, India is home to one of the Seven Wonders of the World: the Taj Mahal. Agra is an iconic tourist destination, and attracts many tourists all year round. India is also home to a number of peculiar wildlife species scarcely seen in other parts of the world, with many opportunities to get up close and personal with these great creatures. Be sure to visit before or after the rainy season, so that you can enjoy all the beautiful outdoor adventures which the country has to offer.

### **The Czech Republic**

Situated in Eastern Europe and quite unfamiliar to many travelers, The Czech Republic is a budget-friendly and cost-effective tourist destination. With a very favorable exchange rate for the United States dollar, The Czech Republic is a country requiring very low resources to visit, and is therefore easily accessible by everyone. The Czech Republic is also starting to command attention for its aesthetic, both natural and man-made. Therefore, there is a possibility that this won't be a budget destination for much longer. With a number of fairytale castles set in picturesque valleys, scenic mountains, plus cities like Prague featuring in big-budget movies, The Czech Republic should be on your budget travel wish-list.

### **HOW TO BUDGET IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE TO HELP YOU SAVE FOR A TRIP (THE ABSOLUTE BEST SAVING TRAVEL TIPS EVER)**

Reiterating the importance of living on a budget, let's now discuss how to create and incorporate budgeting in your daily lives. Living on a budget when you are not traveling will help you easily save more money for travel.

- **TRACK YOUR EXPENSES:** First, it is necessary to track all your expenses (all of them!), so that you are aware of what you are spending money on. You can then discern whether all of the expenses are necessary, and determine which expenses can be reduced, in order to spare some extra cash. When you check your tracked expenses, you will be amazed at the things whose worth you cannot even fathom, and you will wonder why you spent money on them in the first place.
- **DRAW UP A BUDGET:** Depending on preference, individuals can have a weekly or a monthly budget. Whatever you choose, make sure to be completely honest with yourself by recording exactly what your expenses are for the duration of the budget, without trying to cut corners. The goal is to make sure that your budgeted expenses do not exceed your income. Hence, after calculating your budgeted expenses, determine if expenses exceed your income. If so, you will need to cut out your extraneous items until your budgeted expenses are less than your income. You then need to make sure to stick to your budgeted expenses.



- **SAVE:** Probably the most cliché word used by adults, it however still does not wear out its importance. It is important to set aside at least ten percent of your income, deposited directly into your savings account. These savings funds can be used at a later time to invest in other profitable ventures.
- **SAVE FOR TRAVELING:** Yes, we have previously discussed saving. However, your general savings is not to be used for travel savings. If you are going to travel, you need to save for it, just like you would save for any other expense. It helps to set aside another five to ten percent of your income, until you've accrued enough to set sail. Of course, taking advantage of cheap flight and accommodation deals, and visiting relatively inexpensive countries with great tourist attractions.

## **HOW TO LOOK FOR THE BEST FLIGHT AND HOTEL DEALS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

The internet makes it very easy to have all kinds of information at our fingertips. With the help of travel websites such as Airbnb, Tripadvisor, The Telegraph, Sky Scanner, Expedia, and a host of others, travelers now have the luxury of receiving first-hand information about different countries, as well as how to get the best deals on flights and accommodation in those countries.

## **BUDGET COMPANIES USED FOR SIGHTSEEING TOURS**

There are several great budget tour companies available in all parts of the world. Choosing the right tour will make your visit to any location pleasurable, easier and much swifter. These tour companies will help you find and book city tours that align with your travel preferences. A number of them include:

- Cosmos
- Globus
- African Budget Safaris

- Gate 1
- Viator
- Contiki
- Topdeck
- Hop-on-Hop-off (available in only Berlin)
- Tuscan Travel
- Travel Tak
- Great Value Vacation
- On The Go Tours etc.

### **APPS FOR BUDGET CONSCIOUS TRAVELERS**

There are several applications that make traveling easier and less expensive for travelers. If you are traveling on a budget, it would be wise to download these applications before your trip. They range from translation apps, cheap flight and accommodation apps, travel budgeting apps, to navigation apps that help you find your way around. There are also apps that tell you where to find the best local meals, those that make sure you don't forget your luggage, as well apps which help you find free Wi-Fi.

- **GOOGLE TRANSLATOR, ITRANSLATE, AND LONELY PLANET:** These are excellent foreign language translation applications. They provide immense help to foreign travelers, as nothing can be more frustrating than being unable to communicate, and sign language can only help you so far. Downloading a translation app provides a cheaper means of understanding locals and communicating with them, rather than purchasing a printed phrasebook which probably contains more limited information.
- **HOSTEL WORLD:** This app helps travelers locate hostels, and provides excellent reviews to keep customers better informed on what hostels to choose and book. Aside from tenting, hostels are one of the cheapest means of accommodation for budget travelers.

- **TRAILWALLET:** This is a budgeting app for all travelers, which helps track all expenses incurred throughout the duration of the trip. It relieves travelers of the stress of creating a budget by themselves, and will accurately alert you when you might exceed your budget.
- **PACK POINT:** This app saves travelers the stress of meticulously planning and packing for a trip. It goes a step further to prevent the traveler from forgetting any necessary travel items. Travelers provide details about the nature and duration of the trip, and the app then procures a list of needed items.
- **WI-FI FINDER:** This app helps travelers find the closest Wi-Fi connections, so that they can access free internet.
- **EATWITH:** This app tells you where to find the best local cuisines. Experience the culture of the people, eat their local meals, and create memories, while saving money over expensive restaurant food.
- **GOOGLE MAP AND CITYMAPPER:** These are great apps to help you find your way around foreign locations. They also give you information on local means of transportation are available, and whether a better deal is available.

#### **USEFUL TRAVEL HACKS FOR BUDGET CONSCIOUS TRAVELERS**

- **USE A VPN WHEN BOOKING:** A lot of hotels and airlines quote you a higher price if you have searched their website before. Using a VPN masks your identity and browsing history, therefore you can get better deals on flights and hotels.
- **USE A WATER BOTTLE:** Buying bottled water throughout your travels can be expensive, especially because it's important to remain hydrated. Save yourself the unnecessary expense and get a refillable water bottle. Boil your water, or buy a filtered water bottle, and refill your water bottle instead of spending money on bottled water.
- **EAT THE LOCAL CUISINE:** You are only a few days away from home, so save your money and eat street food or patronize local restaurants and enjoy their native delicacies.

- **USE PICTURES AS SOUVENIRS:** Instead of buying lots of souvenirs from your trip, take pictures of your experiences instead. This way, you capture memories, save your money, and avoid heavy luggage.
- **RENT A HOSTEL:** Instead of spending so much on high-priced hotels, rent a space at a hostel. In addition to low prices, you'll also get some perks of staying in a hostel, such as free classes and meals, as provided in most of them. You can also do volunteer to work in exchange for free accommodation at some hostels.

## RECOMMENDED BUDGET TRAVEL INSURANCE

Although travel insurance does not cover all travel expenses, it helps to tackle some unforeseen circumstances that present themselves in the course of the trip or even before the trip. Travel insurance mostly covers medical treatments, trip cancellations, delays or interruptions, delayed, lost, stolen or damaged baggage, and even hijacking.

There are several travel insurance companies that provide excellent options for travelers on a budget. Below are travel insurance companies listed as the best by Forbes:

- Allianz Global Assistance
- Annex Assurance
- General Global Assistance
- Seven Corners
- Travelex
- Travel Guard

## **CONCLUSION**

With a well-calculated budget, anyone can afford to travel to any destination. There are always great deals that make traveling more affordable, so there is no need to stay home with claims of insufficient funds anymore. Travel, and see the world!