

Basic Reminders for Inexpensive Traveling

People often ask how we can travel so much. I tell them, "Travel is a matter of priorities: priorities when you're traveling and priorities at home". For example, obviously, a 5-star hotel is alarmingly more expensive than a 3-star – so why spend extra money for it when you only need a safe place to sleep and clean-up? Likewise, at home, do you *REALLY* need the \$4000 70" curved, 4K UHD TV? If you got the \$1000 50" UHD TV from Wal-Mart instead, the difference in cost is a plane ticket to pretty much anywhere in the world and – *voilà!* – your trip is half-paid!

Priorities. If travel is your priority, then make the adjustment.

While Arthur Frommer's famous *Europe on \$5 a day* is no longer possible, inexpensive travel is still doable. I have folks tell me about their international experiences – and how inexpensively they were able to travel – all the time. It's all about priorities. I can still get by in Europe on \$100/day if I want (including transportation and assuming I travel where I find the least expensive airfare). For example, in summer 2013, I spent three weeks in Europe (two weeks driving around Eastern Europe, one week in Paris), and the total cost was just over \$5000 for everything *FOR THREE PEOPLE* staying in Ibis hotels, a few quaint B&Bs, and an apartment in Paris.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Experience shows that generally, the longer you stay, the less expensive it is *per day*, but then the overall cost increases
- Traveling inexpensively is difficult, and you usually have to work hard to find a bargain
- You can sometimes save money by flying "Open Jaw". The ticket might be a bit more expensive, but if you want to see a lot of a country, the time saved by not having to return back to your starting point *usually* makes up for the cost (Google "open jaw")
- If traveling with more than one person, you can save money by renting (sometimes *leasing* for longer trips) a car and sharing a room or apartment
- Be flexible. Getting lost is not necessarily a bad thing, and can lead to some interesting sites and experiences!
- Purchasing souvenirs can add-up quickly. Look for small, indiscrete, original items if you want a remembrance. If you do buy something large – say a Turkish rug – consider mailing it home from the place where you purchase it.

Follow the cheap airfare, don't be extravagant in country, and be selective on the not-free experiences you choose. Sharing with one or two or three other travelers also reduces costs. And be highly selective about souvenirs and adult beverages (aka alcoholic), as these can be VERY expensive in foreign countries and also lead to trouble...