

DIY Travel: Adventure on a Budget

KAITLIN

HENNESSY:

Hello there. We're going to get ready to get started. My name is Kaitlin Hennessy, I'm the program coordinator at WSU Global Connections, as well as your presenter this evening for DIY Travel: Adventure on a Budget. Thank you for coming. And if you can let me know if you can hear and see me and see the PowerPoint, I'd really appreciate it. If you want to type in where you hope to go next, or what is your dream place to travel to, that would be really helpful.

So the aim tonight is to get you pointed in the right direction to craft some journeys that are memorable, fit your lifestyle, interests, and of course, your funds. Because I'm sure there's all places we'd love to go but can't quite afford to go there yet. Or don't know how. And of course, in this moment we can't turn coal into diamonds and I can't tell you how to have a fabulous time in Monaco for less than a grand. But we can find some really unique places to go to and also tailor our budgets and our expectations for really great destinations.

So as we gets started tonight, my name is Kaitlin Hennessy, once again. And the information presented is based on personal experience, travel mishaps, travel successes, and a lot of research. So I hope this is beneficial to you. And I really do encourage you, if you have great resources of your own, to leave them in the chat box or the comment leader on YouTube when this is a public recording. And I have been fortunate to travel in India for five months travel to Italy, France, Spain, Mexico, and I've seen many states in the US. And a fun fact is that my first flight was actually when I was two weeks old. So I feel like I've been really conditioned for travel for a while.

And as we're going over the objectives for this webinar, if you can let me know in the chat box, what is your biggest budgeting struggle when traveling? We'll tailor that a little bit towards what we focus on on our presentation tonight. And to preface everything with DIY Travel, what's going to be the most important thing is research, research, research. In fact, I'm going to encourage you to pre-search your research. And I know that can sound really awful for some people, and maybe not quite as adventurous as we want. But that is how I have found that you're going to save the most dollars, is by putting that extra leg work in before you go someplace. And then of course, you can still have wiggle room if you decide to do something. And if you think that is the antithesis of what you want to do when you travel, a lot of these resources you can keep in your back pocket for when you do you want to switch destinations

or you need to find a hotel or a place to stay on the fly. So I think it will accommodate both types of travelers. And with this said, we are going to go over one, budgeting techniques and tools. To Two, our time and place, and what a big difference that makes in how much we spend when traveling. How to craft our own unique itinerary, that's shows what's important to us and also showcases our interests. And makes that time and money we spend traveling really unique and valuable to us. A lot of the resources will utilize the shared economy, which for our purposes tonight, mean a peer to peer network in which you either trade services or time in exchange for money or just hospitality or goodwill. We'll also go over the necessities like accommodations, food, transportation, as well as-- for those of you with families-- some hacks on how to travel with kids, save money that way. And then some general resources.

And throughout the evening, don't worry about writing URLs. I will put in a PDF link for the entire slide show that will have all the websites hyperlinked in it as well. So don't worry about writing those down. And let's get started.

So first of all, since we are talking about budget travel, you have to own your own money. And when you start out budgeting, I think there's two main ways you start out. Either you have your dream destination in place or you have your budget already set, let's say I've saved \$2,000 that I'm willing to spend on a vacation for up to two to three weeks with myself and my partner. Where can I go to make that money work? So decide which way you want to go and then you craft a budget from there.

So our first resource that we're going to look at is Mint. And Mint is a free online resource that you can use. You just sign up for an account and it will ask you at first to attach a bank account to it. You don't have to do this. Of course, you can add features if you choose to. It can help you divide up your expenses as it looks at entertainment, how much you spend on meals, how much you spend on rent, utilities, and helps you see these big areas and where you can improve. But for our purposes tonight we're going to first look at their goal-setting for "Take a Trip." and this can just be a good tool to get you started.

So let's say that we're going to start out with going to the Faroe Islands. And I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly. You can choose a type of travel if you'd like, and we're just going to hit "other" right now. That doesn't really matter. It will give you some suggestions for places to go, but it is not necessary for using the tool. And let's say we want to go for about a month. Number of travelers, we'll do one.

And this is the part where you have to, again, pre-search your research. And it will give you some tools on how to come up with these numbers, but right now I'm just putting in some random ones. We're going to say you don't need a car, food is a little more expensive, and activities, you plan on doing a lot of stuff. So let's say your goal is \$17,000. And this could be \$1,000, it doesn't matter. Whatever you think are realistic goals. And I don't think you need to have every single penny accounted for, but you do want to always round up when you're doing this. It's far better to have money left over from your trip than to be worrying those last few days or a week when you're somewhere supposed to be enjoying yourself, but you can't because you're concerned you're not going to have enough to get by.

So you select "next." If you'd like to, you can link this to a special account. So let's say you already have a savings account-- and some people find this really helpful when working towards a goal because it's set aside in a special place and they can see it grow and get closer to their goal. Of course that's not mandatory. And we're going to choose to you hook up an account later or never. And next, you can put in whatever. So "summer travels." And then if you want to re-estimate this goal at any point, you can here. And then, when would you like to go? Ideally, let's say we want to go next July. And then it'll give you a monthly spending goal. Or monthly savings goal. You can save your goal.

Next-- there's lots of different things you can do with this tool, but next we're going to look at budgets. And I like this area because it's very interactive and you can see where your money's going and how to adjust it. So right now I put in some expenses, general ones, so how much you spend on amusements like movies, going out at night, if you are over 21 and you go to bars, that can be a big expense. Groceries, gym memberships, your rent, a mobile phone, and also your income. You can adjust these settings by going to "create budget" and choosing a category. So say food and dining, and we go out to eat a lot. So let's say we spend \$250 a month on that.

And you can see that we have our goal down here for what we set as a monthly goal and what we have is monthly expenses. So this is a good way to see, in real time, what can I actually adjust in my own personal spending to get closer to my goal? So things like groceries and maybe gym memberships, since those are tied with your health, don't mess with those too much. But when looking at how much you're going to eat, you can see, OK I don't have to cut out everything but I can try to bring that down a little bit or bring my amusement down a little bit. See a few less movies or go to less plays. And adjust it from there.

And there's a lot of other things that you can do with this tool but that's just what we're going to go right now. And of course, if you're like, hey lady, I don't want to put my bank information on something or I'm sick of having nine million accounts for everything, you can always do super DIY and just have an Excel program. If you do want to do that, I recommend starting out this open resource.

And it gives you ideas for what to have as line items in your Excel document. Everything from commonly missed things like road tools, where if you're traveling to Florida or New York, that can get really expensive and a good thing to consider. As well as things like travel insurance, especially if you're going out of the country. And things like, you need special suitcases or backpacks, depending on what kind of trip you're going on. And your various food and drinks.

So this can give you a good place to get started. Although I do recommend you make your own Excel sheet because it will be easier to move around and you can sort it the way you want. Of course, if you want to use this one, you can easily modify things and then print it out. And use the print function here.

And if you need a little help with creating your own Excel, you can use a previous Global Connections program called Excelling in Excel. And you can set that hyperlink right there. And finally, if you're a WSU student or alumni, a really great budgeting tool that you can use that's not directly travel-related is softmoney.org. And softmoney.org is a nonprofit organization that promotes financial literacy, and it can give you information on budgeting, consolidating debt, dealing with student debt, saving for the future, among other financial topics. And this is what the website looks like. And as a Washington State student or alumni, you can get an account for free and check out all the neat resources there.

Next, as we move on, keeping in mind our budget, we have to find our place. So this is applicable whether you have a goal in mind or if you're really flexible in your destination and have more of a cap on how much money you want to spend. So flexibility in this is going to be your biggest money saver. And let's say for example, you really want to go to Iceland and that's always been your dream destination.

Now if you can be flexible with your time, you can go there a little cheaper by using your bookend seasons. And so by seasons I mean, there's a reason and a peak season for every destination. And usually it has to do with weather, but also a lot of times, summer. When kids are out of school and when most people are on vacation. If you can work around that you can

help get cheaper accommodations as well as attractions. And oftentimes you can avoid crowds, which most people enjoy. And sometimes even cheaper flights factor into that. And I'm not asking you to go to Iceland in December, because you're probably not going to have a lot of fun unless you really love winters. I understand that. But you can go towards the beginning or towards the end of peak season and potentially save a good amount of money.

Another option is, if you're flexible with your destination-- and we'll look at this a little further-- is that a lot of aggregate search engines now have explore options. Where, let's say you usually fly out of Spokane, Washington. You can get that as your home base and then explore where the cheapest flights are for a duration of time, and just pick a place from there. So if you really like adventure and finding new places, that can be a great way to find really cheap flights to, sometimes, destinations all over the world.

So first of all, for finding a good season, one resource you can use is Rough Guides. Of course, if you have a favorite adventure guide that you like to use, many books-- whether you get them at the library or internet resources-- have the seasons listed for different destinations. But Rough Guides is just one that I chose that really highlights it well and if you have a favorite resource that you'd like to look at for travel information please send in the chat box at any time to share with everybody

So for example, if we are going to our idea of Iceland, you go to planning your trip. Then when to go, and you can do this for any country or area you're interested in. When to go, and it'll give you suggestions for when the weather's best, when peak season is, or different things to look out for. So some people who are really wanting to go to Iceland for the northern lights, September to January will be the best time for them. But overall, late May to early September. So instead of trying to go in July, you may want to initially look for flights in late May and early September, because those are the bookends of the season. That means less tourists are likely to be there and also accommodations are still likely to be more affordable, as well as oftentimes flights.

And next, as you're planning where you're going to go, if there's anyone that you want to travel with, it can be way more cost effective to travel in packs. Especially if you have a family and you want to travel with another family. Not only can you possibly rent a house instead of hotel rooms, which can save a lot of money especially if you have a group of people, you can also save money then on buying food, if you're cooking at your rented house or rented AirBNB or whatever it is, and also share the responsibility with cooking. So it's not just you having to do it

every time or you and your partner.

You can also, with this, save money on excursions or going places. Because you can all rent a van or, let's say you want to go fishing off the Florida Keys, you can rent a charter boat for the afternoon at a far cheaper price per head if you have eight people, than if it's just you and your partner trying to go.

And finally, one thing to keep in mind when you're looking at your when and how, that I really like, is national parks. So our national parks in the US have free days, which you can see at the highlighted link below. And a lot of them correspond with holidays, or there is even a National Parks Week, where you can enter into any national park for free. So that's a good thing to have in your back pocket if you're just looking for a fun long weekend and don't necessarily have a lot of money saved up yet.

OK, so next, as you are trying to formulate your idea of where you want to go, or if you already know, you have to figure out how you can transport yourself. One good starting point is Rome2Rio, and it is an aggregate map website that helps you find different types of transport, how long those transportation options take, and also how expensive they are. So especially if you're staying stateside or landlocked, I think this can be helpful. Or if you're really flexible with how you're getting there and just want to look at the cheapest way possible.

For example, let's say we're calling from Portland, Oregon to Phoenix, Arizona. We can select "search." And this will show us how long it will take and approximately the lower and higher ranges and how much it will cost. So for flying, taking a bus, taking a train and bus combination, and also driving. So if you have a little time on your hands, you may think hey, I want see some of the US, I would love to see my friends in San Francisco, this seems like a good option for me. Or, like lady you're crazy, I'm not about to spend 37 hours on a train and bus. I'm definitely taking that four hour flight. It's a good way so you can get an idea and compare. It also shows you common airlines by their logos, here. As well as common flight times as well.

So many people do choose to fly because it is the fastest option and most convenient most of the time, especially if you're working full time. And a big thing with flights is where to book? So there's not necessarily a day of the week or time of day that is best to book. I know for a while people wanted to say like Tuesdays at midnight is the best time or 2:00 a.m. on Fridays. There's no reason you have to torture yourself with looking at a clock on a particular day of the

week to book something. It's more of the duration of time before you want to go somewhere. So approximately two months to five months before you want to get to your destination is the optimal time to book flights and tends to be the best prices.

And also when you're looking at that, is flexibility about what days you're going to fly. So not necessarily when you're booking but when you're actually taking that flight. It's much more affordable to take flights on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Typically because a lot of people are trying to work around their traditional work weeks. But if you can make that work with your schedule, that can save you-- depending where you go, potentially hundreds of dollars. As well as always search for nearby airports. Even though an airport might be 20 minutes from your house and another one might be 45 minutes away, it can sometimes make a big difference if you search for the one that might be 45 minutes away because different airlines have different contracts with various airports or they might be running specials. Or they might just have different destinations and connection flights.

You can make yourself-- I think-- really crazy trying to search every single flight aggregate site there is, and every airline there is, trying to save the most amount of money. I think typically that ends up being a really frustrating experience. So what I recommend is finding three to four airline aggregates or airline sites that you really like. Everyone has different ones. These are my three favorites personally, which is Kayak, Skyscanner, and Momondo. Sorry, I can't even pronounce that one right.

And the reason I like these is because all three look at a collection of different flight options. They give you explore options, where you can put in your home base or where you want to fly from and look all over the globe for the most cost-effective flights, as well as it gives you flexible days. So instead of making yourself crazy trying to look at, OK, if I fly on the second and come back the seventh, how much is it? Now it's try the third and the seventh, or the fourth and the seventh. It looks at that and gives you a grid so you don't have to spend all that time typing in different things.

Due to our limited time today I'm not going to show how to use each one, but just highlight one. This one, you can either choose to type it in your normal way of a destination and a departure and arrival place. As well as specific dates and how many passengers and always you want to click that "nearby airports." And for example, we search here. It gives you different dates so you can scroll on and see which dates are the most cost-effective in that range. As well as it tells you the cheapest, the fastest, as well as what they rate as the best, which is

usually which airline is rated the best. And you have appropriate controls over here for how long are you willing to sit on that plane, or have layovers, or different airports. And all three of those websites that I outlined do have those options.

Another option is your explore mode. So let's say you're up for anywhere. And we're going to have New York, sure. And you can either look at popular destinations or if you've always been interested in going to Australia or a country near there, or an island, you can search that way as well, by region. Or if people want to go to South America and look for cost-effective flights there. And it shows you how many passengers as well. And you can switch this down or type in a different city. So getting all the way from New York to Sydney is only 670 USD, which is fairly cost-effective. Or getting to different ski resorts, islands, you can search from there.

So that's just how to use one of those aggregates. And if you do find a flight that looks really good to you in that time period, even if it is on an aggregate, if it's one of those big name carriers I do recommend checking on the company's individual website. And the reason for this is that company might run its own special, so crosschecking is always worth that extra couple minutes to make sure you're not missing out on a special that the company is offering.

And lastly, always good to know the budget airlines that travel in your area. For example, Spirit, Allegiant, or Ryanair-- if you're in Europe-- are all budget air that have usually very specific airports they fly to. Again, why it's good to search nearby airports, and also can be region-based. So it's good to know around your home community, which are the budget airlines that fly near you. For example, when I used to live in Florida, Spirit was one that was pretty prolific in Florida. But we don't seem to have it as much in Pullman now.

Finally, if you are going to travel by car, some good resources to have when you're crafting a budget is gasbuddy.com. That can help either when you're looking at driving through different regions-- because prices can fluctuate so much depending where you are-- and crafting your budget or when you're just on the road and want to know, is this gas station the last one for 50 miles? Or is there another one a mile away that's maybe \$0.20 cheaper because it's not on the edge of town? That can be really good resource.

And then for rental cars, there's not a whole bunch of really great hacks that I know. Of course, if you have one I'd love to hear about it. But the best is for rental discounts through your car insurance that you already have. For example, one major one is if you have-- this is just an example-- Progressive offers some that, at some major national car rental places.

Likely, whatever car insurance you have also offers it, so I would check in with them before you make a reservation somewhere.

And finally, buses. Buses have gotten a really bad rap, which sometimes is deserved and sometimes not. I do recommend that- especially if you're going from one very large city to another very large city, and particularly if it's in the same region, for example, if you're going from Seattle to San Francisco or Tampa to Miami-- buses can really be much more cost-effective and less stressful. Because when I still lived in Florida I would grab a bus from Tampa to Miami, which is normally about a 5 and 1/2 hour drive. The bus would take about six hours and if I got the good special, it would only cost me \$8 to \$10 each way, which is cheaper than I could pay in gas, as well as I didn't have to drive then. And I could just hang out and not have on a crazy highway. And then when I got to the city I didn't have to worry about finding a place to park my car.

So buses aren't optimal for every single situation but if you're going from one large city to another, it can definitely be good. And these are some buses below. Boltbus, Megabus, Greyhound, and Wanderu. Wanderu is more of an aggregate for rail and buses. And so it can help you search multiple lines.

BoltBus in particular only services certain regions. But it does have \$1 fares, where randomly one seat on every single bus will only cost \$1. You won't know until you purchase it. Or it also has a frequent rider incentive. Which can be helpful.

Next, train. You know, unfortunately the US, we don't have a ton of train options. So as most of you are probably aware, Amtrak is our major train provider. But something to be aware of with that is Smartfares can be very helpful. Where if especially you're planning a trip on the fly and you want to travel during the week, it can be helpful to be aware of your Smartfares. Because they can offer up to a 30% discount. But they are very limited in when you can use them and when you have to purchase them. But it's a good thing to have your back pocket.

Additionally, if you have some time on your hands and really want to see the US, they do have these rail passes where it's either, buy a certain amount of days. You have travel options, so you can hop on and off the train as you would like to see different areas. Or it can be done by a multi-pass system where it's a certain amount of stops you can take.

So let's say, within 30 days you can get on and off the train wherever you like 15 times. So if you want to have more of a rail trip, so to say, you can have this as well. And with both the bus

and the train option, always double check the company's discounts. Buses and trains are more likely to offer student discounts, veteran discounts, children discounts, as well as senior discounts.

For example, Amtrak has up to 50% off for kids under 12. Which if you are traveling with children can be really helpful. And if anyone is traveling with kids or would be interested in that information, please let me know. And if we don't have anyone traveling with kids, we'll probably skim over that part.

Next is ridesharing. Unfortunately ridesharing in the US is something else that's not quite as popular. But if you ever are traveling in Europe or in parts of Asia, BlaBlaCar is actually gotten very popular and can be really effective.

In the US, there is a couple options. Though they're not as widely known, and don't have quite as many users on them. And that is either, as many people know, Craigslist is one, there's a Share My Ride option.

And if you live in a university town, check with your university, they actually have a rideshare board. Because some universities, whether you're part of them or not, will allow you to use their rideshare, because you have so many students that are going across country or across the state. Trying to get from place A to B as they are going to see their family or friends or just traveling around. And that can be either really, really cheap, sometimes people just ask you to help them drive or they just want company.

And the same with Share Your Ride is another aggregate website, for the US primarily, where you can select a state and look at different postings of people going places. And usually these are for long-haul trips.

And if anyone has any questions so far, please let me know in the chat box and I will address them. Otherwise I'm going to keep going forward. And as you get to your destination, you need to consider what you want to do. So once I get somewhere, I don't particularly like to have to spend time then researching what I want to do once I'm in this place. I just kind of want to get out and go.

And so I think spending a little bit of time beforehand can help you know your options And give you some fun places to go. And of course, if you hear about great things on the way, by all means go. And also it can keep you aware of either cheap or free tourist attractions or local

festivals or just oddities, or art that is unique to the very place that you're in. Which is really cool because you may never be there again.

So some websites that I like for that are Atlas Obscura, Lonely Planet, Vayable, is another one where it's actually tourism based. Or tours based, I should say. Where you can search for an area and locals will actually take you on a tour. And it can have very different themes, whether it's food, or art, or architecture, or hiking and outdoors. But it is a local person taking you. And they range from very cost effective to, in all honesty, very expensive. So you have to do some digging.

Another one I like is Weird USA, which is really great for road trips. Because it gives you odd legends about states, as well as, goofy things to see on roadside attractions, and can be fun to read when you're on long stretches. And that you can usually get at local bookstores or they have a website. So just to take a peak at a couple of those.

Here's Atlas Obscura, and you can search by where you want to go. So here's an example of our Faroe Islands, and it can give you either outdoor things to see. This one in particular is very outdoor oriented, where it is different boulders, and you can see either a description of them. People upload their own photos. So if it's new to you, you can see what the area looks like. As well as looking at hashtags and check out maps of it.

So if we also look at a city like Paris. it can give you options that range from anything from art and sculptures, to interesting markets around that you wouldn't find anywhere else, dance places, unique bars, restaurants, as well as architecture places. So there's a lot of different options.

And I like this because it can tell you, since it's a shared resource, it's not done by a marketing firm or a tourism board, it can give you insights into those little odd things that make a place special. And also if you like anything in particular, for example I really like street art and architecture, you can then find those things that you really like.

And of course, many people do know about Lonely Planet, but one thing that I want to highlight here is that they have a survival guide that can be helpful when you are figuring out one, your book end seasons, so when to survival guide, when to go, and weather. And it can tell you when the high season is, the Shoulder Season, and also the low season. Most of the time you want to stick to that Shoulder Season.

But this one lets you know what the seasons are well known for. Either films screenings, or food festivals, or autumn leaves. So this is a good way to help determine, if you're flexible with your timing, when may be a little more affordable to go.

And also in that survival guide, which is helpful, is money and cost. So this can help you with your initial Pre-search Research budgeting. You can see what budget options are for a hostel, or a basic motel, simple meals, or what a mid-range looks like. So, especially if you're traveling to a brand new place or new country, and you really don't know what to expect in terms of pricing, before you spend a lot of time doing this, this is a great way to get a feel. So if you really only want to stay in a mid-range place, but you can't afford maybe \$130 hotel a night, then maybe it's not the right time in your life to go quite yet. But if that does sound reasonable, or if you're willing to do a budget, maybe that is a good time and you can move forward with your planning.

And then, one thing to be aware of once you choose your destination is, I like to look at local newspapers because you can find festivals going on, art festivals, as well as, free concerts, movies in the park, things unique to the area that can be very affordable and also give you an interesting highlight into what that place is well-known for. As well as meet locals, and usually try new food, and get to a new part of the city that you might not otherwise go to.

And then I think it's always worth spending a little bit of time, especially if you go into a big city, looking at a couple of those big coupon sites like Groupon, Social Living, or using Honey Chrome, because it can often have attractions and you may only be able to find that price using one of those big aggregate websites. For example, I really like going to gardens and a lot of times there will be buy one get one free entrance passes to botanical gardens that the website itself won't list.

And lastly, city passes. So again, in large cities, they might have bundled passes, where if you like going to museums or certain attractions, you may be able to go see many of them for a more affordable price if you get a city pass. And the best way to find out about those before you go is to actually look at the local tourism office. Or the board if they have a tourist board. And then also, if you, say, aren't sure about the Shoulder Season, you can give them a call too. Or if you just need to shoot some random questions that you can't find answers to you, usually they're very, very helpful. Because that's really their job and they want to help people get to know their area and help them have a good time for what that means for them.

So now you've done all this Pre-search and Research and everything. And you might have like 80 scraps of paper and all these documents, if you want to keep it collapsed and organize it, here are a couple of websites that are free that you can use. And one is Roadtrippers, which is particularly good if you're going on a road trip and it also has a search function to help you find hotels, or attractions, or natural wonders around those areas.

As well as, Trip It is another one where it's a little more effective for if you have a lot of flights, hotel reservations. Let's say you're going on a long trip and need to keep that all organized. You can actually forward your confirmation codes to an email that will organize it for you in your account. Or Inspirock is another good one that I like. Because one, it helps you find things that are unique to your interests, and then also can help you organize your interests and it's very easy to manipulate.

So let's say we're going to New York. And I was disconnected. Sorry, just one moment. New York City. And the dates you choose is really for your own reference. They do have options where you can look at hotels and stuff on this website, but that's not what I primarily have used it for in the past. And then to get you started, you can look for hidden gems, let's say, and a medium pace, so that's how many things they're going to put in your schedule for you. As well as, I like the outdoors, to know about culture, and historical sites. And you can see your plan.

And first it gives you a little information about your location, the general highlights, destinations nearby. And then you can look at day by day, and it will, based on what you selected, select things you might be interested in. So I like to look at it in calendar view. And it will give you the name of it, as well as how long it takes to get from one place to the other. And if you select that, you can see it on the map. So you can change if you're driving, walking, biking, et cetera.

As well as, let's say you pick one of those places, it links to TripAdvisor so you can see what other people say about it and what their thoughts are. As well as give you a general description. If it does have a website a part of it, then it gives you the website link over here. But since this is an outdoor destination, it doesn't. And then price range if it's applicable, and then let's say we're not really interested in that. You can simply exit out and it gets rid of it. You can also search for more things here and add them in, or add them manually. So you can explore here, or create a custom event.

Let's say I have a friend there, and I'm going to get dinner with Sam. And we can select our date If we want to keep this in mind and then, well, probably wouldn't meet her at 1:30 AM,

but. And choose a time. And you can move this around and add whatever notes. And of course, you don't have to be committed to this. But it at least let's you know what times things are open, what you are generally interested in, where it is. Which is really helpful in this map function.

So if you know you're going to be around a certain area all day, then you can see where your locations are at. And you can also share it. So let's say you're meeting someone there or you want to work on it together with a coach traveler. Then you can use that function.

Finally food. You know, food is one place that I feel like, at least, I usually end up spending more money than I expect to on. Because you get someplace and you're having a great time, and all of a sudden, you get hungry. And so you're just looking for anything. So the best way to do this is to really plan ahead and get your snacks under control.

So if you're driving somewhere, pick up those bananas, apples, granola bars. If you are not driving anywhere, but you know your hotel is near a market, or you actively plan for your hotel or wherever you're staying to be near market, you can pick those things up while you're on the go and keep those with you.

A good thing with playing with this is, if you are going to tourist attractions, oftentimes the food near there is very expensive, and not always all the bang for your buck that you want. So that way you don't get pushed into eating someplace just because you're hungry. And spending more money than you want to.

And, with that note, I think it's always good to compare how much it would cost to either rent a hotel, Airbnb, or what-have-you with a kitchen available. Versus just a standard hotel room or bedroom. If you plan on cooking, and I don't expect you to be cooking giant meals while you're in a new place, just sitting at home. But if even you're just making fast, let's say, egg sandwiches or stir fries or cereal and milk, it can be really helpful to have that kitchen available to you to save some money.

And one particular thing to keep in mind is if you are actively planning to do that, please, please, please make sure that it's close to a market. I have made this mistake before where I've had grandiose plans to save a lot of money on cooking my own food, but then didn't quite realize how far the nearest market was that wasn't just a convenience store. And I would spend a lot more time than I wanted to trying to take the bus somewhere to get groceries and taking them back and having to haul them. So that's one thing to keep in mind that seems

obvious but it's a mistake people make certainly.

Finally, you will also want to spend some time researching where locations are really known for their food, and where the best food is. So it's when you're in a new place and it has a local specialty or is well known for a particularly great restaurant, spending that little time up front can really help. So you're not realizing, oh no, I missed this great place, after you're on your way out and you're talking to other travelers.

Two websites I like for that is are Zomato and TV Food maps, which I think is a fun one because it showcases, especially if you like cooking or watch cooking shows, you can browse by state depending where you are. So if you look at Washington and you can see different places that have been featured. And if you're in that similar place then you can check out some good food that's been featured. Or you can use Zomato. And insert your location, what kind of food you're looking for, breakfast, dinner, or lunch, or a particular type of cuisine and go from there.

And this might seem a little obvious or trite, but I think bringing a reusable water bottle, and travel mugs if you're a coffee drinker, can really start to save up those dollars during the day. Because if you're buying a water bottle every single time or buying coffee every single, two to three times a day, depending on how much coffee you drink, that can really add up and be an unnecessary expense. When you could save or use that money elsewhere for either museum tickets or a nicer dinner that you really want to have. And if you're traveling with a family and kids, if everyone is buying water bottles, that can really add up in a day. So it's well worth it to pack that. Even if you're taking a plane, just empty it out beforehand, and you'll be good to go.

Finally, accommodations. So there's a wide range of things, depending on what your goals are for your trip. First of all, if you especially are trying to travel for a while and want a unique experience, and are willing to work a little, a couple websites can be really helpful with that. One is WWOOFING, and the other two are Work Away, or Helpx. WWOOFING in particular has to do with farming, so vegetable farming, fruits, livestock, vineyards, things like that. Whereas Work Away and Helpx can be a lot more diverse.

And basically how all three of them work is that you exchange your labor, a certain amount of hours a day, in exchange for, usually, accommodation and food. So each one has its own type of listing, where you can either search for a place you want to go. So let's say, I've always wanted to go to Italy, but I don't know how I can afford to stay for a month. Maybe this could

be an option. Where you can, one, meet new people, work in a culture that's completely new, which can be a very interesting process to see how different people work. Depending where you live or where you were raised. And be able to extend your trip a little bit by saving some money. So all three of those are options.

As well as if you are interested in maybe not working, because you are traveling and on vacation you're trying to enjoy yourself, which is perfectly understandable but you would like that opportunity to meet someone new, even if it just someone in a new state. Couchsurfing and BeWelcome are two resources that allow that. Where no money is exchanged, and there's no expectations for labor or trade. But it's really a hosting web site, where if you want to go to let's say Mexico City and stay with a family, you can look on one of those two websites and look through different people. And there are reviews for those. So again, you have to gauge your own safety levels and be smart about it, but those can be interesting ways to meet new people. And also save a little money.

Finally, house swapping is also an option. Where you actually trade homes or living situations with someone from anywhere in the world or maybe across the country. Most of these websites do have a cost associated with them, like a subscription. The one I have highlighted, for example, that you can search through if you're interested in that costs \$150 for a year. But if you really, truly use it, and let's say you go for a week or two weeks, \$150 is certainly less than you would spend if you were purchasing a hotel every night.

And finally, I believe most people know about Airbnb at this point. That's a good option to keep in mind. If you would like me to talk about it, please let me know in the chat box. Otherwise I'm going to breeze past it.

And then hostels. Hostels are kind of like buses where they've gotten a really bad rap and they don't necessarily deserve it. Certainly, there are hostels that are more geared towards young backpackers, say 18 to 20 years old, but there are also more hostels coming about that have seniors coming to them, or people with families. Or offer private rooms with your own sink, or even private rooms with your own bathroom that can be very affordable. And they're all over the world.

The reason I really love hostels is because you can always meet someone new from literally anywhere on this planet. And you can trade stories, you can learn about what they're doing, if they have any good travel tips for you, as well as just meet new people. Also many hostels

now offer free breakfast, which is always a good benefit. And if you want to make sure you end up in a hostel that, if you're worried about cleanliness, or if it's OK to take your family, or what the culture is like, you can always read reviews.

The link to our hostel aggregate website, Hostelworld, has lots of reviews on it. Or if there's one you're particularly interested in, I do recommend just calling the hostel. People who work at hostels I have found have been generally very helpful and honest about what to expect.

And then finally, if you're looking for a traditional hotel, that is a-OK, but we're going to still use our same rules as we do for flights. So you can make yourself crazy looking for the cheapest hotel in a certain area. Choose three to four hotel aggregators that you like and just go from there. Ones I personally like are Hotwire, TravelPony, yes, that is TravelPony, and Booking.com.

And all travel aggregates are not made equally. Based on how those aggregates buy other rooms at different points in the year can affect the prices. And also how much they're adding on to the price that they buy them for. So it's good to have a handful and just select which one's cheaper from there.

And since we didn't anyone indicate that they're particularly interested in traveling with children, I am going to go past this a little faster. If you are interested in some tips for traveling with kids, I recommend the blog Travel With Bender. They have lots of articles on there, as well as, general tips and budgeting tips, as well as, kid friendly destinations.

And one big takeaway when you're traveling with kids, I would say is to know that when they're young, although you may have to spend more time entertaining them, you can also get things done a little more affordably. For example, kids under two on airlines usually travel free. And so depending on what your objectives are on a trip, or if you're making a family trip, this can be a great time. Because as soon as they hit above that age, you're going to be paying full price for a seat for them. So if you're going let's say with grandma and grandpa or aunts and uncles, and you can make it a family adventure, this can be a great time to go somewhere, while it's still on the more affordable side.

Also, especially when kids are under 12, I would change my search strategies a little bit, especially for hotels. For places where they can eat for free, stay for free, or there's free childcare. Especially in larger tourist destinations, this is a reality at a lot of hotels. So it is worth the time to look for that, especially if your kids are under 12.

And finally, one big takeaway is that kids can earn miles. So if you, let's say, really like one particular air carrier. For example in Pullman, the main place that comes here is Alaska Air. And you want to get miles with a particular air carrier, no matter who it is, see what the cut off age is for kids. Because a lot of times, people under 18 can earn their own miles. So there's no reason, if you travel at all with your family or your children why they shouldn't be earning their own miles.

And finally, here are some general hacks and resources that I do. Since we're getting closer to the end of time. I do want to open up to questions. So if you have any questions, or comments, please write them into the chat box now. Otherwise I am going to go forward with the resources. And I will give you, in the meantime, the link to the PowerPoint presentation, so you can look at everything on your own as well.

Some of my favorite tips from here are to put it on your card. So I know that it seems a little counterintuitive, especially if you're fiscally minded, or trying to be budget savvy, to put everything on your credit card, or let alone go that way. But if you plan on doing some serious traveling and want to earn some money back, putting it on a card that gives you travel points can really, really help. One, you can get free flights, or free hotel rooms, or money back. There's a ton of options out there, and it seems really scammy, but if you use it responsibly and do your research on what you'll use most often, it can be well worth it.

Now, some cards do charge a fee, usually \$50 to \$100, and might have a minimum spending limit. Those are two things that people, I think, don't look at close enough when they are checking these out. So be sure to see if that spending limit is something that you would normally spend. Whether it's \$500, \$200, or \$2000, be sure to check that. And if it is something that you would normally use a credit card for, be sure to be making money back on your own purchases that you can then use later on.

Another big takeaway is to rent things. So, especially if you're into outdoor sports or you want to explore it, there is no reason why you have to buy a tent, a sleeping bag, and skis, and ski poles for everyone in your family just to try out skiing. You can rent it from your local outdoor recreation center. Or maybe it's called Outdoor Pursuits. For example, at WSU, we have Outdoor Recreation, where anyone in the community, for a pretty small fee, can rent outdoor gear. Many places have this, if you live anywhere near a university, no matter where your location is.

And finally, a wrap up thought is that if you're traveling abroad, know your fees getting into things. And this is a real hidden thing that I think ends up costing people a lot of money is ATM fees. Make sure you call up your bank before you go traveling, well ahead of time, to see what their fees are for foreign ATMs where you plan to be traveling. And if they're part of a global consortium of ATMs and what those local ATMs are called. Because you don't want to be paying \$3 to \$5 every time you need to take out money.

Another good thing to do is check your credit card and see what their foreign transaction fees are. For example, not all credit cards allow you to just swipe them and pay for things anywhere in this world for the normal price you pay in the US or wherever you're from. Many charge a 3% fee if you are outside of your home country. So double check with that, which can be really helpful and save you a lot of money.

And then also cash. So there's no way of getting out of this. If you decide you want to carry cash in local currency, find where has the best rates for exchanging that cash. Usually airports have very poor exchange rates, whereas places like some banks might have better ones, or places away from tourist attractions. So doing some pre-search there can really help you too.

And then finally, I have general good resources if you're interested in more articles, or ways to travel cheaply, or to look for destinations. NomadicMatt.com has awesome budget resources. And tips from the traveling community that's very practical. And [The Clumsy Traveler](#) also has a lot of resources as well.

So I want to thank everyone for stopping by. If you have any questions, please let me know. Or if there's anything that you'd like to share. I see that Kara shared that the Alaska Airlines credit card is awesome for traveling. Thank you so much for sharing that. And then also you get an annual \$99 companion ticket once a year, which is pretty awesome.

So if anyone has anything else they'd like to share, I'd love to hear it. And then, as you do your own summer adventures, please stay in touch. I love to see people's pictures, and where they go, and learn about new places. And you can either tag us [@WSUGlobal](#) or [Facebook.com/WSUonline](https://www.facebook.com/WSUonline) or [#diytravel](#).

And if you could take a moment to fill out our survey, I would appreciate it. Let me know what you thought of tonight's program. What would you like to learn about in the future. And thank y'all for coming. I'll hang around a little longer in case you want to share anything or have any

questions. Thank you!