



Wine Lovers
Travel

Spectacular Wines. Inspired Travel.

International Travel FAQs



Excited about your upcoming trip with Wine Lovers Travel? We want your experience to be your best travel yet, and to help make sure it's a success, we've put together this FAQ for the questions most commonly asked.

How Much Cash Will I Need?

- A small amount (\$100-200) of foreign currency to start the trip.
- Check with your local bank at least a week before departure.
- Cash is useful for tips, smaller purchases, and when bargaining.
- Should you need additional cash while abroad, the best sources are well-lit ATM machines.
- They charge a small processing fee, so best to estimate how much you'll need in total and get that, rather than making multiple withdrawals.
- Be sure you know your PIN. It's the only way you can get cash from an ATM.
- NEVER exchange money with someone you meet on the street, no matter how much better their exchange rate may seem.
- If you have cash at the end of the trip you can apply it to your hotel bill and pay the balance with your credit card.

• What Is The Situation With Credit Cards?

- Credit cards are always your best payment option.
- They are safe and have protections against fraudulent use.
- Visa and MasterCard are preferred, Amex and Discover are not accepted everywhere.
- Some cards charge a fee for foreign transactions, check to see which of your cards do not charge a fee.
- Find out if you are required to contact your card company and notify them of your travel plans.
- You do not want to be in a situation in another country where your card is declined because the card company thinks it's a stolen card.
- Make sure you have the international phone numbers for your credit card, airline, travel agents, trip insurance company, health insurance, etc. 800, 888 and toll free numbers do not work overseas.
- Always choose to be charged in the local currency when a merchant asks you. You will get a better exchange rate.
- Be sure you know your PIN if it's needed to use a card.
- Most of Europe uses "chip and PIN" cards, while in the US we use the less secure "chip and Sign" cards. Ask if your institution offers "chip and PIN" cards for rare occasions where it is the only purchase option.
- Bring as few cards as you'll need.
- Take photos of the front and back of each card to store on your phone in case your card is lost or stolen. It's also a good idea to share those photos with someone you trust back home.
- Apple Pay and Google Pay are sometimes accepted but they are not yet widespread.

Is Tipping Required?

- This varies by country, so it's best to ask Wine Lovers Travel or your tour leader. Depending upon your trip, we sometimes include tips for your drivers and local guides in the price of the trip. If tips are not included, it's considered good practice to tip the people who are helping make your trip a great experience. We add this information to your itinerary/final paperwork, but feel free to ask about whether to tip and if so, how much.
- In many countries, tips are not required or expected in eating or drinking places. They are often included in your bill and this will be stated on your check. It's always kind to leave extra coins if service was good, even if the tip was included.
- When you do tip, it should be in the LOCAL currency. Don't make it difficult for them by tipping in US dollars or other currencies you may be carrying.
- Tips cannot be added to your credit card charge like they are in the US. They need to be in cash.



Safety & Security

Are There Any Special Precautions to Take?

- Use the same precautions you would use at home
 - Always be aware of your surroundings.
 - Don't venture into dark, deserted places, no matter how intriguing they may seem.
 - Keep your head up, don't have your face stuck in a map where you are not paying attention to your surroundings.
 - Don't go off with strangers, (seems obvious, but you'd be surprised what people do when their guard is down).

Keep Your Valuables Safe

- Keep your valuables close to you
 - For men, a hidden money belt is a good idea.
 - For women, a cross-body bag with a zipper works—as long as you remember to keep it zipped.
 - For anyone, you can wear those money/card holders around your neck underneath your clothes. The downside is that they are hard to access when you need cards or money.

Transportation

- If you need transportation, use either registered taxis or an approved ride-sharing service like Uber.
 - Do not accept rides from strangers or unmarked "taxis" without meters.



Phones

What's The Least Expensive Way To Make Calls?

- There are multiple options for staying connected while you are traveling abroad
 - Temporary International Plans and surcharges from your phone carrier company.
 - Wifi Based Apps
 - Many of these apps allow you to send messages and photos, as well as make both voice and video calls.
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Phone Carriers Offer Different International Plans

- Verizon: offers two options a \$100 flat rate for an unlimited monthly plan or a \$10 for a 24-hour plan that is only activated when you turn your data on.
- T-Mobile: most users automatically get 5 GB of free high-speed data for international coverage, then you can pay to upgrade, or it will downgrade you to slower data, but still free.
- If you are going to be away for more than 10 days, it's simpler to get the 30-day plan because you don't have to worry about data.
- Check with your provider as these plans are subject to change or they may be running a special deal

Alternative Forms of Communication

- WhatsApp is a great way to make calls and send text messages, you can even do video calls, and it's FREE as long as you are using WiFi.
 - This is also a great option if you're traveling with others. You can set up a group, then use WhatsApp to message each other to arrange meeting times, etc.
- Make certain at least ONE person in your individual party has an international plan turned on at all times so that you can receive texts or calls from your group leader in the event plans change or they need to reach you.



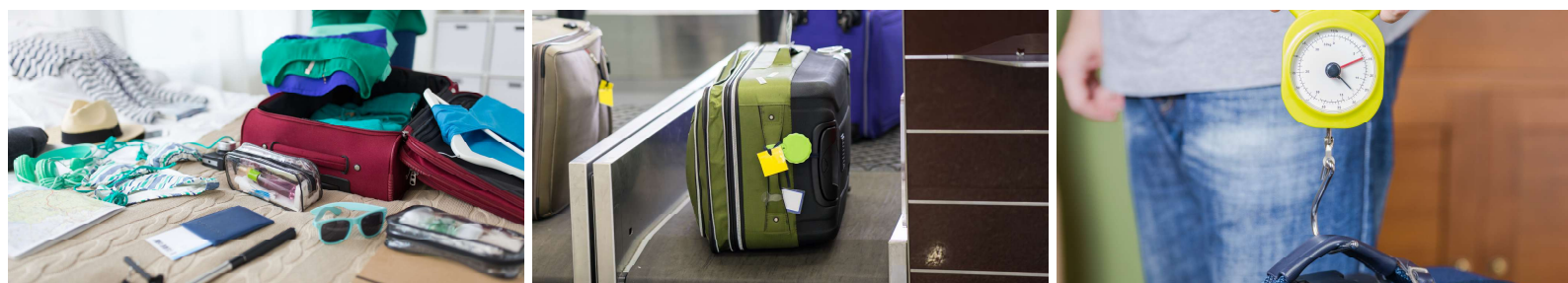
Packing

How Should I Pack?

- Always good to bring layers. These days, you can wear nice casual clothes just about anywhere, even fine restaurants, so no need to bring formal or cocktail attire, unless instructed otherwise by your travel vendor.
- Choose one or two colors so you can minimize packing too many outfits. You can always add pops of color with accessories.
- For ease of packing and to conserve space, roll your clothes instead of folding them. Some people like packing cubes, which is a good alternative.

What Can You Check And What Can You Bring Onboard?

- Most airlines permit at least 1 checked bag, 1 carry-on and a personal item without a fee for international flights.
- If you pay with an airline credit card, that usually entitles you to more free checked luggage. However, with airlines changing fees continually, check with them before you pack.
- Low-cost carriers, ranging from Spirit in the US to EasyJet and Ryanair in Europe, do charge for all bags, even if you are connecting from an overseas flight where your bags were free.
- Medicines
- Always bring them onboard with you. Checked bags can get delayed or lost and you don't want to be without your meds.
- Change of clothing
- I always pack a change of clothing in my carry-on, just in case my checked bags don't arrive with me. Airlines will usually give you a small allowance to purchase new clothes and personal items if they lose or misplace your bags, so take the money...and also have your spare clothes and toiletries with you for backup.
- Weight limits for checked bags are usually 50 pounds or 23 kilograms.
- If you do a lot of traveling, get a luggage scale. It's a small device that you attach to the handle of your suitcase, and it will weigh it while you're still at home and can make decisions about what to take or not.
- Leave some room for purchases you make while traveling. Alternatively, bring a fold-up duffel you can pack, and then check when coming home. Great for dirty laundry!



Packing List

Packing Essentials

- Shoes
 - 2-3 pairs at the most.
 - Wear your bulkiest pair on the plane and pack the others.
 - Make certain they are comfortable—vacation is not the time to break in new shoes. If you are going to a beach or pool destinations, one of those pair should be flip-flops.
 - Remember that in many international destinations, there are cobblestone streets and uneven surfaces, so do not bring high heels or unstable shoes.
- Outerwear
 - If you are going to a place where rain is even a possibility, it's good to pack a waterproof coat or jacket. Nylon is great because it weighs almost nothing and can be scrunched into a tiny place.
- Hats and umbrellas
 - Always good to have a small collapsible umbrella.
 - Although most larger hotels and ships will have sturdier ones you can borrow. They are the kind too large to pack, but at least they won't blow away with the wind.
 - As for hats, it depends on you. Sunhats are good for the beach, otherwise I'd recommend leaving them at home.
- Jewelry
 - DO NOT bring any valuable jewelry.
 - Even though most places have safes either in the room or at the reception desk, it's safer and easier not to have to worry about losing anything you cherish, or worse, having it stolen.
 - The only exception to this is jewelry you wear 24/7, like a wedding ring. That means, if you take off your jewelry, even if only to wash your hands, don't bring it. Not worth the possibility of loss.
- Bathing suit
 - Always throw in a suit. You never know where there will be an indoor pool or spa you'd want to use.

Electricity

How Do I Use My Devices?

- The US may be the only country in the world to use 110V power, so anything you plug into a foreign electrical outlet must either be dual voltage OR plugged into a transformer and then the outlet.
- Check to make sure any devices you bring, such as hair styling devices, are dual voltage and can accommodate a transformer. Most hair drying brushes (like the popular Revlon model) are NOT dual voltage and specifically warn against trying to use them with 220V power.
- Some specialty retailers, like Sharper Image, offer hair styling products like flat irons that operate on batteries and charge with a USB port. That is a great solution and eliminates the issue of converters, transformers and voltage!
- Bring converters so that you can plug your US appliances and devices into the wall outlets for the countries you will be visiting.
- Most luggage shops and Amazon also carry universal converters that work with almost all wall outlets, regardless of where you travel.
- DO NOT RELY upon your hotels or cruise ships to have converters.
- If they don't, you'll either be unable to use what you brought or will waste time searching for a place to purchase one.

Other Helpful Tips

- Bring a nightlight which plugs into an international outlet. I have one with the European 2-prong, and it's great to have a little light and not fall when looking for the bathroom in the middle of the night.
- I recommend bringing a 6 ft extension cord with an end piece that has multiple inputs for 3 prong plugs. Many hotels do not have enough electrical outlets and/or they are not conveniently located.
- Get an international converter that contains outlets for 2 or more USB ports.
- Many of these converters with a USB port can accommodate a wider range of voltage and eliminate the need for an additional transformer.



About Us



Gail Sherman

Founder/CEO

Wine Lovers Travel is all about bringing our travelers to small boutique wineries which are mostly closed to the public unless you have a relationship like we do. We'd love to have you join us on one of our many custom trips to wine regions throughout the world. It's time to say CHEERS to travel, and do it with wine.

NOTE: Recommendations for products and services are based upon personal experience. We are not connected to any of these companies nor do we receive compensation for purchases made based upon our suggestions.

[HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?](#)

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