

GALAVANCERS

Traveling As A Student: Intro - Priorities



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GETTING

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STARTED



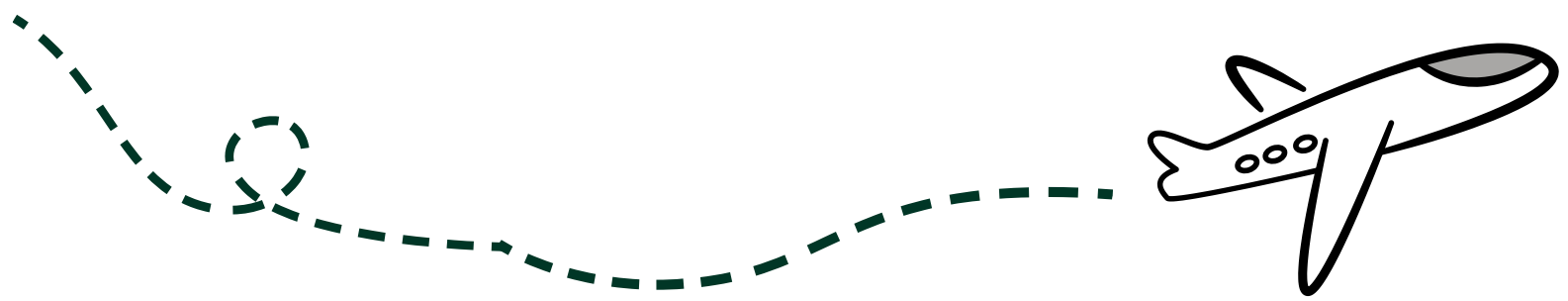
TIPS & TRICK

if you are someone who like to travel in groups, but don't have anyone to go with, there are lots of facebook groups for solo travelers to connect with each other so that they won't have to vacation all alone. You can find someone who will be in the same place at the same time, and you guys can get together for an activity or something. You might even make a long-term friend!

A few months ago, I took a semi-spontaneous week long vacation to Copenhagen, Denmark. I was bored, burned out, and suffering from the blues, so a change in scenery gave me the temporary serotonin boost I needed at the time. I then began to ask why I don't travel like that more often. Well, the answer is quite simple. I am a college student.

Reaching out and touching the world as a student is most certainly not easy, but this trip made me realize that it's also not impossible. Now, I know what you're thinking. "Of course traveling to get over the blues isn't impossible when your rich! We can't all have rich families." While you wouldn't be wrong, I will assure you that I am not rich. I won't deny my privileges. Both of my parents are educated and make pretty good money, though I don't rely on them for much of it. I'm not in any position in which I have to support someone else financially, nor do I have too many "real adult" financial responsibility, such as a car payment or insurance. My rent is relatively cheap when compared to the typical price. I get a financial aid refund check from my school every semester. And, I have an on-campus job for a little extra income. (More on my income vs expenses will come in later posts.) If these details about my life send you into a fiery ball of rage, then perhaps this blog isn't for you. However, even if your lifestyle doesn't mimic mine, I do still think, or hope, I can help bring the world a little bit closer to your reach.

Just hear me out! :)



On paper, my social position looks better than it actually is in real life. I really am your average, broke, stressed out, overthinking college student just like everyone else. I 100% understand the struggle of having dreams, but not having the means. I often feel discouraged myself before realizing that some of the means *are* there, and I just have to put in some work.

I hate saying that and sounding like a boomer, but I simply don't know how else to phrase it (open to suggestions!). When the blues hit, my go-to remedy is to run away. That's not the best solution to any problem, but that's *my* solution. Do with that what you will. Sometimes, it's a whimsical turn-left-instead-of-right situation. Other times, however, I will put tiny bit more thought into it. This leads into the first order of business: Priorities.

PRIORITIES

When it comes to opening yourself to the life of a traveler, you have to have your priorities straight. ALL of them. This will influence a trip long before it happens. I'm not saying you have to be the world's most mentally organized person ever. Lord knows my mind is far from that. You do have to have an idea on what's important to you right now in life, though. Personally, traveling is high on the list of Things That Are Important To Me (probably because of my frequent desire to run away). It makes me happy. It makes me feel close to a missing piece of me. Because of this, I am willing to sacrifice other, smaller pleasures in life to ensure a fulfilling trip when I know one is coming up.

As an example, my short term practices include lessening my daily spending so that I'll have more spending money at my destination. Listen, I get how unpleasant this sounds. The world sucks. The economy sucks. Inflation sucks. Sometimes it feels like joy is hard to come by, so indulging on little daily pleasures in order to spark the slightest bit of happiness is completely understandable. I do it, too. I buy a coffee every morning, and spend almost every weekend browsing TJ Maxx just to feel something. But when I know I have an upcoming trip, I'll significantly decrease my coffee intake, or go for a cheaper option, and cut out my shopping days because I also know that once the plane lands in my final destination, I'm going BUCK WILD with my debit card. My vacations are my fantasy breaks. It's my chance to play pretend, but in real life. All rules and cares and worries are GONE. BYE! My celebrity alter ego comes out, and baby, she needs money to blow!

Keep in mind that this is not the case for everyone. *I* like to spend, but others may have different vacation expectations. Maybe you're someone who doesn't care to shop until your bank account is crying. Maybe you like to spend more of your time relaxing in your hotel, or tanning on the beach. Those are very valid ways to spend your time, and in that case, maybe cutting back on coffee is not necessary.



What I'm getting at is, again, that you should do your best to figure out your priorities when it comes to travel. Ask yourself questions like:

- **How important is travel to you? How often would you (in theory) like to go on these trips?**
 - If it's high on the list and something you'd like to practically turn into a lifestyle, perhaps that requires a large lifestyle change. Reducing coffees or TJ Maxx runs won't make too big of a difference (depending on how much you spend per run), but something like moving to a smaller place to save money on rent will. That is obviously not simple, nor is it even possible for many people, but I think you understand the idea. I recently had the option to move into a bigger place, but chose not so because that meant less travel money, and traveling is something I like to do multiple times a year. If you enjoy other things in life more (I've met plenty of people who do) and travel is only a once every blue moon thing for you, you'll have a different set of things to consider. Maybe less changes need to be made, of any at all.
- **Once there, what do you like to do? What is your personal definition of a vacation?**
 - It's okay if you don't have one answer! I've taken trips where I did nothing except sit at a lake for 3 days and read philosophy books, disconnecting as much as I could from real life. I've also had my celebrity fantasy, put-it-on-the-card trips when I needed a boost in mood and self esteem. One answer does not always fit all. You know yourself better than I do, so I can't tell you what to prioritize, only that you should as this will influence your decisions long before the trip takes place.
- **Do you prefer to keep your trips short? Closer to home? Long and far? Do you plan on traveling alone?**
 - All important decisions when considering things like budget, destinations, and even non-travel related things, like the people you choose to surround yourself with, or items that you find valuable.

Of course, there are tons of more questions you can ask yourself when planning for a trip, but there are some to start with. Remember that everyone is different! We all have different situations and circumstances. Pretty much everything I've talked about in the post depends on the individual and varies greatly from person to person. I'm not here to provide you with a step-by-step how to that I guarantee to work. I simply want to be a loose guide and idea planter for people who may not know where to even begin. It's vital that you adjust all of my questions/suggestions to fit your life, otherwise you'll end up feeling just as stuck as when you began.

There's so much more to come on the blog! I hope you stick around for future posts! I'll be talking about other important aspects of travel, and sharing the steps I have found to be the most beneficial in my experience. I'll also be diving into topics such as testing out travel "hacks" found on social media, confirming/debunking/learning the fine print on claims made by influencers, trying destinations out myself to put together a navigation guide for regular people who don't have influencer status, and whatever suggestions are thrown my way!

See you next time!



**Stock photo. Not me in picture.*