

Road Warrior Tips: July 2012

Like many of you, we travel all the time. And we have secrets that help us get around faster, more comfortably and tips on what to make sure and carry with you in the air, on the ground or even, underground! Thanks to the generosity of these frequent flyers—these trial consultant secrets can be yours as well. As we collect additional secrets, we'll add them here (check the Road Warrior category before you head out).

National Travel: [alphabetized by state]

Florida, Orlando

Orlando security is very slow. They have one of those “Clear” lanes, which I thought didn't exist anymore, but other than that, no frequent flyer or First Class lines. Prepare for a 20 or 30 minute wait at the Orlando security lines. [Submitted by Tara Trask of Tara Trask and Associates]

Nevada, Las Vegas:

Very often the cab lines in Las Vegas are HORRIBLE. If there is a convention in town you can literally wait an hour for a cab and the lines can stretch around the building. There is a trick. Get one of the luggage porters that are employed by the airport to haul your bags out for you (even a briefcase). They take you to the FRONT of the cab line. Worst case, you will wait behind one or two people. This can save a lot of time for a tip of \$5 or \$10 bucks. [submitted by Tara Trask of Tara Trask and Associates]

New York, NYC:

I really like hopstop.com. Great for big city metro info. You can use it on your handheld and it tells you how to get where you are going via metro lines. For NYC, it even says “go south toward Houston” or whatever to direct you when you come out on the street from the subway. I use it in NYC on the subways all the time. LOVE subways. [submitted by Tara Trask of Tara Trask and Associates]

Traveling faster, easier and with less frustration

Be a 'Trusted Traveler'

The "Trusted Traveler" [known as PreCheck for domestic travel] program of the TSA has reopened (for a while, at least) for new registrants. It is a program that allows people who are deemed to be 'low security risk' to register. It provides access to special lanes at airport security checkpoints, and you don't have to deal with having shoes, belts, liquids, computers, etc. hauled out and placed back in your luggage. It is more like it was before 9/11. There are also options that facilitate driving through border checkpoints into Canada and Mexico, as well as returning international travelers. I just registered, and was conditionally admitted. Now I have to go through a fingerprinting and photographing process at one of their airport centers, and I am good to the standard security lanes. I anticipate that will give me back dozens of hours each year.

Note: Not all airports make use of this program. Generally, the bigger the airport the more likely it is to be in the system. By the end of 2012, it will have expanded to 35 airports. Austin is not in it, but most of the airports I fly to are, so I will benefit on the return flights. For program information and included airports, go to this website. [Submitted by Doug Keene of Keene Trial Consulting.]

Carry a spare passport, driver's license and eyeglass prescription

Another thing that I do when flying, especially overseas, is to make a color copy of my U.S. Passport, driver's license and flight information including the paper documentation for electronic tickets. I tuck all of these together in the lining of my suitcase and in my backpack/briefcase. I also bring a copy of my most recent eyeglass prescription with me as I have been in the unenviable position of having lost my glasses when canoeing on a combination business and vacation trip. [Submitted by Steve Perkel of Archer & Greiner, PC.]

International Travel: [alphabetized by country]

Japan, Tokyo

If traveling to Tokyo – you'll be flying into Narita, which is well outside of Tokyo. Like Dulles and DC here, only worse. Best way into Central Tokyo is to use the "Airport Limousine Bus" – and not a taxi. It's a much cheaper, and nicer ride. [submitted by Bruce A. Beal of Beal Research]

Eating Well on the Road

Everywhere you want good coffee

I love coffee, but don't want to spill it on me while sitting in that airplane or have it go cold. Holding it while someone tries to crawl over to his or her seat is no fun either. I bought a great little thermos from Nissan Thermos (JmL350P) and take it pretty much everywhere with me. It's vacuum insulated and comes with a tea infuser for people who are discriminating tea drinkers. I like it because the top screws on and prevents spillage. I've had it for five years and have dropped it, kicked it, and bounced it down a set of steps and it's still going strong. More importantly, it really keeps my coffee hot for hours. I fill it up at the airport and have good coffee, or at least better coffee, than is typically served on the plane. It easily slides in the pocket in front of my seat. And, I've never had a problem getting it through security. [Submitted by Debra Worthington, Auburn University]

In the airport

Longing for a layover? Not generally. But when you have one, CNN has a link to 14 airport amenities that will make you long for a layover! Austin, TX (my hometown) is first among them (and rightly so). Also included are Miami International Airport, Schiphol in Amsterdam, Hong Kong International, Boston's Logan International, San Francisco International Airport, and airports in Portland, Milwaukee, Minneapolis/St. Paul and more. [Submitted by Rita Handrich of Keene Trial Consulting]

Enter the "Secret Garden." For anyone with flights or layovers at Norfolk International Airport in VA and needing to refresh and relax, there is a "secret passage," a walkway into Norfolk Botanical Gardens that borders the airport. The Gardens are truly lovely—all 12 acres of them and there is a free tram with narration that makes a 25 minute tour of the main areas on the half hour. There is a good Café with real fresh made food, and beer with terrace seating adjacent to the Japanese Garden section, complete with small waterfall, koi, statuary. Not that many travel by air through Norfolk, but I thought I would recommend it. The Gardens also have Bald Eagles, Eagle Cam and on Easter when I was there with a friend, many folk with big camera set ups were focused on the nest. There are numerous secluded, shaded places with benches where one can sit, review work, meditate or just love being outside. (Apparently the passage way isn't really so "secret" because I discovered the WSJ ran an article on it stating that there are monitors in the Gardens main building where you can keep up with flight schedules, but I didn't try to find them when I was there.) [Submitted by Margie Fargo of Jury Services, Inc.]

When traveling I am always on the lookout for electrical outlets as I wait for the next connecting flight. These are two terrific resources for identifying which gate to stop at for a quick recharge of phone, laptop or tablet devices. AirPower Wiki and the easily remembered AirportPlugs.com. [Submitted by Doug Keene of Keene Trial Consulting]

The GoHow app for Android, iPhone and Blackberry is pretty awesome. It provides flight tracking information, including departure and arrival gates, what's around the gate (restaurants, services, etc.), and transportation and directions to and from each airport. You can find, ahead of time, the best place to grab a salad during your 20-minute layover or while you're running to your gate. It's come in very handy. [Submitted by Leslie Ellis of [TrialGraphix](#).]

While at your destination

I try to control my diet pretty strictly, but the road makes it very hard. On the road my hours tend to be long, time zones change eating times, long flights with no in-flight food makes me tend to eat what I can, when I can. Also, client invitations to go out with them for meals or drinks create more pressures on the whole eating-thing.

I have started to Google map some health food stores for places near my hotel in advance of my trip. I then try to go a little early (like catch a flight that gets in an hour earlier than one I would have chosen) and go to that store and stock up on some items that are part of my regimen. Then, if I know I am working long hours, I can take some good food with me. If a client wants to go out, it is fine because I can order a salad or something light while I am with them knowing I have some reserves back at the hotel. When I do not think about meals in advance like that, I find myself at the mercy of the "we'll bring in sandwiches" offer, which, as kind and as thoughtful as that might be, usually does not fit my vegetarian and cycling-racing life. By being more mindful of meal challenges and being more proactive, I have been much more successful keeping up my energy levels on the road and not having to compromise how I want to live. [Submitted by Dan Dugan, [Trial Science Inc.](#)]

A good night's sleep is absolutely critical for me, especially when I'm keyed up the night before a project. I have three things I won't travel without: first, a set of Macks Pillow Soft Earplugs. I buy them at my local grocery store, but I think they're also available on Amazon. These are made of moldable silicone. I found that the cheap foam earplugs are nearly worthless for me, but the silicone ones work wonderfully if they're inserted correctly. They block nearly any sound (like unsupervised kids running through the halls). Note: an airtight seal is important – just follow the instructions.

Secondly, I use an eye mask to block all light. Yes, they look dorky, but I'm either alone or with my husband so it doesn't matter. Bed Bath and Beyond has a good selection. Get one (or two) with very soft edges so you don't wake up with raccoon lines on your cheeks.

Finally, I suck on Historical Remedies' Stress Mints just before bedtime. They are homeopathic mints with ingredients like vanilla, chamomille, peppermint, and the like. I get them at Vitamin Cottage, but you can ask at any health food grocery store or, again, check Amazon. I fall asleep within about 15 minutes and never wake up groggy. Watch out for similar mints with valerian – I used some until I learned that valerian can cause nightmares – not a good thing before going into a high-stress environment the next day! [Submitted by Gayle Herde of [Integrity Services Group](#)]

While using taxi services

Leave the taxi door hanging open as you go to retrieve your items from the trunk. It helps to stop the driver from taking off (because he's forgotten you have trunk items — it has happened to me), and also forms the habit of taking one last look inside the cab for things you may have left on the seat or floor when you do eventually close the door. [Submitted by John Gilleland of [TrialGraphix](#)]

I always ask the cab driver for the “standard rate” to and from the airport to the hotel. It is almost always cheaper than running the meter. I always like to know I can save my client some money, even in little ways, once in a while. [Submitted by Dan Dugan of [Trial Science, Inc.](#)]

Asheville, North Carolina is lovely but the taxis at the airport are often dirty and rundown and I was sure the driver I had was going to communicate his tuberculosis to me as he spit phlegm into a plastic cup. Then I found Marvels Upscale Transportation. The same price as the dirty cabs with a wonderfully clean town car and a charming and personable driver! [Submitted by Rita Handrich of [Keene Trial Consulting](#)]

iPhone app - Taxi Magic. Need the phone number of a taxi, this app appears to know how to find them most anywhere. [submitted by David Fauss of [Magnus Research Consultants](#)]

Things to Leave Behind When You Return Home or Move on Down the Road

Bedbugs

A friend who had recently done some work for a major exterminating company gave me these instructions. When entering your hotel room, take your luggage straight to the bathroom and set it all in the middle of the tile floor. Then go directly to the bed and pull back the covers all the way down to the mattress. Carefully examine the beading around the mattress to see if you see any of the little irritating bugs. If you find any, call the front desk and ask for another room. When we were in Manhattan recently, the Ritz made the headlines with an infestation. It seems no hotel is immune. [Submitted by Andy Sheldon of [SheldonSinrich](#)]

Nasty (but invisible) germs and filth

Read somewhere to always pack a Ziploc or other clear plastic bag to go over the remote control. It's supposed to be one of the most germiest, disgusting items in the room. The travel expert said put the bag over it and then you don't have to worry about touching it. [Submitted by Kristin Fitzgerald of [ZMF](#)]

Stinky gym shoes

While your shoes are still hot and steamy from that workout, stick a fabric softener sheet in each of them prior to packing them back up in your suitcase. When you unpack you can stick your nose in those shoes and inhale nothing but freshness (if you really want to do that). [Submitted by Charli Morris of [Trial Prep](#) who learned this one from Karen Lisko of [Persuasion Strategies](#)]

Make that Cell Phone Work Harder for You

Don't want to forget what level you parked on in that parking garage? A quick snapshot can take care of that problem.

Have you been in and out of one too many hotels this week? Hotels don't have room keys anymore with the room number conveniently inscribed on it (thank goodness). But that swipe card may not help you remember if you were in Room 1114 or 1141. Take a quick shot of your room number or send yourself a text.

If you run a lot of mock trials, you end up in a lot of venues. Later, you're trying to remember what it looked like or whether it was the place with the column inconveniently placed right in the line of site of your video equipment. Take a quick snap or two, tagged the photo with when, where, or any other comments, then text or email them to yourself.

You've probably seen this done elsewhere, but if you're traveling, it's a fun and easy thing to do for those of you with smaller children at home. Take a small stuffed animal or other toy (their choice). And take shots of it in fun or weird places as you travel. Email or attach them to a text and send them home. Seeing Ginger the Horse doing a handstand on the window ledge at your hotel or looking out a taxi window while you're stuck in traffic only takes a moment, but can make your child's (or niece or nephew's) day. If you're really busy, just do it once during your trip. [Submitted by Debra Worthington, [Auburn University](#)]

Things to Carry With You: [alphabetized by product name]

A Playful Attitude:

I play a kind of Pollyanna Glad Game with the myriad of hotels I spend time in. I have learned a trick to no longer being angry and resentful over the fact that the place that I am to lay my weary head for the night or week or whatever has a boisterous convention group in it. I do this in one of two ways:

1. I use the knowledge I get from staying with them for a show I am writing. For example, I just finished a short play partially based on the experience of staying in a hotel where a junior beauty pageant was taking place (think *Toddlers and Tiaras* meets me in the lobby). Another consultant and I stayed in a hotel recently in the midwest where upon entering we were greeted by a convention of Elvis impersonators and a very bewildered wedding party. You know I am using that one for something.
2. Instead of pretending that I am not with the convention, I pretend that I am. I discovered this trick while staying at the same hotel as an NRA Convention once where it just seemed...well...safer to have everyone around me believe that I actually was carrying a concealed weapon. It is fun to be an IT genius, a Financial Planner, an auditor, an office supplies regional manager, a quilter, etc. So far it has only backfired on me once when a desperate woman in New Orleans ran up to me shouting, "Are you the Port Of San Francisco???" and I blew my cover by saying without thinking, "Darling – how could you? I've really worked damned hard to keep the weight off." [Submitted by Katherine James of [ACT of Communication](#)]

Belkin Power Cube:

Always travel with a power strip, or even better, the Belkin power cube with USB ports. Great for charging multiple objects, like computer, phone, iPad, et cetera. [Submitted by Paul Sceptur of [Sceptur Trial Consulting](#)]

Divers Alert Network:

What do scuba diving and trial consulting have in common? Travel, and the potential for illness or injury while traveling. Membership in the Divers Alert Network is \$35/year and includes (as quoted from the website): "DAN TravelAssist®. As a DAN Member, you automatically receive DAN TravelAssist and up to \$100,000 of evacuation assistance coverage. This benefit is effective for both diving and nondiving medical emergencies. Evacuation coverage begins when you travel on a trip at least 50 miles (80 km) from home and call the DAN Emergency Hotline (+1-919-684-9111) for assistance or evacuation." Check www.dan.org for more info – you might just want to start diving too! [Submitted by David Fauss of [Magnus Research Consultants](#)]

Flashlight!

Having been in a hotel during a hurricane when the power was lost and the emergency lighting was inadequate, I learned never to travel without a flashlight. Now, with the ubiquitous presence of smart phones and a plethora of free or low-cost apps, I use my Flashlight application on my cell phone to light the way. [Submitted by Steve Perkel of [Archer & Greiner, P.C.](#)]

Google Translate:

Google Translate is a Google app that will translate between any 2 of dozens of languages, include a speech out load option. [Submitted by Bruce A. Beal of [Beal Research](#)]

Hotel shower caps

Many hotels still provide you with a shower cap (although I've never used them for this). Snag them and use them to slip over your shoes to help keep your clothes clean. [Submitted by Debra Worthington, [Auburn University](#)]

Laughter

Before road trips, I download comedy shows from sites like azizansari.com onto my iPad. Then I bring a splitter and two sets of ear buds. If we are driving, my assistant and I can both listen to the show. If we are flying, we can use the splitter and ear buds and watch something mindless after a long day. It is better than movies because sometimes you just want to listen to something hysterical while shutting your eyes. And, if you laugh out loud on the plane, chances are your colleague is also laughing so you both look and sound equally idiotic. [Submitted by Ellen Finlay of [Jury Focus](#)]