

Travel Savvy

By Ashley Sanders

PLANES

1. DRESS SMART AND COMFORTABLE.

You can expect a line at security. Make your security screen a breeze by wearing easily removable shoes. Skip the belt and have any jackets or coats ready to place in a bin for x-ray screening.

2. CHECK YOUR BAGS.

It takes just about 5-10 minutes more at the airport to pick up bags after your flight. It saves you from having to throw out liquid items not in plastic bags and makes the boarding process so much easier.

3. BUY A VIP PASS.

For long layovers, pick up a one day VIP pass to the airline's presidential lounge. Some passes are as low as \$25. You can surf the web and have a calming drink in a relaxed atmosphere before your flight.

4. BRING EARPLUGS.

Babies cry. Babies will cry on your flight. Save your nerves and pack earplugs.

5. STOWAWAY HEADPHONES.

Most airlines offer in flight movies for longer journeys. And they rake in the dough by selling headphones for \$5 each. Bring your own and save a little pocket money. You may only be able to hear out of one ear because airlines use two-prong headphones, but you still can enjoy the motion picture.

6. PACK A SNACK.

Read your ticket carefully before boarding. An airline "snack" is often just that. While Continental might surprise you with a sandwich and a salad, on other airlines a snack means pretzels and a soda. Bring your own fixings to tide you over en flight. It's healthier and likely more pleasing to the palate.

7. EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED.

Just in case you arrive to your destination before your luggage, pack one change of clothes in a carry on bag or large purse. The clothes should tide you over until your luggage arrives.



After enjoying her visit, Sarah Flessner of Oklahoma City waits for her flight back home in the Jerry Ware Terminal at the Southeast Texas Regional Airport. (Photo by Mike Tobias)

This holiday season ...

Don't let long lines and delays turn you into a scrooge. Save your holiday cheer by following these savvy tips.

TRAINS

1. ROCK OUT.

Record your favorite traveling songs on your iPod. The songs will get you moving and take your focus off the long journey ahead.

2. ESCAPE WITH LITERATURE.

You can finally finish that Hemingway novel you started in June. Train rides tend to be lengthy. Block out your surroundings with a good book and escape into a land of mystery, intrigue or even romance.

3. MAKE A FRIEND.

Dining cars are full of interesting people. Share a table and a cup of Joe with a fellow traveler. Who knows what you might have in common.

4. BRING TOILETRIES WITH YOU.

Nothing beats a good face washing or tooth brushing on a long trip. Freshening up on a journey can really perk your spirits up.

AND AUTOMOBILES

1. SPRING FOR THE HOLIDAY CDS.

Encourage family time by singing holiday favorites with the kids.

2. PLAN STOPS AHEAD.

Breaks in driving cut travel stresses and only add a few minutes to the trip. Go online before you leave and plan stops at roadside parks and places of interest along the way.

3. PACK A COOLER.

Drinks and snacks add up on the road. Bring healthy eats and water with you for the ride.

4. PLAY GAMES.

Pack easy crafts and travel games for the kids. If the games have sound, bring a set of headphones.