



Holiday Travel Buttoned Up

Sarah Welch & Alicia Rockmore

Whether by train, plane, or automobile, it's very likely that you and your family will be traveling this holiday season. Sadly one thing is certain: you won't be alone! During the next few weeks, it is estimated that over 38 million Americans will be traveling to reunite with friends and loved ones. So before you find yourself stuck in traffic or delayed at the airport, take a few moments and consider these tips as you plan your travel for the upcoming holiday season.

Sarah on "Lighten Your Load"

"I will never forget the first time I had to travel quite a distance for the holidays. Trying to be the consummate guest, I packed all of the wrapped presents to take with me on a six-hour flight. Well, you live and learn! When I arrived at my destination (after a layover in Atlanta), I was presented with the seriously depressing sight of smashed gifts as most of the presents had been roughed up in transit. The best way to avoid having your gifts arrive in less than perfect shape is to ship them ahead of time. Most shipping companies, even the USPS these days, allow you to choose a particular arrival date and track your precious package's every move online."

Alicia on "Kid Proof Your Trip"

"No matter how bad the traffic or how long you are waiting in an airport, the situation could always be worse if your kids are unhappy during the extent of your travels. So if you want to avoid the endless "are we there yet" mantra, make a plan to kid proof your trip. To keep our four-year-old daughter happy during travel, we always give her

something to look forward to. If we travel by plane, I put together a kid kit with new crayons, stickers, and coloring books for her to open up after take-off. If by car, my husband and I always schedule at least one "kid-friendly" stop, either to a scenic stop on the highway or a farmer's stand to pick up some home baked goodies."

The Big Haul

Here are three tips to keep in mind when traveling this holiday season:

#1: Add It Up

With the increased number of travelers, and because you have more important things to worry about besides running late, it is always a clever move to allow yourself extra time to get just about anywhere during the holiday season. Whether you are traveling to and from the airport, train station, or dinner at the relatives, make sure to apply the "holiday time factor" to your trip and allow yourself a reasonable amount of extra time to get to your destination.

#2: Check Off the Check In

While you may not be able to control the amount of time it takes to get to the airport this holiday season, there are ways to ensure you will spend less time at the hectic hub. Forego the endless lines at the airports and check in online. Most airlines now allow passengers to check in and print boarding passes online within 24 hours of departure. Using online check in will not only save you time, but will have you feeling like a VIP as you bypass the lines and board your flight sans the hassle.

#3: Be in the Know

Over the past few years, airline restrictions on carry on luggage have undergone rapid changes, sometimes on a week-to-week basis. So before you pack, take a moment to check with your airline carrier as to what, and more importantly, how much of an item are you allowed to bring with you on the flight. Being up-to-date on "no fly" items definitely beats having to hand over your most cherished and discontinued moisturizer to airport security!

We are the co-founders of Buttoned Up, inc., a company dedicated to helping stretched and stressed women get themselves organized (along with everybody else they're responsible for too!). We welcome your thoughts! Please send ideas and questions to us at: yourlife@getbuttonedup.com or visit us at www.getbuttonedup.com