

HOLIDAY PLANNER

RESEARCH AND PREPARATION

- Where do you want to go/what type of holiday you want to have and how much time and budget you have available
- Who you are going with e.g. family, partner, friends, children and what are everyone's needs
- Who will be planning holiday or will you use travel advisor/travel agency
- High and low season in the selected destination as well public holidays
- Latest safety and covid update for the destination
- Weather in the destination
- Travel documents e.g. passport validity, visas, covid documentation needed

BOOK FLIGHTS

- Research and book flights. Allow enough connection time between flights. In many international destinations you will need to clear customs before connecting to a domestic flight. I would allow 2-3 hours connection time. If you are booking flights with different airlines you may also need to re-check your bag.
- Cheapest days to book and travel are usually mid-week Tuesday and Wednesday
- Consider using VPN with a different location when using search engines
- It can be cheaper to fly to secondary airports that are not so central however consider the cost of getting to that airport
- Do you have airline points available to use towards the ticket

BOOK ACCOMMODATION

- Rely on reviews more than star rating for the hotel
- Location (more central accommodation will be more expensive however you will save on transportation to visit sights of your interest, especially in cities)
- What is included in the price (breakfast etc.)
- What is available in the accommodation (e.g. hair dryer, toiletries, pool towel)

TRANSPORTATION

- Airport transfer - will you be using taxi, shuttle or public transport
- If travelling by taxi, do you need to download taxi app beforehand e.g. uber/bolt/grab/yandex/lyft
- What is the payment method for the public transport e.g. cash/pre-paid card/contactless card payments. Will you need to exchange local currency
- Will you be hiring a car

ACTIVITIES

- Will you be using any local travel companies or travelling to places by yourself
- How easily accessible are your points of interest if travelling by yourself
- Costs vs convenience
- If you will be using local travel companies, will you be booking tours in advance or when you are in the destination. Popular tours can be booked up quickly, however it can be cheaper booking tours in the destination. Some points of interest require booking well in advance e.g. Machu Picchu
- If you will be travelling by yourself, local language considerations
- Safety of the destination for solo travelling etc.

FOOD AND DRINK

- Will you be only eating out or will you be booking self-catering accommodation
- Will your accommodation have breakfast included
- Will you be attending popular restaurants that require booking in advance
- If you have special diet how accessible is the food in your destination. There are countries that are well catered for vegetarians, vegans and allergies and there are parts of the world that can be more challenging.

DOCUMENTS & OTHER

- Visas - how long will the application process take/do you have to send a passport away/can you buy visa on arrival
- Covid documents - will you require a PCR/rapid test
- Validity of your passport - many international destinations require 6 months
- Get a decent travel insurance
- Research local government advice on safety, save emergency contacts and find where is the nearest embassy

FINANCES

- Tell your bank that you are going away to avoid your card being blocked
- Consider getting a pre-paid card that has good exchange rates e.g. Revolut/ Monzo/ Chase and keep little money on the card
- Always have some cash on you and consider international currencies that can be used in a destination (e.g. USD is often accepted worldwide)
- Never keep all the money in one place
- Consider whether you will be exchanging money in the destination and beforehand, however always have some money on you before your travel. It is often cheaper to exchange local currency in the destination.
- Always have a 'buffer' money available for emergencies