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Travel Cheap! Travel Well!

Confessions of A Traveling Pauper

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Forward

There are thousands of books on travel. From remarkable memoirs by great travelers of the world, past and present, to more mundane books that serve as pure guidebooks. They all have value and I've read hundreds that have informed, entertained and excited me.

So why write another one?

As a freelance writer and photographer, right from the start, I realized that a book devoted purely to budget travel would offer readers a newer slant on worldwide adventure. My desire was to present a variety of ways to travel for the 'economically challenged' individual. Though I'm comfortable, I'm far from rich. I have always had a need and burning desire to travel, but there was always another 'burning' that took place; --- a hole that seemed to burn at the bottom of my pockets.

I was always anxious about my short trips (in those days they were all short) because I didn't know how to spend my money wisely. I was worried about how I'd pay the bills that accrued while I was away and how my credit card had become maxed-out despite my best intentions when leaving home. There were always unexpected expenses while I was on the road. I was stuck wondering how I might change all of this and do what I loved more than breathing---travel.

Then I decided to use my skills as a researcher and consultant to unearth ways to travel cheaply. As I was in the middle of doing this

exhaustive research, not even contemplating a book at the time, I drifted asleep, my work papers, books and reports disheveled about me, and (as the Beatles put it) I fell into a dream:

I met a pauper on the roadside in some strange far-off land. He had a very regal bearing, in spite of the fact that he was obviously of small means. His eyes shone brightly and I was sure the glint in them came directly from the sun. He presented a warm, inviting smile that careened off the corners of his mouth.

A duffel bag was slung over his right shoulder and he held a walking stick in his left hand, he wore a loosely draped deep purple cover dress, which was frayed and just a bit soiled. I smiled back and asked him if he knew the best way to travel this land on the cheap. I pulled the pockets in my denim jeans inside out and showed him the holes that were burned in them.

At this the pauper laughed and pulled his pockets inside out, too. From them fell hundreds of dollar bills, gold pieces, diamonds, and all manner of jewels.

“You can travel this land with the most precious thing of all, and have money in place of those holes in your pockets”, he said.

“The most precious thing?” I asked.

“Yes, --- your imagination. You have to see that the world is very small indeed and you can go anywhere at anytime you choose”, the

wise pauper related. “But first, you must imagine that this is so, and only then can you make it so”.

“Then all my money worries can be overcome?”

“Oh, indeed. There are hundreds of ways a pauper travels with only his wits and knowledge to pay his way. In fact, I have been handsomely rewarded by the world, and all I must do is travel!”

“Then I shall let my imagination free, and find these ways”, I said declaratively.

“And while you’re at it, write a book about me”, the splendid pauper said.

I think I started down a new road after that sweet dream. I awoke to a broader world that had somehow become smaller. New avenues of possibility opened to me and I wished only to travel down the pauper's trail to journey and adventure.

You’ll notice that in this book I capitalize the word pauper. That is because I’ve come to see that becoming a conscious Pauper is a laudable act and deserves more respect than is commonly afforded. My hope is that you, dear reader, will become a Pauper that takes great joy in developing wise, crafty and savvy traveling knowledge. A true Pauper uses experience as his teacher and employs his wits to succeed.

That's the purpose of this book, to guide you to ways you can use your own innate genius to travel the roads of life. My gratitude to the many Paupers I've met along the way. In my search to find the secrets and tricks of the trade I've learned that imagination is truly the most important quality, and that we must first travel within ourselves before finding the truest pleasure in the world about us.

Let's begin our journey together, with a wink and a nod to that first Pauper of my dreams.

Introduction



Why do we travel? How is it that we humans continually move from one place to another, always expectant, ready and eager to explore and learn? It is in our genes to grow and search. Our earliest ancestors always moved about to find new fields of opportunity, new hunting grounds, new vistas.

“The trail is the thing, not the end of the trail. Travel too fast and you miss all you are traveling for. [Louis L'Amour](#) (1908 - 1988), “Ride the Dark Trail”

In this modern age we travel for pleasure; we vacation. Not from necessity, but from a desire to experience other cultures and ways of life. We also travel for business. Opportunity to gain financial prosperity many times requires us to travel to a new city, even a new country.

Now, the world is our oyster. It has shrunk and become accessible to us like never before in history. It would take Columbus months to traverse to the New World. The danger and uncertainty of travel plagued the Old World. You took your life in your hands in making almost any journey. There were bandits, brigands, pirates and ne'er do wells around every corner, just waiting to exploit your uncertainty in the new environment. There were no airplanes, fast moving trains or supersonic jets. By foot, by meager ship, by small cart, carriage and wagon we struggled to get from one place to another and our ancestors, through millennia past, undertook tremendous journeys of risk and toil. Why? Because travel in the ancient world was as valuable and needed as it is in our modern time.

Mankind has gained remarkably from its willingness to travel. Humanity has conquered strange lands, settled in disparate places, created whole new civilizations in distant locales. Our species is all the better for our traveling.

“What you've done becomes the judge of what you're going to do -- especially in other people's minds. When you're traveling, you are what you are right there and then. People don't have your past to hold against you. No yesterdays on the road.” **William Least Heat Moon**, “Blue Highways”

Beyond the massive accomplishments that travel gave us, there is the call of our spirit to travel. Inside each human being there is a yearning to see new vistas, new mountain ranges, swirling seas,

architecture, dress and customs. When we confront the new, the strange and unusual, we grow and expand our consciousness. We learn to appreciate our own 'home' culture and at the same time, revel in the cultures others have designed for their lives.

Have you noticed how your spirit is always refreshed after a time of travel? You return with new eyes, or you may stay at your destination, but you always do so with a larger vision of your life, with a more receptive attitude toward living. You can tackle problems that have plagued you with a fresh perspective. Your travel has freed you to a great extent. Now you are more than when you first left on your journey. You have allowed a finer sensibility to arise in your soul. We are always touched by our travels.

Once you have traveled, the voyage never ends, but is played out over and over again in the quietest chambers, that the mind can never break off from the journey. [Pat Conroy](#) (1945 -), "The Prince of Tides"

In this book we are going to discover ways to travel that are unique and cost-effective. Really, this is an electronic book that you should put on your laptop and carry around the world with you!

What a smorgasbord of travel information awaits you!

All in one place, right in front of your eyes, instantly available, --- all the travel hot spots, ---the unknown secrets, ---the special deals and **comprehensive travel savvy**, --- knowledge that would take you

years to learn on your own...in one location, on your hard drive, in this PDF document!

Need to know the best day of the week to rent a car? It's in here.

Worry about what you need to say to the desk clerk at the hotel when you arrive, so the desk clerk doesn't take advantage of you? It's in here, **(This one saves you tons of money and gets you the best room in the hotel!)**

Do you know the best time of day to make a plane reservation to save hundreds of dollars? It's in here.

How about a way to get a **FREE** airplane ticket nearly every time you travel? The answer is in this book.

What if you could discover exactly how **the airlines are vulnerable**, so you can take advantage of them? It's in this book.

What if you could find **20 ways to outsmart the multi-billion dollar travel industry?** Little ol' you! It's in these pages!

I'll give you a **10-step program** to get yourself BUMPED from a flight so you can have the airline ticket agent eating out of your hand and begging you to take another flight for FREE! Right away, *in chapter #1.*

This isn't rocket science. I'll show you the **ABC's of air travel** and provide you with all of the major airline contact phone numbers so you can have fast, *instant access when you are ready to travel.*

Did you know there are **6 types of published airfares**? In this book **you learn about all of them** and *ways to take advantage of each.*

In chapter 2 I'll prove to you that frequent flyer miles are like money in the bank. Too many sappy travelers waste their miles instead of using them to the max. I'll take you **step-by-step into the wonderful world of maximizing these miles** to the ultimate advantage...*your advantage...not the airlines.*

I'll show you **3 'hidden' ways to accumulate tremendous free miles** *that most people don't even know exist!*

In this book you'll find out how crafty the airline business can be, and how **they depend on you not knowing the rules of the game.** How they bank on you misusing, and even LOSING your frequent flyer miles, *out of your own ignorance!*

I'll teach you about Courier Companies. *They need you!* **They will pay all the expenses for your flight.** You'll learn that all you need to do is carry a piece of luggage for them.

Can you do that?

Can you fly to Singapore, enjoy the sights; sip some Malaysian tea, play in the area's hot night spots, get 'jazzed' by the great energy

available at this exotic destination, have a beautiful vacation---and drop off **one piece of luggage at the airport when you arrive?** I think so!

Then, in **chapter 4** I'll introduce you to Consolidators. These guys buy blocks of tickets and pass tremendous savings on to you. Once you find out about them you can say Ta-Ta! ---*Goodbye*---to the masses that buy airline tickets the old fashioned way!

Hold it!

All of the above is coming your way, and you've only read the first 37 pages of this book! Imagine, all the knowledge, the insider secrets, the ways to beat the billion-dollar travel industry, and we've only read the first four chapters of Travel Cheap- Travel Well!

There are still **200+ pages** and **10 chapters** to go!

I'm serious. You can travel like the rich and famous, but with the mindset of a Pauper. I'll say more about this special, world-altering *frame of mind* later in this introduction.

I'm still talking about those fabulous Consolidators here:

I'll show you consolidators that can send you **around the world**. Yes, *it's a dream you've always had, right?* You fly around the globe and see what Planet Earth is like **from everywhere to everywhere**. Why not? If you're a member of the **Traveling Paupers**, it may be more of a possibility than you've ever imagined.

I will list, in black & white, some consolidators that *break their backs to make this dream a reality*. They offer tons of routings and you can even get a guarantee to see the sites **you really have a hankering for**. Ground transportation, city tours and even lodging can be booked in advance or when you arrive.

But I can't hang around this meaty chapter 4 forever. And man, is it chock full of money saving, mind blowing advice?!

Let's look at chapter 5: **CRUISES ON THE CHEAP!**

I reveal how all cruise ships, yes all of them, need to “kill time” with what is called ‘repositioning cruises’---what does that mean? **It means you save TONS of money on first class, state-of-the-art-cruise lines every month of the year, that's what!**

You'll be an **expert on cruises** with this chapter. Did you know there are *6 categories* in the cruise ship industry? Each of them offers you something different, something marvelous and magical. But you have to know which is best for you. **Again, it's in here.**

I'll show you how the sneaky cruise lines plow on the extra charges for “activities” that you can turn back on them and get for free, or very little cost.

Do you know which are the **best cabins on board** a cruise ship? You will after you read this book. *And it's not the Penthouse suite, either!*

I'll even help you out if you have a tendency to get 'sea-sick'---there are cabins that are more stable, and your tummy will thank me!

You can get so much more for your cruise dollar, like “added value” packages and even **“FREE DAYS”**. It's in here.

I'll give you **pinpoint directions** on when to book your cruise for maximum value.

You'll **discover the biggest single expense on a cruise vacation**, bar none, and how to snuff it out, long before you even lay out on the sundeck.... and STILL get the benefit of this highly overpriced 'nicety' for pennies on the dollar.

Cruise Directors will hate me for revealing this one!

There is a comprehensive list in this book of small, medium and large cruise lines with all the contact information you need.

I'll even uncover the *best way* to take shore leave:

- ✓ what to do
- ✓ how to save scads of money
- ✓ where to look and
- ✓ how to spend your time to thwart the cruise lines in their effort to 'suck' some more dough out of you!

Then I talk about other water travel - from houseboats to using cruise consolidators.

Whew!

Ahoy, mate!

In **chapter 6**, we look at **RICH ACCOMODATIONS ON A PAUPER'S BUDGET**.

Hotels are some of the most over blown, out of the ballpark, ridiculously expensive items on your travel itinerary. It needn't be that way!

You will gasp out loud when you read this chapter.

I've found some glittering establishments; fine, well-appointed hotels, motels and more.

If we play our cards right, we can stay at them and pay even less than we would at one of the 'sleaze' joints that pepper every town, city and highway around the world.

The trick is to employ some great strategies that every Pauper can use. You'll get them all in this book!

Incentives and programs are listed for you in this chapter, along with contact info for all the major hotel and motel chains.

Let me ask you a few questions.

Did you know that you should QUIZ the check-in clerk at the hotel where you're staying? I give you **the EXACT words** to make him shake in his boots and give up the best room he has to offer!

Did you know that you almost always OVERTIP for room service? I'll explain how the hotels trap you into paying up the kazoo for breakfast in bed.

Do you know why a 15-minute tour of your hotel can save you mounds of money and make you safe and secure? In this book you will!

Do you realize check-in clerks are *trained to 'tempt' you into an upgrade---* by making you an offer you can't refuse? I show you how they do it, and how you turn the tables on them!

Did you know the marketing department of most major hotel chains always spring a doozy of a deal to book unused rooms...at the last minute? They do! And you'll know how to take advantage of those delirious deals on your very next stay!

Do you own a house? Then get ready to TRADE IT to other like-minded Paupers for some really fantastic vacation getaways! **It's all in chapter 6.**

Ever hear of ones that offer walk in closets, DSS Satellite systems, king size beds, heated tile floors, automatic awnings, slide out patios,

retractable sunroofs, spiral staircases and rooftop decks? Well you will here, and you'll learn how to get yourself inside one, too!

Want to learn how to buy an RV and not sell your grandchildren's legacy to do it?

Chapter 6 is for you!

Would you be interested in just renting an RV? Why not? I'll lay out the real skinny and put it on the line exactly how.

Wouldn't it be *remarkable* if you could enjoy camping out under the stars in a first class park----for **FREE?** I'll show you numerous ways to make it happen.

[Personal side note: (I have to brag, right now!)

I went to Margarita Island, in the Caribbean and lounged on sandy beaches, golfed, had a blast with the nightlife, visited the spas and enjoyed first class shopping for 8 days for \$232.

That's with airfare, unlimited drinks, meals, and more. I used a discount club that lets Paupers save on vacation packages, cruises and more. They have a Hot Deal featured on the website. It's all revealed in **Paupers Secret Confession #27** in chapter 6.

End Personal side note.]

Look, I'm exhausted. I've only covered the first six chapters...**there are 8 more!**

In **chapter 7**, you will discover exactly what KIND of Pauper you are *on the inside!* In "Say Hello To The Pauper In You" you **get two great quizzes** for an insightful view of your personal preferences when it comes to travel.

Are you a

? **Traveling Professor Pauper**

? **The Pack Rat Pauper**

? **the Show Me Pauper** or a

? **White Rabbit Pauper?**

When you finish this chapter, you'll feel amused and enlightened - knowing more about yourself, your travel habits and preferences.

In this revealing chapter, there is also the first of our helpful checklists - **The Pauper's Travel Checklist** that conveniently sorts out all the choices available so that you are organized, prepared, and ready for action.

Chapter 8 will amaze you! The title "Pauper's Travel Free & Get Paid To Travel" says it all.

You actually **MAKE** money when you read this book and aspire to be a true traveling Pauper.

There's a baker's dozen in here. I'll present **13 ways to generate income** as you see the world. Each and every one is a unique use of *your talents and abilities* that you would never dream were available.

But they are.

Chapter 9 is The Independent Traveler's chapter.

Like to go it alone? I teach you **10 essential things** you need to understand for this kind of trip to become a joy, instead of a lonely or barren experience. You've got all the information you need to really enjoy making any trip by yourself.

The single traveler needs to know the many vagaries involved with other types of travel besides touring and airline travel. That's why the next section deals with ***trains, buses and cars***. In other words, **Ground Transportation**.

You'll discover **4 exceptional companies that are dedicated to you and YOU alone**. They are custom-made for independent travelers. There's everything here that you need to know, including contact information.

"Flying by the seat of our pants" is a way of life for some of us.

There are wonderful resources to help you out in this chapter.

- ✓ What to do and how to act at the train station ticket window (this is important in some countries).
- ✓ The savvy use of a rail pass
- ✓ How to get the perfect seat on the train
- ✓ Why buses are a godsend to Pauper's who love the bus because it's really cheap transportation.

In America, Greyhound is huge, offering **2,600 destinations** in **48 states, Canada and Mexico**, with **1,800 daily departures**. I'll tell you all about them and *7 other perfect bus companies!*

- ✓ **The only bus route you should ever book** (this will save you hours of travel and days of frustration)
- ✓ **6 tips** on bus travel including my secrets about “leg room”, food, border crossings, and security
- ✓ **Cars, cars, cars**. Around the world **contact lists for instant access** when you want to hit the road anywhere at anytime.

My personal favorite rental car company that consistently saves a **bare minimum of 30% off** any other car rental company out there. (See Paupers Secret Confession # 50!)

✓ **7 tips** for the open road including how to instantly find the cheapest gas nearest you.

Chapter 10 *is jammed with every pauper's travel resources* including my **TOP SECRET** confession (you'll love this one).

All about travel clubs: Websites including **my 6 absolute favorites that I wouldn't walk around the block without having on my laptop computer** (one of them helps me speak a foreign language instantly while traveling) and much more!

I even cover the **only ways to judge whether a guidebook is any good**. There's a list of the 5 BEST GUIDEBOOKS in the world--- (and they're not the ones you may be familiar with), complete with all the contact information to get your personal copies.

Chapter 11 presents an entire set of valuable FORMS to help you plan your trip.

Use these *every time you make a journey* and you will be completely prepared with your mind at ease so that you can really soak up the destination you've dreamed of.

Why worry about forgetting something? You never miss a beat when you use these forms and allow them to **direct your choices and focus your desires** to a fine point!

Chapter 12 is one of my favorites.

Here, you'll learn **all about traveling with a partner, solo or with a group**; the benefits and problems attached to each choice.

We even finesse the sticky issue of **\$money\$** and how to make sure it doesn't come between you and the person you're traveling with.

I'll lay it out in *very human, realistic terms*:

- ? What makes the ideal travel partner?
- ? How do you find the perfect traveling companion? It's in this chapter.

Chapter 13 is really detail-oriented.

Here, you find out **everything you need to know about the paperwork involved in travel**. Where to get, how to use, and what's needed concerning passports, visas, money and much, much more.

We look at insurance:

- ? Do you need it?
- ? What about trip cancellation and interruption insurance?
- ? How much is it?
- ? What are the options?

- ? How can you win the game and still feel secure?
- ? What about medical insurance abroad? What are the options?
- ? **How about exchange rates?**

How should you get money sent to you from back home?
What are the cheapest alternatives? It's all in Chapter 13.

Chapter 14 tackles the #1 reason most people are afraid to travel abroad: **Language!**

You'll discover the ways to make language a NON-ISSUE by understanding **exactly which words and phrases** you'll need in ANY country you visit.

You can immerse yourself in a language (I show you that too!) or you can discover how a mere **10 -100 words** can get you anywhere, anytime around the globe.

You'll breathe a big, long, fat, relaxing sigh of relief when you discover that English has been firmly planted around the world over the past 100 years. It's the #1 favorite 'second language' in the world. (I'll tell you the other top four in this chapter, as well).

English is everywhere, so there is no need to fear.

Do you know how to instantly find someone who speaks English when abroad? In **chapter 14** you will ([See pauper's Secret Confession #74](#)).

I'll introduce you to **other techniques for communicating** your needs and desires without speaking a single word, whether it's English or Swahili!

When you've finished this remarkable chapter, the discomfort about language disappears and you'll find all the confidence to engage in conversation or enter meaningful communication with your fellow human beings around the world!

Trying to introduce all the extraordinary tricks, secrets and downright sneaky ways you can save on your next travel adventure would make this introduction way too long.

Just thinking about the trips I've made, the joy that awaits you, the insider knowledge packed into each and every chapter of this book - well, to put it frankly: **you've got it all in one handy electronic reference book**. I'm very proud of the contents which just keep on coming ... page after page and chapter after chapter.

Do you own a laptop computer? Then put this baby in there and open it up as you whisk around the world, carefree, money in pocket, ready for anything!

Every time you open this e-book, you'll find:

► Over **200 workable links** that will take you to online sites that instantly plug you into travel magic and travel bargains. You can make your plans right then and there, on the spot.

► Over **75 real-life 'confessions'** that make sense of travel in the REAL world, these are *sometimes humorous, sometimes dead serious, but always useful and wise.*

These are my own experiences that will save you countless months of misery and halting experiments; insights that you won't find anywhere else.

► Over **200 resources** that make every trip you take an organized, positive and fully-charted adventure. **No guess-work here.** Only knowledge and facts that *you can use* in your real-life travel around the globe.

There are opportunities available to us now that allow for **regular, consistent travel, all around the globe**, that our ancestors would have been highly jealous of. Where it was once very expensive to move about, arduous and even life-threatening, **we now have an entire industry that will cater to our wanderlust** while we enjoy easy modes of transportation, delight in exceptional service and remarkable comfort.

While our ancestors grasped adventure that was often thrust on them, we can now **choose the level of adventure that we wish**. We can travel to the wildest, most remote areas left on the planet or, conversely, choose to experience deep pleasure and satisfaction in the most luxurious of world capitals.

In these pages, I will introduce you to all of the money-saving techniques, **the price-slashing values and the world of ‘discount’ travel**. You will discover ways that you never dreamed of, that will make all manner of travel instantly possible.

Once you learn the way to **Travel Cheap- Travel Well**, you can look forward to living like the rich and famous, but on a pauper’s budget.

*The trouble in corporate America is that too many people with too much power live in a box (their home), and then travel the same road every day to another box (their office). **Faith Popcorn**, “The Popcorn Report”, 1991*

Once you decide to join me as a *world-traveling Pauper*, you will become one of the elite, the people that have expanded their opportunities and ideas - **a person that knows how to travel with limited funds**.

You’ll never have to settle for a lifestyle that keeps you stuck in the mud, away from the wide world that surrounds you. You will become a fearless adventurer ready to explore and discover all-new ways of life.

Whether you travel for business or pleasure, you will be able to make this planet more of a “backyard” than you could ever have imagined it to be with the knowledge you gain by reading this book.

Certainly, travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living. ***Miriam Beard***

We'll look at ways to travel by air, by train, by boat---even by foot!

We will capture the best prices, the best bargains, the cheapest modes of transportation.

I'll introduce you to best buys in lodging, from Hotels and Inns, to Bed & Breakfast establishments, thatched huts or houseboats.

We'll even look at ways to best take advantage of our days in a new locale - *how to be a 'wise tourist'* and soak up as much of the surrounding culture and landscape as we can, no matter how long we stay.

There are other bargains to discover, as well, like where to eat: restaurants, diners, local eateries and places of rest and relaxation that don't break the bank.

You will find that using these tricks, tips and techniques in your travel will **greatly expand your enjoyment.**

When you don't have to count every penny, worried about whether you will be able to afford the ticket home, constantly concerned about what you must spend to enjoy yourself---**you experience a new-found freedom.**

Being a Pauper is a grand and noble experiment in freedom. Together, in these pages, we will cast aside the common aspersion that 'being a pauper' is anything but a noble accomplishment. When I travel, I love acting like a vagabond - a pauper among the rich and well to do!

Why?

Because, I know that **I don't ever have to worry about returning home to pay that escalating credit card bill.** In fact, I can look forward to my next trip, right away. You see - I'm a frugal cuss. I don't cower with the fear that I will over-spend or over-indulge during my travels.

Yet, I have a marvelous time. The pauper in me is carefree, unconcerned with the silly ways people often waste money. I fly, cruise and travel with a light heart, filled with the joy of discovery.

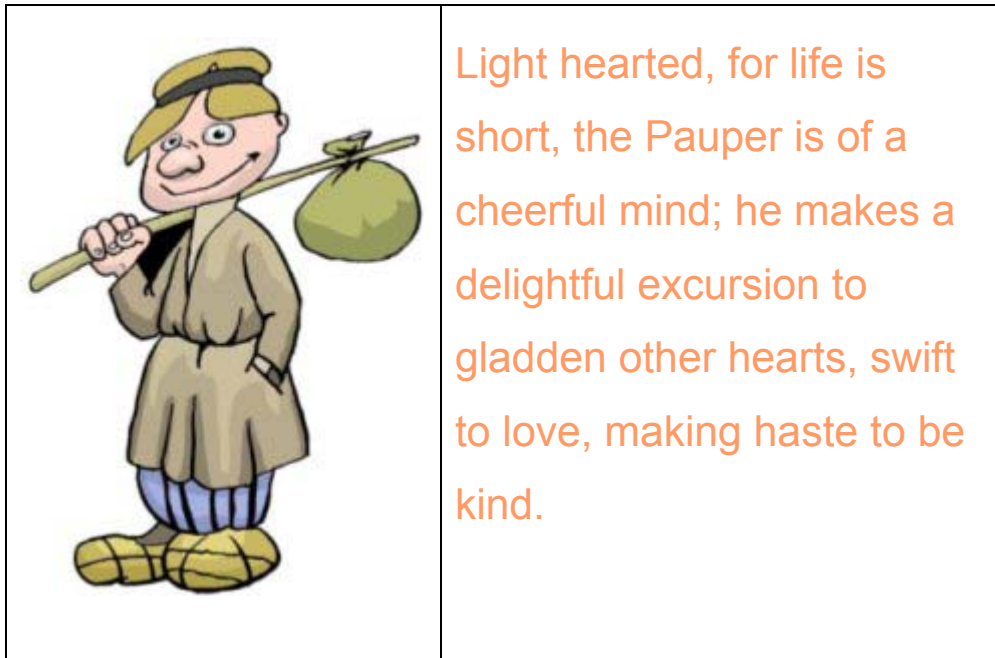
When we travel like stalwart Paupers, we can, together, beat the multi-billion dollar travel industry at their own game.

Traveling like a pauper is traveling savvy.

That's the purpose behind this book. I look forward to our 'journey' together. Hold onto your wallet - a wallet that has plenty of left-over cash in it---**you are about to hear the confessions of a traveling pauper.**

Welcome to our secret society!

Victor K. Pryles



Let's Get Bumped!

I have found adventure in flying, in world travel, in business and even close at hand... Adventure is a state of mind – and spirit. -[Jacqueline Cochran](#) (1910 - 1980)

Overbooking can be a Blessing

Is "overbooked" a dirty word?

Many people instantly would answer yes, of course it is and, just as quickly, wonder why such a stupid question is even posed.

Overbooking often causes delays while the airlines sort out who is going to be "bumped" from their chosen, ticketed flight. Big, bad, uncaring airline computers are involved, too. Perfectly good travel plans are snuffed out.

But you should know that overbooking is now a business necessity and a beautiful opportunity for free travel.

Why is Overbooking Here to Stay?

Each year, Dean Headley of Wichita State and Brent Bowen of the University of Nebraska-Omaha rate the ten major airlines for best service.

One of their 14 study criteria is denied boardings. They found the rate didn't really change between 1998 and 1999, despite plenty of negative publicity for the airlines, especially Delta.

Who is most likely to bump you?

- • Delta, 1.53
- • America West, 1.39
- • Southwest, 1.38
- • Alaska, 0.91
- • United, 0.90
- • TWA, 0.73
- • US Airways, 0.52
- • American, 0.43
- • Continental, 0.34
- • Northwest, 0.18

Source: Dean Headley and Brent Bowen

I want to show you the ins and outs of this overbooking and how you can take advantage of it.

The airlines constantly overbook. Why?

Why not? Profits are at stake. Empty seats are simply unacceptable. Programmers try to develop formulas that will overbook just enough to ensure a full aircraft while allowing for no-shows. That's a tricky task that no one has fully mastered.

It is profitable to overbook, even at the risk of giving away free tickets and overnight hotel rooms. A few freebies are preferable to ten or twenty empty seats on that flight from Japan to Los Angeles.

Voluntary Bumping

You're not celebrating Granny's 100th birthday. It's not New Year's Eve or Christmas. Getting to your destination hours or even a day later is not the end of the world. Ask yourself if this, indeed, is your case. Yes?

Then read on...

Tom Parsons is a travel expert who says he gets bumped roughly a dozen times every year. His article, "Getting Bumped For Fun and Profit", lays out the basic strategy, and these words of wisdom: "some travelers consider overbooked flights a golden opportunity".

Parsons recommends starting the night before departure with a call to the airline or your travel agent (a list of airline contacts is at the end of this chapter). Ask if the flight is overbooked. An affirmative answer means you should be at the gate 90 minutes before scheduled departure. It's a bit early, but it usually guarantees you'll be first in line.

The Department of Transportation requires airlines to ask for volunteers before they deny a flight to anyone. You should make it clear that you're willing to be bumped.

What makes up Rule 240

How has Rule 240 changed?

Because Rule 240 deals with cancellations and delays, it is probably the best known of any 'rules' pertaining to the airlines. What makes defining Rule 240 so problematic is that Rule 240 is not a Federal requirement since the deregulation of the U.S. airline industry. Therefore, if the airline has submitted the rule in their respective contracts (also conditions) of carriage (the ticket is a contractual agreement that an airline and passenger enter regarding the transport of a passenger) then the airline has a Rule 240, but it's not required to do so.

A common misconception is that all airlines must have a Rule 240, but they do not. And airlines have different versions of Rule 240, making it even more difficult for passengers to know their rights in the event of a delay or cancellation.

What is considered the airline's fault regarding delays and cancellations?

Mechanical problems

Late arrival of an aircraft

Pilots or other crew that are not at the aircraft on the time

Other factors that are within an airline's control

What details might a Rule 240 include?

A Rule 240 may or may not include the following items:

- Meal vouchers
- Confirmation on the airline's next flight or on another airline
- Option to not travel and obtain a refund
- Hotel accommodation
- Ground transportation
- Phone calls

Beat the Airlines at their Own Game

The D.O.T.(Department Of Transportation) does not specify compensation, so a final agreement should come only after some important factors are settled to your satisfaction. Flight arrangements for the current trip that you're taking should top the list.

Make certain you can get on that airline's next available flight to your destination. If not, you want a guaranteed flight on another carrier. You have the law on your side here -that's right, you can cite Rule

240. No need to read or understand it, just bring it up in your conversation with the booking agent or flight attendant. Airline workers understand it pretty well.

Next, you'll probably be offered a travel voucher that's good for deeply discounted or, better yet, free flights on a future trip. Be sure that today's inconvenience will pay off. Is a discount coupon worth the hassle when you really want a round-trip ticket? It's like any other situation: If you're not happy, be prepared to walk away. If you experience a delay of more than two hours, then you should be entitled to meal vouchers and perhaps admission to the airline's V.I.P. club. Don't be afraid to ask for them.

What if you find yourself bumped from the second flight, too? Oh boy, oh boy! Parsons says it is possible to earn two or more no-cost-to-you tickets in a single day.

- ***Reading Material is Essential***

You'll spend a long time sitting at the airport, so bring along your favorite magazines and lusty novels.

Other recommended publications include the timetables for airlines that fly from your current airport. These will be important if you can't get another immediate flight after the bump. Attendants have been known to say, "Sorry, none of the other airlines will be able to accommodate you." If you can point out that there is indeed a flight to where you are headed leaving in 45 minutes, they will have to work it

out for you, and you will feel very, very happy about using the airline rules and timetables to beat them at their own game!

'Bump Me, Please!'

Here's a quick reference for people who want to get 'bumped' in order to obtain a free airline ticket.

Here's How:

1. Ask if the flight is overbooked. Call your travel agent the night before scheduled departure.
2. Pack flight schedules for other airlines leaving for your destination from the departure airport.
3. Get to the airport 90 minutes before scheduled departure. Be first in line at check-in.
4. Before agreeing to be bumped, make certain the airline is offering a free ticket or a deeply discounted ticket.
5. Before accepting the ticket for another day's travel, tell the agents you want to be sure of today's arrangements.
6. Tell the agent you want confirmed reservations on the next flight to today's destination.
7. If there is no guaranteed seat on the next flight, tell them you want a guaranteed flight on another airline. Cite Rule 240.

Consult the flight schedule that you packed and choose an alternate flight that works best for you.

8. If your wait for another flight exceeds two hours, inquire about meal vouchers and other perks.
9. If you get bumped from the next flight, repeat the above steps.
You could get a second free ticket in one day!

Tips:

There are rules everyone must follow in a 'bumping' situation, but some of the benefits will vary by airline.

The rules on bumping are different for international flights. Consult your airline if applicable.

Under some circumstances, the airlines have to compensate bumped passengers with cash values up to \$400 USD. Don't take a ticket that's worth less if you're eligible for the money.

The ABC's of airfares

When booking a ticket, regardless of whether it is using a published or unpublished fare, there are always letters that are assigned. These letters indicate the class of service, not simply economy or business class, but rather the type of fare that was agreed to.

Without getting into the particular rules of each fare type, letters are assigned by the airlines to indicate the kind of ticket that was bought.

- **F, P** are the letters most commonly used to indicate **First Class**.
- **J, C** are the letters most often used to represent **Business, or Executive Class**.
- **Y** is almost universally used to indicate a full fare economy ticket.
- **B, H, L, M, V, etc.** are just some of the letters indicating subclasses (reduced, restricted, and/or discounted fares).
- **X, U, R** are a few of the letters commonly used to indicate a fare purchased from a consolidator.

These letters vary by airline and in value. **B** may show a more expensive ticket on one airline. **L** may represent a ticket booked on a seat sale on another airline.

If you have booked a discounted fare and are interested in the subclass you are holding, the letter immediately follows the flight number on your ticket and will fall under the heading of Booking Class or some similar, shortened version.

Types of published airfares

This is a list of the main types of published airfares - usually based on round-trip or one-way travel:

- APEX fares are discounted international fares. Such fares usually require tickets to be purchased in advance, such as 7, 14, or 21 day minimum advance purchase, and will have other restrictions – being non-refundable or attracting change fees are just two of the possible restrictions.
- Discount Fares tend to have a smaller price tag and are offered for a limited time (seat sales would fall into this category). They usually have a long list of restrictions such as specific travel dates, minimum and maximum stay (for example, a minimum Saturday night stay, a maximum 30 day stay), etc.

Unlike most published fares, it is important to make sure that you are aware of the fare rules and restrictions on discount (seat sale) fares. Keep a copy of the rules because seat sale fares come and go quickly. The rules and restrictions can be harder (sometimes impossible) to retrieve online.

- Excursion Fares are lower priced fares that have restrictions like advance purchase, time of year, minimum/maximum stay, etc.

- Unrestricted, Flexible, or Full Fares are the titles given to the most expensive tickets. You pay for a ticket that allows you to refund or change the ticket as necessary for fares that can be purchased at any time, even the same day of travel.
- Joint fares are offered by airlines that have some sort of partner relationship on selected routes. They, essentially, give a passenger a price-break when you are using more than one airline to get somewhere. Joint fares have their own set of restrictions, not unlike those already mentioned for excursion and discount fares.
- A through fare is a fare to a destination reached by traveling through a gateway city. It could be combined with any of the fare types listed above and is used to obtain a lower price when you are not simply flying from point A to point B, but are connecting through other points to get to your destination. If you are traveling from Atlanta to Athens via Frankfurt, you may be offered a through fare so that, instead of paying for Atlanta to Frankfurt and Frankfurt to Athens, you pay one fare for Atlanta through to Athens.

For the sake of profits, airlines will not offer every seat on an aircraft at the seat sale fares, or excursion fares. As flights fill, the least expensive fares disappear regardless of how far in advance it is.

Unless you are on a full-fare ticket, you can be certain that there will be any number of restrictions involved with your airfare -

minimum/maximum stay; time of day; weekday, weekend price differences; change fees; mileage (on through fares you may be restricted to a certain number of miles to get you to your destination), advance purchase; youth/child/senior rule differences; etc.

With so many fare types, even more fare rules and, considering that airline tickets are contracts between passengers and airlines, it is important to know what you are signing up for.

What is an airfare?

You don't always know what you are going to get when you purchase an airline ticket. Why is it that every person on a flight may have paid a different price to get on the same airplane?

Can you change or cancel your tickets, and if so, how much will it cost?

The airlines have a seemingly labyrinth like formula for constructing airfares. Knowing what types of airfares exist and how they play into your travel may not mean that airfares make sense, but you can at least make sense of them.

Simply put, an airfare is the price a passenger pays in order to travel by plane. The types of fares, rules and restrictions, taxes, etc., are all components that complicate the price involved for a passenger to fly from here to there.

Fares are most often based on one-way or round-trip. Fares may be published, unpublished and/or negotiated fares. In fact corporations or government agencies/organizations may have fares negotiated with an airline at a lower rate.

Unpublished fares are also known as consolidated fares and are offered by consolidators and bucket shops.

Airline Contacts

The following contacts are subject to change. However, all airlines that remain in business will usually offer you the new number when you call.

Adria Airways 49-69-25730

Aero California 800-237-6225

Aeroflot 888-340-6400
333-0276

Aero Lineas Argentinas 800-

Aer Lingus 888-474-7424

Aero Mexico 800-237-6639

Air Afrique 800-456-9192

Air Aruba 800-882-7822

Air Canada 888-247-2262

Air Caribbean 809-623-2500

Air Europa 888-238-7672

Air Fiji 800-677-4277

Air France 800-237-2747

Air India (310) 338-8480, (312) 782-6263, (202) 785-8989,
(281) 587-0035, (212) 751-6200, (416) 865-1033

Air Jamaica 800-523-5585

Air Lanka 800-247-5265

Air New Zealand 800-262-1234

Air Pacific 800-227-4446

Air Ukraine 800-857-2463

Alaska Airlines 800-426-0333

Alitalia 800-223-5730
9262

All Nippon Airways 800-235-

Aloha Airlines 800-227-4900

America West 800-235-9292

American Airlines 800-433-7300

Asiana Airlines 800-227-4262

Austrian Airlines 800-843-0002
2622

Avianca Airlines 800-284-

Bearskin Airlines 800-465-2327

British Airways 800-247-9297

British Midland Airways 800-788-0555 **Cathay Pacific Airlines**
800-223-2742

China Airlines 800-227-5118
338-8988

China Southern Airlines 888-

Continental Airlines 800-525-0280 **Copa Airlines** 800-892-2672

Croatian Airlines 800-247-5353 **Czech Airlines** 800-223-2365

Delta Airlines 800-221-1212 **EasyJet UK** +44 0870 600
0000

El Al Israel Airlines 800-223-6700 **Emirates** 800-777-3999

Ethiopian Air 800-445-2733 **Finnair** 800-950-5000

First Air 800-267-1247 **Frontier Airlines** 800-432-
1359

Gulf Air 800-553-2824 **Hawaiian Airlines** 800-367-
5320

Horizon Air 800-554-2924 **Iberia Airlines** 800-772-4642

Icelandair 800-223-5500 **Japan Airlines** 800-525-3663

Kenya Airways 800-343-2506

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines 800-374-7747

Korean Airlines 800-438-5000 **Lacsa** 800-225-2272

LAN Chile Airlines 866-435-9526 **Lauda Air** 800-645-3880

LOT Polish Airways 800-223-0593 **Lufthansa** 800-645-3880

Malaysia Airlines 800-421-8641 **Malev Hungarian** 800-223-6884

Mexicana Airlines 800-531-7921

Midwest Express Airlines 800-452-2022

Northwest Airlines 800-225-2525 **Philippine Airlines** 800-435-9725

Polynesian Airlines 800-223-4277 **Qantas** 800-227-4500

Royal Air Maroc 800-344-6726 **Royal Jordanian** 800-223-0470

RyanAir +44 0871 246 0000 **Saudi Arabian Airlines** 800-472-8342

Scandinavian Airline Systems (SAS) 800-221-2350

Singapore Airlines 800-742-3333 **South African Airways** 800-722-9675

Southwest Airlines 800-435-9792 **Spanair** 888-545-5757

Spirit Airlines 800-772-7117 **TACA International** 800-535-8780

Tap Air Portugal 800-221-7370 **Thai Airways** 800-426-5204

Ukraine Intl Airlines 800-876-0114 **United Airlines** 800-241-6522

US Airways 800-428-4322
468-2744

Varig Brazilian Airlines 800-

Vasp 800-723-8277
862-8621

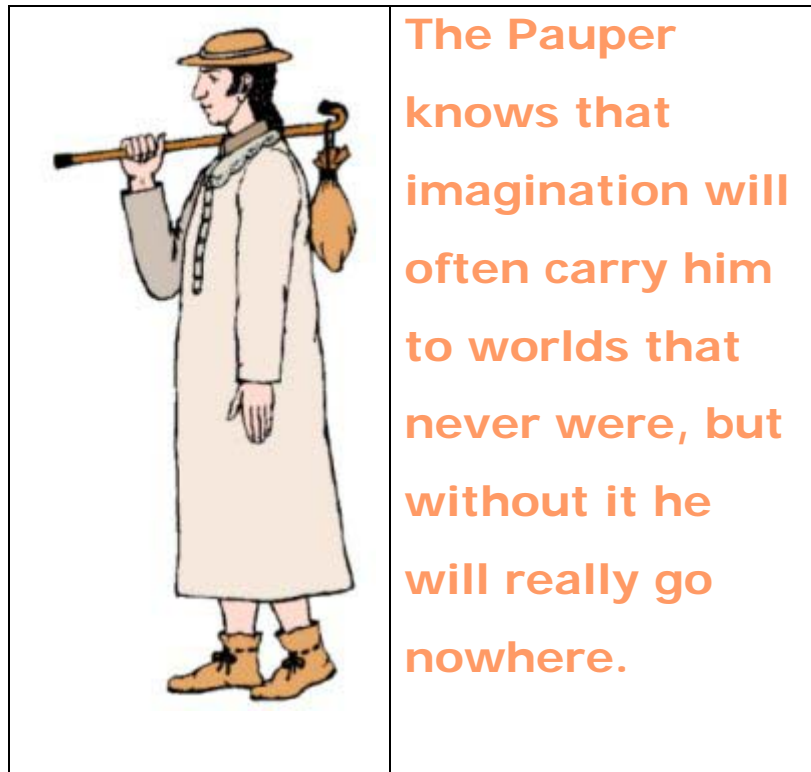
Virgin Atlantic Airways 800-

WestJet Airlines 800-538-5696
6528

Yugoslav Airlines 800-752-

Zambia Airways 800-223-1136

In this chapter we've looked at the often-used vehicle of overbooking by airlines to get free and drastically reduced airfares. You can use this technique as often as you'd like. I highly recommend it to the budget conscious, traveling Pauper.



Chapter Two

Get Your Magnificent Miles



Finding Value

What's It Worth to You?

Those miles you accumulate by flying when you travel have an individual value. It's just tough to choose an exact monetary figure.

It's worth the effort of trying, however. The accepted range is somewhere between one and three US cents per mile.

Let's say you've collected 50 thousand miles and you're ready to book a trip. At one cent per mile, your chosen flight should cost a

minimum of \$500 USD. Two cents per mile: \$1000. So we've established the range for tickets at \$500-1000.

If your desired trip costs \$450, don't change your trip around. But if it is significantly lower than \$500, you might want to reconsider your strategy.

This might be the time to save your miles and purchase the ticket. If your budget allows, it might also be worth upgrading your trip.

Unfortunately, many travelers simply plunk down their mileage for a trip they could book well below even the bottom end of the range.

Emergencies aside, be sure you're getting a full ride for those miles.

Miles for Sale

The same thing applies to these new Web sites offering to "cash in" your miles for money and merchandise.

Consumer studies indicate those items usually are far too expensive when bought with mileage.

In short, it can be like walking into a McDonald's and paying \$30 for a hamburger.

Use these programs as a last resort. For example, if you have a few thousand miles remaining with an airline you're unlikely to fly with again, getting merchandise from their site or an independent site

could make sense. Better yet, just stick to no more than three airlines to maximize your mileage account.

Places offering to buy your unused miles should be treated in the same way. Anything less than 1.5 cents per mile is a sacrifice on your part--you're pocketbook is the one taking a hit.

Get Help!

Busy people rarely have time for the intricacies of frequent flier strategies. Airlines plan on that--it's a moneymaker for them.

Since you're stuck with the system, it sometimes makes sense to hire a company that will manage your miles.

[Miles Direct](#) and [Max Miles](#) both do this for a fee under \$30 USD per annum. They keep track of all your frequent flier accounts on one statement, too. They always will red flag miles about to expire. They'll also lead you to opportunities for more points.

Unless you've got a lot of miles in several accounts, these services probably are not worth the money. However, their existence is testimony to the importance of managing miles properly.

If you're going to deal in frequent flier miles, gather them up as often as you can, and use all of them. When you let splinter blocks of 5000 miles expire, guess who wins...Yep, the airlines.

Remember--You paid for those miles!

Don't Give Away your Advantage

What could be better than earning free travel tomorrow when you pay your bills today? Frequent flier programs are a much-prized institution of budget travel.

So you might be surprised to learn airlines love them far more than most travelers, and with good reason. Take a moment to look at this from an airline viewpoint.

A frequent flier program can keep a major airline in firm control of its hubs while chasing away cheaper carriers. Customers of all carriers tend to be loyal when they have frequent flier miles.

Best of all, many consumers manage their miles so poorly that the actual cost of maintaining the programs might be much less than you imagine.

What You Need to Know

Accumulate Miles Aggressively. Travel, credit card programs and airline partners all provide ways to get mileage.

Make note of the program's "partners". Which hotels and rental car companies cooperate? Use them!

Never Let Miles Expire. If you have mileage remaining after planning a flight, consider expanding that flight to use ALL of the miles in your account. Ask about converting the soon-to-expire

mileage into an award certificate, which nearly always will extend your decision time by about a year.

Find the Lowest-Priced Fare, then Compare. Let's say you want to fly to London from Boston. If the lowest fare available is \$365 USD and you're planning to use 50,000 miles, the airline wins. Each mile is worth at least one U.S. penny.

The Goal is Free Travel, Not Big Mileage. Resist the temptation to watch mileage pile up in your account(s). Consider breaking that 100,000-mile block into four or five segments, each good for a free flight.

Limit Your Accounts. Concentrate on one or two programs. Consider plans that include a number of airlines.

Treat frequent flier miles as you would money in the bank.

What do that birthday gift for Aunt Mary and the red-eye flight from Chicago to Atlanta have in common? Both can produce frequent flier miles.

Long ago, someone figured out that actual air miles flown should not be the only reason for awarding free travel. Accordingly, some credit card companies offer cushy deals for travelers. You earn a mile or more for each dollar spent. But please understand this: no one is throwing away miles. You're purchasing them.

Likewise, when you buy a ticket and make a trip, you pay for the service *and* the frequent flier miles. They are a commodity, and are not awarded without a cost.

But that's not the way many travelers look at their mileage. You would think their accounts were prizes won at a county fair. They throw away miles right and left because, after all, it's not really dollars. They let mileage expire.

Don't think the airlines haven't noticed this tendency.

More than 50 million travelers have miles to use. Millions of those miles expire without being utilized. Every time that happens, the airlines pocket a nice piece of change.

I remember a presidential debate in which someone tried to cut off former president Ronald Reagan. He replied petulantly: "I paid for this microphone!"

You should have the same feeling whenever someone tries to cancel, discount or steal your frequent flier miles.

I recommend you join the Frequent Flier News website where you will find breaking news about frequent flier miles and promotions.

<http://www.frequentflier.com/>

Here's a look at the home page:

FrequentFlier CRIER NEWS Highlights of this Week's Newsletter

Breaking News

The Promise of Free Seats, Broken

More Miles from Best Western

La Quinta Offers Double Southwest Points

[MORE »](#)

The FrequentFlier Forum

Post your questions and comments on the forum, and check out posts by others. [MORE »](#)

Miles from Credit Cards

After flights, credit card purchases are the most lucrative source of miles. That's the good news. The bad news is that there are too many cards to choose from. Which card is for you? [MORE »](#)

FrequentFlier Polls

Cast your vote in travel-related polls, and compare your opinion with others'. Currently featured: Which airlines do the best job delivering on the promise of award seats? [MORE >](#)

[FrequentFlier Programs](#)

Most of what you might ever want to know about frequent flyer programs is here. [MORE >](#)

[Sweepstakes & Freebies](#)

Someone has to win those million-mile prize drawings, right? May as well be you! [MORE >](#)

[The FrequentFlier Bookstore](#)

Here, in conjunction with [Amazon.com](#), we make available a selection of books related to travel generally, and frequent flyer programs particularly. [MORE >](#)

[FrequentFlier Merchandise](#)

A selection of high-quality merchandise (t-shirts, bags, mugs, etc.) bearing the FrequentFlier.com logo. [MORE >](#)

[Travel-Grams](#)

Travel-Grams are digital postcards (with images of historic aircraft, naturally) you can use to stay in touch with friends and relatives.

[MORE](#)

Airports

The Internet's most comprehensive collection of airport links. [MORE](#)

I love this site and the newsletter you can sign up for. It constantly gives you the very latest news and ever-changing opportunities to gather up frequent flier miles.

Here's another resource for you. Become a courier and fly on the cheap.

What's a Courier Company?

Courier companies have overnight shipments to cities such as London, Hong Kong, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Bangkok, Manila, Melbourne, Manchester and several other locations in Europe, Asia, South America, and Australia.

These companies have flights booked every single day of the year. What do they do? They are in the business of providing a courier, an individual who buys only the seat space, for companies who are sending luggage on commercial airlines. They simply purchase a coach class ticket and use the allotted luggage space to ship their packages.

What do they do with the seat? That's where you come in. The company sell the seat space to individuals at bargain prices. In other words, you fly as the passenger, a courier as they call it, checking in their luggage. Many companies will send a courier because it is cheaper than shipping freight by air cargo. Also, shipping material as luggage clears customs can be hours, even days quicker than by cargo freight. They cannot send their important luggage without you, so they offer the seat for very low prices. Interested yet?

If you wanted, you could probably be on a flight to some exotic country within the next 24 hours. To learn more about this unusual way to fly for pennies on the dollar visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/7y2tp>

The International Association of Air Couriers (IAA) has about 1,400 round trip flights each week to seventy-one cities worldwide. Return tickets are usually good for a full week, often longer. If you participate, you're responsible for transportation to the departure cities, which can be found in many major markets like Atlanta, Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Chicago. Here are some examples of round trip fares: Paris - \$395, Bangkok - \$295, London - \$199. See why our Pauper loves this way of travel?

IAA requires an annual membership fee of \$50 but you save from 50 to 80% off of airline tickets. You will learn about them all with your monthly newsletters *Air Courier Bulletin* and *Shoestring Traveler* (alternating months), which are included in your membership. You

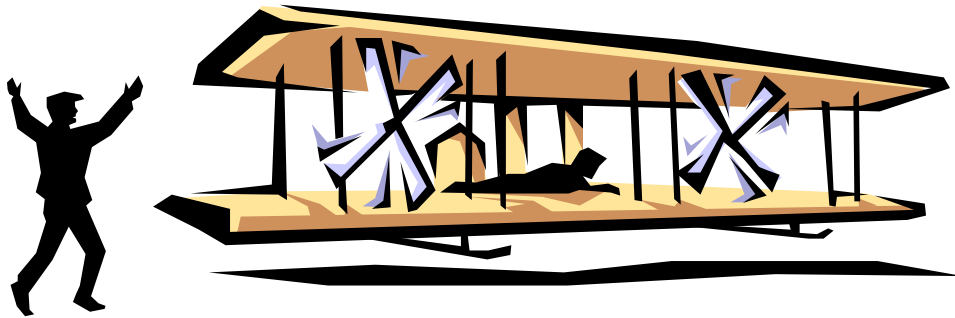
can also get the ACA World Guidebook, MEDEX card, exclusive discounts, last minute specials and all flight schedules: 8 South 'J' Street, P.O. Box 1349, Lake Worth, FL. 33460. Call 407-582-8320 and visit: <http://www.aircourier.com>

Here's another agent that represents many different courier companies:

Now Voyager 74 Varrick Street, Suite 307, New York, NY 10013. Call 212-431-1616 and visit: <http://www.nowvoyager.com>

Chapter 3

The Paupers' Secrets To Flying!



In this chapter I'll start confessing the “secrets of the pauper” and continue revealing them throughout the rest of the book. But, right now, I'll confess to little known ways of really taking advantage of the most popular form of transportation (airline flights) and saving bundles of money in the process.

Many of us rely on the ever-famous “airfare price-wars” or our travel agent to save us money while flying. But depending on them too much may cause you to miss the boat (or the plane, to be exact) even though these price-wars can work to your advantage.

The airlines often slash their normal fares during sluggish travel times in order to entice you to buy a ticket. The best advice is to regularly scan your travel sections in the newspapers and talk to your agent about these low fares.

If you wish to travel like the rich and famous but make it happen with a pauper's budget here are some little known "secrets" that will make you glad you purchased this book.

Pauper's Secret Confession #1

Call the airlines between midnight and 1 a.m. Monday through Friday to get cheaper tickets. Most people never realize that at midnight, airline agents revise and load new fares into their trusty little computers (actually really big computers). The best shot at rock bottom fares is just after they have done the updating!

Pauper's Secret Confession #2

Check into other airports other than the main one you usually use. Many major cities like New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Dallas, Washington, and London have two airports. I live in Boston and yet, along with our Logan Airport there is the city of Providence, Rhode Island that offers an airport, too. So, check into surrounding towns and cities so you can compare airfares. I've often flown out of Providence, not only because the fares can be cheaper, but also Southwest Airlines doesn't even have permission to fly out of Boston. I've saved hundreds of dollars on my flights with SW Airlines to Dallas because I went a little bit out of my way to get to the airport in Providence. You may be able to do the same in your locale.

Pauper's Secret Confession #3

The early bird catches the plane! Typically, the earlier you book your flight the more you save. Most special fares have restrictions of 7 to 30 day advance purchase. Usually non-refundable but they

can offer deep discounts. Just make sure your travel times are set in stone so you don't forfeit your money by missing this flight. On the other hand, there are "last minute" deals too. Here's an address every wise traveler should use to get e-mails for last minute flight deals: <http://www.smartliving.com>

Be a Pauper and get e-mailed with info that can save you a bundle if you're flexible on your travel schedules.

Pauper's Secret Confession #4

Get out of town on Wednesday! Mid-week travel is usually less expensive. If you leave on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday and stay over a Saturday night, you can garner terrific savings compared to Friday through Monday when most people fly.

I promise you, most of the sites you wish to visit will be there in the middle of the week just like they are on weekends. A bonus is there are almost always fewer tourists around and lines to wait in, too!

So, start taking your vacations Wednesday-to-Wednesday or Tuesday-to-Tuesday. Tell your boss about your plans; most companies don't force you to leave weekend to weekend only. You have a week's vacation, for instance- well, a week is a week. It can start and end when you want it to! You'll save a lot by choosing your departure and arrival dates this way!

Pauper's Secret Confession #5

Did you know buying a one way or split ticket can be better than round trip sometimes? Well, our traveling pauper sure does! Let's say you're going from Boston to Dallas. It may be cheaper to get two separate tickets. You could buy one ticket from Boston to Nashville and one from Nashville to Dallas. It all depends on the connecting cities and your airlines hubs. Just tell your agent you are willing to travel out of other airports and connect using regional airports to save money.

Pauper's Secret Confession #6

Open wide! You should look into what is called an “Open-Jaw” ticket. These are used when a traveler is arriving and departing from different cities. One ticket is purchased to cover both cities. Sometimes this is even cheaper than the strategy in secret #5, so check into it with your travel agent or airline representative to see if this trick is available instead of two one-way tickets. Compare the price of each.

Pauper's Secret Confession #7

Here's an excellent online service called “SideStep” which you can download into Internet Explorer or Netscape. You enter destinations and dates and SideStep quickly searches a couple of dozen affiliated regional and international airlines to find the best, rock bottom rates. <http://www.sidestep.com/>

Pauper's Secret Confession #8

Here's some useful airline slang for you to use: “code share”.

Ask your booking agent if this flight is a “code-share” flight. That means the same flight is now offered by two different airlines. Just copy down the name of the other airline and check into what they are charging.

Only one of the airlines is actually operating the flight even though both are listing it as their own. The actual operator always offers

this fight for less, so book with them.

You'll find code-share flights more often these days because airlines are making new alliances with each other more than ever. Our Pauper wins!

Pauper's Secret Confession #9

How would you like to go to Paris, France for five days, airfare included complete with hotel package, including continental breakfast, transfers, and sightseeing vouchers, for less than \$400 per person?

Our Pauper sure would!

That very offer was recently presented in an American Airlines online newsletter to subscribers. Sign up for the airline newsletters (you can unsubscribe anytime) they are free.

From weekend getaways, to international flight packages the newsletter saves you money on travel and doesn't require that you constantly visit the airline website for the latest offering. Instead it is conveniently delivered to your e-mail inbox.

Go to your favorite airlines web site and click on "registration" to sign up for their announcements newsletter.

Pauper's Secret Confession #10

Well, this used to be a secret, but not anymore---not to you! You were smart enough to buy this book so you already know about volunteering to get “bumped” for free air travel.

Our pauper just wanted to remind you that it is a very valuable strategy that is hardly ever used, but can substantially save you loads of cash in your travels.

Re-read Chapter One: “Let’s Get Bumped” to learn all you need to know about this little secret!

Chapter Four

All About Consolidators



Our Pauper loves to save money using an airfare consolidator. These consolidators contract with airlines to get tickets at cheaper rates than the general public. Because they buy large blocks of tickets the airlines love them.

Though you can get really good deals by knowing how to use consolidators, remember they are not structured for great service. They're playing the quantity game, not the hold-your-hand game. Use your travel agent instead if you need personal attention.

The best time to use consolidators is during high travel times of the year. Other than these peak travel times consolidators don't really offer much better rates than those offered in the lowest advertised

fares. Yet, you can enjoy 20-30% off when you decide to travel during Christmas, for instance.

The other good time to turn to consolidators is if you are traveling on short notice. Unlike the airlines, they don't penalize you for traveling on the spur of the moment.

Always use a credit card with consolidators.

Some consolidators can charge high fees if you change your plans and/or cancel your flight. So make sure you understand what the policy on cancellations and refunds is.

In this chapter, I'll give you a list of consolidators that are available to you directly or through your travel agent.

In addition, I'd recommend you purchase a copy of *Consumer Reports Travel Letter*, which is available at most libraries or you can subscribe for \$39. Write to: **Consumer Reports Travel Letter**, 101 Truman Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10703-1057.

Let's get started:

Cheap Tickets sells more than 500,000 tickets a year for domestic and international flights. Now they even help you with hotels and cruises. Call 800-AIR-PLUS (800-247-7587) and visit <http://www.cheaptickets.com>

Council Travel Service offers super fares in the USA and almost all of Europe for cheapskates like you and me. They also package individual travel packages for vacations, car rentals, rail passes, paid internships and work programs. 800-226-8634 And visit:

<http://www.counciltravel.com>

Far Eastern Travel - if your plans include a visit to China. 800-275-3384

Fly Cheap has my favorite name among the known consolidators. They do a good job on all kinds of flights to all manner of destinations. 800-359-2432 and visit:

<http://www.flycheap.com>

Magical Holidays is specially geared for flights to Africa. 800-433-7773 or 800-228-2208

Nova Travel is your one-stop for all of eastern European countries. 818-222-8300

Pino Welcome Travel is set up to help you with worldwide travel but they specialize in Italy, Central and Latin America and South America. 800-247-6578 or 212-682-5400

STA is perfect if you're a student that wants a domestic or European flight bargain. 800-777-0112 and visit: <http://www.statravel.com>

Travel Interlink for all of Asia. 800-477-7172

Tzel Travel if you're going to Israel. 212-944-2121

UK Consolidated specializes in Ireland and the United Kingdom.
800-577-2900

Around The World In As Many Days As You Want!

Now let's look at consolidators that can send you around the world. Yes, it's a dream you've always had, right? You fly around the globe and see what Planet Earth is like from everywhere to everywhere

Why not? If you're a member of the Traveling Paupers, it may be more of a possibility than you've ever imagined.

Here are some consolidators that break their backs to make this dream a reality. They offer tons of routings and you can even get a guarantee to see the sites you really have a hankering for. Ground transportation, city tours and even lodging can be booked in advance or when you arrive.

Air brokers International, Inc. has been around since 1987 for around the world travel with their "Circle The Globe" programs. Trips start at less than \$999 per person. Stay as long as you wish in each location because all travel is good for up to a year. They also provide information about travel insurance, visas and inoculations. Hotel reservations and stopover packages are available too! Air Brokers

International, Inc. 150 Post Street, Suite 620, San Francisco, CA. 94108 Call 800-883-3273 and visit <http://www.airbrokers.com>

Air Tickets Direct isn't shy in claiming the lowest guaranteed prices on scheduled airlines. No charters and no advance purchases necessary on most fares. I like the fact that they don't place any additional fees when I use my credit card. Flights start at \$200 one-way. 208 E. 43rd Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10017 Call 888-888TKTS and visit <http://www.airticketsdirect.com>

High Adventure Travel will take you around the world in their Around-The- World- Airfare- Program. Prices start at about a grand and anyplace you want to go is usually included. 800-350-0612 and visit <http://www.airtreks.com>

Ticket Planet has a bunch of programs to offer from Around-The- World, to Circle- The- Pacific, and lots of exotic destinations like Bali, Nepal and Cambodia. Fares are, again, starting at \$1000 pp. 59 Grant Avenue, Level 3, San Francisco, CA. 94108 Call 800-799-8888 and visit <http://www.ticketplanet.com>

So there you go! Join the rich and famous - travel around the world without breaking the bank.

Pauper's Secret Confession #11

Here's a website that searches most major Internet booking engines like Cheap Tickets, Ticket Planet and Travelocity. Out Pauper loves it because it saves time in making comparisons.

Visit: <http://www.qixo.com>

Then again, you could take the **shortest flight** in the world, too. If you fly between Orkney Islands of Westray and Papa Westray, Great Britain it will take you two minutes in the air--- it actually takes longer to board this flight---twenty minutes!



The Pauper
knows that
traveling is like
falling in love;
the world is
made new.

Chapter Five

Cruises On The Cheap!



Ah, the call of the sea! We dream of luxury and staterooms. We imagine eating at the captain's table, lounging in deck chairs, soaking up sun and surf.

Cruises on ocean liners have become more popular than ever. In fact, as of 2004 the industry in the USA alone rose to \$20.5 Billion. Why not? The ships are so state-of-the-art with every detail carefully considered just for our benefit. We can relax while being carried, as if on a cloud, over the world's vast and immeasurable oceans.

No lugging luggage from destination to destination, no jumping on and off tour buses - not on a floating resort like this!

Take the amazing Royal Caribbean's *Voyager Of The Sea*, for instance. It is a \$700 million dollar ship that holds 3,115 passengers and 1,200 crewmembers. It weighs 142,000 tons; equivalent to an aircraft carrier. The *Queen Mary 2*, launched in 2003, is even grander. Its decks are at a height equal to that of a 23-story building.

It has 5 swimming pools; a restaurant that is three decks high, even an art gallery, a planetarium, 90 suites (including 6 penthouses), 5 1,650 sq.ft. apartments - complete with concierge, butler and private gyms, of course.

The competition is fierce, too. In the last two years, various cruise lines have built some 50 all-new ships.

In 'days of old', only the wealthy could afford to take a cruise. Now, there are enough bargains to fill all of these ships from bow to stern.

Ahoy! Let's get to the real scuttle about how cruise fares work in our Pauper's favor.

Types Of Fares

Several things, from peak travel times, off-season, one-time sailing, or a "positioning cruise" affect prices.

One-time sailings happen when a ship is "killing time" until it repositions to a more profitable cruising destination. Fares are dropped to fill up the ship – it's the same with re-positioning cruises, when a ship leaves a region at the end of the season on its way to another destination where the cruising season has just begun.

You'll find that consolidators for cruises get the best buys, just like they do for the airlines. I'll cover cruise consolidators later in this

chapter. In addition, last minute travelers and those that book months in advance also get great deals. Just like you do with the airlines.

Pauper's Secret Confession #12

Lots of the new ships are now charging for extra activities like miniature golf and in line skating, among others things. Be sure and find out what activities are *not* included before making a commitment. These fun & games can really add up. Our Pauper enjoys playing as well as the next guy; he just likes doing so with money in his pocket!

There are six categories of cruise lines:

1. Budget
2. Moderate
3. Deluxe
4. Ultra-deluxe
5. Boutique cruise
6. Adventure or expedition

Numbers 3, 4, and 5 above require formal and semi-formal attire most nights in the main dining room.

Choosing a cabin is where you need to be money-conscious. Outside cabins have portholes or picture windows, which of course, raises the price. Without the view you can save up to \$1000. Lots of ships have a television channel that shows a picture of the view from the ships bridge. Our Pauper clicks on the TV and pockets the money. The higher the level of your cabin the more money it will cost you. In fact, they can be as much as \$3,000 more than a similar cabin that is located on lower decks.

Pauper's Secret Confession #13

Did you know that the best cabins to avoid seasickness in are the lower and middle deck cabins? There is more stability here than the pricey upper cabins! Our Pauper likes the lower deck rooms for price. Just make sure you're not placed under the Disco, in high traffic areas, or near the engine room. Diesel powered ships vibrate near the stern (rear) of the ship and passenger cabins near the bow (front) may subject you to hearing the anchor raise and lower. Let the Pauper in you be aware!

Here are some wonderful ways to save money. Check which ones you can implement to travel like the rich and famous on a Pauper's budget.

- ✓ If you're 55 or older, you can get senior citizen discounts.
- ✓ If you belong to AAA (American Automobile Association) or AARP (American Association Of Retired Persons), you can get a discount.
- ✓ "Buy One-Get One" fares are often offered. You buy your ticket and bring another Pauper along for the ride. Or better yet, split the cost of the fare and you both travel at a 50% discount.

- ✓ Added Value or Free Days. You book a 7-day cruise and get 3 days free or free shore excursions, as well as pre or post cruise hotel rooms.
- ✓ Flat fare specials are one fixed price for the best available cabin at the time of booking.
- ✓ Share a cabin with friends, another couple or two family members and you could easily end up cruising for free. This fare package can also be cut four ways - reducing the burden on all. You will be sleeping in head over bunks that are comfortable, so consider this strategy. Just make sure everyone gets along.
- ✓ You should check into airfares at reduced rates offered by your cruise line to get you to your embarkation site.
- ✓ How about an upgrade? Better cabins, discounted certificates, 10-40 percent savings off advertised prices may all be offered by your cruise line through their respective newsletters.
- ✓ The early bird still gets the cruise, just like with the airlines. If you're a good long-range planner, then you can save mucho dinero. The earlier you book your cruise - the more you save. Typically 10 - 40%.
- ✓ If you belong to an association, organization, if you have a wedding party, family reunion, belong to a church group or are

planning a corporate outing you can get a hefty group discount.
As always, don't be afraid to ask!

- ✓ Stand by! Yes, it happens with cruise ships too. Typically you're notified three weeks prior to departure if there is space. Late notice like this means you get a nice discount fare.

Pauper's Secret Confession #14

One of the biggest expenses on a cruise are those cocktails! Buy liquor onshore or at the cruise-line liquor store. Drink in your room or poolside. Get a steward to bring ice and mixers. Our pauper hates to spend \$10 for a glass of wine. If you add up the price of a drink or two for two people over a 7-day cruise - **ouch!**

Small Cruise Line Contacts:

Alaska's Glacier Bay Tours & Cruises---226 2nd Avenue West, West, Seattle, WA. 98119 Call 800-451-5952 and visit <http://www.glacierbaytours.com> Tour specializes in Alaska voyages.

American--- One Marine Park, Haddam, CT 06438. Call 800-814-6880 and visit <http://www.americancruiselines.com> Tour specializes in East Coast Intra-coastal and Inland Waterways.

American Canadian Caribbean Line---461 Walter Street, Warren, RI 02885. Call 800-556-7450 and visit <http://www.accl->

smallships.com Specializes in Caribbean, Panama Canal, Central America, South America, Canada, Great Lakes, and U.S. inland waterways.

Clipper--- 7711 Bonhomme Avenue, St.Louis, MO 63105 Call 800-325-0010 and visit <http://www.clippercruise.com> Specializes in Caribbean, Central America, South America, East Coast, Mexico, Alaska, Pacific Northwest, Panama Canal, Europe, Asia, South Pacific, Australia, Antarctic, and Arctic.

Radisson Seven Seas---600 Corporate Drive, Suite 410, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33334. Call 800-285-1835 and visit <http://www.rssc.com> Specializes in Caribbean, Panama Canal, Alaska, Bermuda, Central America, South America, Trans-Atlantic, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Indian Ocean, Asia, South Pacific, Antarctica and Worldwide.

Medium Sized Cruise Contacts:

Crystal---2049-Century Park East, Suite 1400, Los Angeles, CA 90067. Call 800-446-6620 and visit <http://www.crystalcruises.com> Specializes in Europe, Caribbean, Alaska, Mexico, Panama Canal, South America, South Pacific, Far East, and Worldwide.

Cunard--- 6100 Blue Lagoon Drive, Suite 400, Miami, FL 33126. Call 800-528-6273 and visit <http://www.cunardline.com> specializes in Caribbean, East Coast, Canada, Panama Canal, South Pacific, Far East, and Worldwide.

Orient---1510 Southeast 17th Street, Suite 300, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316. Call 800-333-7300 and visit <http://www.orientlines.com> specializes in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Indian Ocean, Asia, Antarctica, South Pacific, Central America, South America, Panama Canal, and Trans-Atlantic.

United States--- Robin Street Wharf, 1380 Port of New Orleans Place, New Orleans, LA 70130 Call 877-330-6600 and visit <http://www.unitedstateslines.com> specializes in Hawaiian Islands.

Windstar--- (sail cruisers) 300 Elliott Avenue West, Seattle, WA 98119 Call 800-258-7245 and visit <http://www.windstarcruises.com> specializes in Caribbean, Central America, Panama Canal, Trans-Atlantic, and Mediterranean.

World Explorer Cruises---555 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111 Call 800-845-3835 and visit <http://www.wecruise.com> specializes in Alaska, Central America, and Panama Canal.

Pauper's Secret Confession #15

When you go on a shore excursion, bring a picnic or snacks from the ship rather than buy lunch or dinner at some high priced, touristy restaurant. On most ships, the kitchen will put together a picnic for you---just make your request in advance. You can also take some fresh fruit, yogurt, and croissants from the breakfast buffet for snacks. For dessert, save some cookies from yesterday's afternoon tea, or last night's midnight buffet. No, this is not stealing!

You paid for this food already (unless you're a stow-away!)

Pauper's Secret Confession #16

Don't want to explore as part of a shore tour? Like doing it your way? Then our Pauper suggests you share a cab or bus with some other passengers to reduce costs.

And there is nothing wrong with going on foot. It's great exercise and more leisurely, not to mention much less costly. Our Pauper always slings a hobo's pole with a bag attached to the end filled with munchies from the on-ship buffet for the trek.

You know what else? Our Pauper only puts "so much" cash in his pocketbook when he goes on-shore. That way he doesn't get trapped into spending a bunch of moolah on silly items that catch his momentary fancy. You can't spend what you don't have. And the thief won't clean you out if you get mugged!

Large And Mega-Ship Cruise Line Contacts:

Carnival---Northwest 87th Avenue, Miami, FL 33178 Call 800-327-9501 and visit <http://www.carnival.com> specializes in Bahamas, Caribbean, Bermuda, Canada/New England, Hawaii, Mexico, Panama Canal, and Alaska.

Celebrity---1050 Caribbean Way, Miami, FL 33132 Call 800-437-3111 and visit <http://www.celebrity-cruises.com> specializes in Bermuda, Caribbean, Mexico, Panama Canal, Hawaii, Alaska, Central America, South America, Trans-Atlantic, Europe, and Africa.

Disney---210 Celebration Place, Celebration FL 34747 Call 800-951-3532 and visit <http://www.disneycruise.com> specializes in Bahamas and Caribbean.

Holland America--- 300 Elliott Avenue West, Seattle WA 98119 Call 800-426-0327 and visit <http://www.hollandamerica.com> specializes in Alaska, Caribbean, Panama Canal, Mexico, Hawaii, Canada, New England, Europe, South America, and Worldwide.

Royal Caribbean---1050 Caribbean Way, Miami FL 33132 Call 800-327-6700 and visit <http://www.royalcaribbean.com> specializes in Alaska, Bahamas, Bermuda, East Coast, Canada, Caribbean, Mexico, Panama Canal, Hawaii, Trans-Atlantic, Europe, Africa, Middle East, South Pacific, and Far East.

Cruise Consolidators Can Be A Pauper's Best Friend

Often called brokers and discounters, consolidators operate the same way as we discussed earlier with the airlines. They offer great deals, anywhere from 20-80% off, but you've got to have a particular destination in mind before calling them to book your cruise.

Most of the companies that I'll list for you in the next section have links to the websites for nearly all of the major cruise lines. You can also find actual deck plans, maps and weather information.

Check out this entire overview before you make a decision.

Once you know where you want to go, when you want to go and how much your Pauper wants to spend, call the consolidator.

Don't be afraid to check with several different consolidators about your trip - Paupers always comparison-shop for the best deal.

All of the consolidators listed here offer 'special deals' bulletins and newsletters you may wish to subscribe to.

Cruise.com--- 800-243-4103 and visit: <http://www.cruise.com>

The Cruise Marketplace--- 800-826-4333 and visit <http://www.thecruisemarketplace.com>

Cruise Vacation Center--- 800-803-7245 and visit <http://www.cruisevacationcenter.com>

ECruises.com---800-223-6868 and visit <http://www.ecruises.com>

Galaxy Cruise & Travel--- 800-445-4177 and visit <http://www.great-vacations.com>

National Discount Cruise Company - part of the American Express Company 800-788-8108 and visit <http://www.cruiseonsale.com>

Spur Of The Moment Cruises--- love their prices! 800-343-1991

Pauper's Secret Confession #17

Ever want to jump on a houseboat with family and friends?

It's a lovely, less expensive form of water travel than a full-blown cruise. A pauper has a great time on these water bound homes.

Houseboat rental information in the USA is available from the Houseboat Association of America, 4940 North Rhett Avenue, Charleston, SC 29405 and visit <http://www.houseboat.net>

All Aboard The Freighter Cruise

Let's get down and dirty, my little Pauper! If you want an adventure and to save scads of money, then look into taking a freighter across the seas.

These are usually working ships and the amenities are meager. But, if you just want be on the open sea, feel the joy of watching real sailors work their trade and having a whopping good story to go home with - then this mode of transport may be just for you!

There are restrictions, however. Freighters usually have no doctor on board so your physician needs to write a note stating you're healthy if you are aged from 60 - 78. If you're 79 or older, sorry, you won't be able to use this form of travel.

But, let's assume you're younger than that, you don't mind a lack of onboard activities or basic amenities. You are an adventurous Pauper who really will get a kick out of super-low fares. Then do this first - just book a short trip your first time around to make sure this form of ocean voyage is for you. Some offer a few days journey; others will take you around the world.

Freighter World Cruises is the big dog on the block and have been sailing the world for over 25 years. 180 South Lake Avenue, Suite 335, Pasadena, CA 91101 Call 800-531-7774 and visit

<http://www.freighterworld.com>

Maris Freighter Cruises These guys have short and long term voyages, standard cabins and private bathrooms. That's all pretty upscale for a freighter cruise. Maris USA Ltd., 215 Main Street, Westport, CT 06880 Call 800-99-MARIS (62747) and visit

<http://www.FreighterCruises.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #18

Some Pauper's have kids! Can you imagine that? They like a newsletter that not only gives them special 'deals' and super bargain tips, but also publishes a section written for and about kids called: "Cruisin' Kids Corner." **All Cruise News.com** 888-666-8120 and visit <http://www.cruise4miles.com>

Chapter Six

Rich Accommodations On A Pauper's Budget



It's time to settle in. We want to have hotel accommodations that are relaxing, as opulent as possible, and covered with great amenities at the most discounted rate we can wrangle. When we are traveling we choose places to stay hoping that each stop will make us feel "at home".

Of course, there are places that are awfully dull and boring. The rooms often achieve a maddening sameness from one chain locale to another. The rugs are a blasé rust color, the walls an uninspired white, and those pictures! Dumb, placid landscapes that look like

someone chose to adorn the room with paint-by-numbers paintings or a factory created still-life that nearly makes you ill.

Your amenities can be non-existent in these places, as well. You are lucky if you get an ice chest out in the hallway to fill up your in-room bucket. There may or may not be a soda machine down on the first floor, stuck somewhere east of no man's land.

The maids are always ignoring your 'DO NOT DISTURB' sign, assuming you're fortunate enough to even have such a sign. There is noise at all hours of the day and night, and getting someone to answer the phone in the front office is like waiting for a slug to make its way across country.

Sure, these are usually 'budget' hotels and motels. They cost way too much in our Pauper's modest opinion. There is no reason to sleep over in a hotel where you're not quite sure if the place has been cleaned, the sheets changed, or the light fixtures work. Not just to save a few dollars.

In this chapter we want to find some glittering establishments - fine, well-appointed hotels, motels and more. If we play our cards right, we can do it and pay even less than we would at one of the aforementioned 'sleaze' joints that pepper every town, city and highway around the world.

The trick is to employ some great strategies that every Pauper can use.

Let's get to them!

By now, you should realize that you can really be a frequent traveler. That's the whole point to budget travel. You get to 'move on out' with more frequency than you ever could, especially before you bought this book.

The good news is that many hotels and motels provide nice juicy rewards to frequent travelers. Hilton, Radisson and Baymont Inns, for instance, offer air miles and hotel points programs. Incentives and programs are listed for you in this chapter, along with contact info for all the major hotel and motel chains.

Pauper's Secret Confession #19

Our Pauper always quizzes the front desk on when the property is most (and least) busy. Book in advance to avoid peak occupancy periods and you'll always save a bundle.

Avoid holidays, weekends, special annual events and summer. They are the busiest times for hotels. Look out for conventions and special meetings that can tie up a city, too. That's when room space is at a premium and our Pauper chooses another location to visit.

(OK, --- well, --- summer may be asking too much. But if you can, travel south in summer, north in winter.)

You know where you can find good deals on hotels? Right there in your credit card bill each month. Many times you discover free nights, deep discounts, or special weekend packages offered.

I used to throw that advertising away until I found a particularly nice Pauper's bargain that almost ended up in the trash can.

When you make a reservation at a hotel, make sure that you mention anything that might entitle you to a discount, like being a government employee, a military rate, membership to an organization like AARP or AAA Discounts. There are often reduced rates offered for people 50 and older, so always inquire about a senior citizen discount, which

can often be at least 10% off the lowest rate. On the other end of the spectrum, children can get discounted too.

Let's Negotiate

Here's another big tip. Don't make your reservation through the toll-free number. Call that number just to get the local number and get the room rate while you have them on the phone. That gives you a starting point to negotiate with the hotel when you call to book your room.

These main 800 numbers don't have all the details that the local hotel operator does. They usually quote a rate that doesn't take into account how many rooms are available, what attractions the hotel is located near and other variables that only the actual hotel is aware of. If you quote a rate that the chain's main 800 number operator gave you, the local desk clerk will often work with you in lowering it to your satisfaction.

Persistence counts. Let them know that you are checking into other hotels nearby and want the very best rate before making your decision. I promise the desk clerk has been trained to beat out the competition.

Booking through a hotel's website can almost always save you money too. Hotels want people to save them in man hours by getting guests to do all the check-in over the Internet and thus will offer at least a 10% saving on a room you book yourself.

Pauper's Secret Confession #20

The best day to reserve a room is on Sunday. That's because, typically, the financial management is not working on that day, and any Pauper can get better deals and negotiate in a tougher manner.

The manager or desk clerk doesn't have the option of "checking with upper management" before giving an okay on a room rate.

Using coupon books are a good idea when the savings are substantial enough. The Entertainment Book series are available in most major cities. You can often find 50% off coupons for hotels as well as airlines, car rentals and cruises. They even contain coupons for money off on movies, dining and area attractions. Call 800-933-2605 and visit <http://www.entertainment.com>

At Holiday Inns and the Inter-Continental hotel chains you can now get prepaid gift cards. Our Pauper has been known to leave subtle hints to friends and family that they make real nice Christmas or Birthday gifts.

Pauper's Secret Confession #21

If you don't mind living on the edge, forget about all this pre-planning and phoning ahead. Just walk into a hotel and make a reservation after 8pm at night, instead of phoning in or arranging a room in advance.

Hotel rooms are a perishable commodity. If there's room, you can negotiate a very low rate for it because the hotel is desperate to get rid of empty inventory when the day's reservations have already been made by the masses.

Worldhotel has more than 200,000 listings for USA, Canada, Mexico and other worldwide destination. You can even do a search for hotels within 5-25 miles. 4206 Enterprise Avenue, Naples, FL 34101 Call 941-403-7881 and visit: <http://www.worldhotel.com>

The Wonderful World Of Hotel Discounters

A discounter is much like a travel agent. They work to get you the lowest price on hotel stays with the amenities you desire.

- ✓ You want New York City near Times Square?
- ✓ Or you're visiting my town, Boston, and want to be located within walking distance of Fenway Park for a Red Sox game?

Then you're better off calling a discounters instead of several hotels. Many discounters give you a written confirmation or prepaid voucher, which you present at check-in.

Here is a listing of some discounters that I recommend:

Accommodations Express lists 1,300 properties in 190 US cities, Bahamas, Turks and Caicos Puerto Rico, Aruba, and Curacao Island. They promise 60% off and there is a small fee for cancellation. 801 Asbury Avenue, 6th Floor, Ocean City, NJ 08226 Call 800-906-4685 and visit <http://www.accommodationsexpress.com>

Asia-Hotels.com with about 1,000 hotels and resorts in nearly 20 Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand. Nice photos of properties are available on the web site. <http://www.asia-hotels.com>

Euro-Hotels.com is the same outfit as above with many properties across Europe. <http://www.euro-hotels.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #22

Woof, woof! Ever see a Pauper with his trusty mutt traipsing faithfully behind?

Well, bring Fido (or any pet) along on your adventures. Check out this site:

<http://www.dogfriendly.com> or <http://www.petswelcome.com>

for listings of hotels, B&B's and campgrounds that just loves giving accommodations to four legged paupers.

Hotelguide.com Want 70% off on over 60,000 hotel listings in roughly 200 countries? This is your website, fellow Pauper. They even have a currency converter online for you.

<http://www.Hotelguide.com>

Discount Programs From Our Favorite Hotels

The following hotel chains offer their own discount programs and special promotions.

Adam's Mark great deals if you belong to AARP (Retired Persons) 800-444-2326 and visit <http://www.adamsmark.com>

Amerisuites Kids under 18 are free! The AmeriClub program is a frequent stay program. You get a free night for every 12 paid stays. 800-833-1516 and visit: <http://www.amerisuites.com>

Baymont Inn and Suites Frequent Traveler Program, Ovation, gives Paupers a free night stay every 12 nights paid. Also frequent flier miles, American Express rewards, and free merchandise. Senior discounts at some locales. 800-428-3438 and visit:

<http://www.baymontsinns.com>

Best Inns gives you 10% off for people 50 or older and lower rates for government employees, AAA & AARP members. They feature “Evergreen” rooms for allergy sufferers that are allergen free, chlorine free shower, and pure, filtered, drinking water. 800-237-8466 and visit

<http://www.bestinn.com>

Best Western Kids under 12 stay free and 10% discount for seniors. 800-528-1234-visit <http://www.bestwestern.com>

Country Hearth Inns with 10% off to travelers 50 and older. Program is called Country Club. Call 888-HEARTH and visit:

<http://www.countryhearth.com>

Days Inn Kids under 12 free and 10-50% off for those 60 or older. The September Days Club gives 10-50% off for 50 and older and discounts for rental cars, tours, on-site restaurants, free stay for spouses, free subscription to *Budget Travel*, and three \$5 Coupons Membership is currently \$15 per year. Super Saver fare for those booking 29 days or more in advance. 800-544-8313 and visit:

<http://www.daysinn.com>

Doubletree Hotels Discounts vary depending on location. Usually kids under 18 are free and 10% off for seniors. Members of AARP that book a room 21 days in advance achieve 40% savings. 800-528-0444 and visit <http://www.doubletree.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #23

Don't be overly generous! When you order room service, the tip is already figured into your bill. If you fill out the receipt and place a gratuity on it, you will get double charged for service. Don't do it! Read the fine print on your room service bill.

As a general rule, Pauper's don't order room service, anyway. Most hotels charge top dollar for sandwiches and small treats that you can get much cheaper when you go out on the town.

And keep your hands off the tempting treats in those baskets and small refrigerators in some rooms, unless you're willing to pay \$2.50 for a candy bar or crackers. And those little bottles of booze can run as high as \$8.95 each! Go to the bar, or visit a liquor store and use the refrigerator to keep your mixers and fluids cold.

One Pauper we know actually asks the hotel to remove those baskets from the room so she doesn't get tempted. She keeps the coffee pot, though. If the hotel charges you for a cup of coffee stay somewhere else.

Embassy Suites Under 18 free 10% off for seniors. Free cooked to order or continental breakfast 800-362-2779 and visit

<http://www.embassysuites.com>

Hilton Hotels Under 18 free and 10% off for seniors. The Senior Honor Program offers 50% off for retirees 55 and older or 60 and older retired or not. Depending on how much you spend at a Hilton Hotel per year you can get another 20% off at their restaurants and cash certificates. Call 800- 445-8667 and visit:

<http://www.hilton.com>

Hampton Inns The Lifestyle 50 program allows four persons over age 50 to stay in a room, with two double beds for a single rate. Kids under 18 free with an adult. Call 800-426-7866 and visit:

<http://www.hamptoninn.com>

Drury Inns 10% off for 55+ and the Drury Member Rewards Program earn you points for rooms, airlines, and cruises. Drury Gold Key Club is the frequent traveler program for free nights. Call 800-553-2666 and visit: <http://www.choicehotels.com>

Econo Lodges 55+ get 10% discount. Econo Traveler Club benefits include one free night for every six nights stay at participating motels. You don't have to stay six consecutive nights to get the freebie either. 800-553-2666 and visit <http://www.choicehotels.com>

Extended Stay America no special deals but good flat rates. Starting at \$209 for a full week. Each room has a kitchenette. Call 800-398-7829 and visit <http://www.extstay.com>

Holiday Inn/ Express/Resorts/Crown Plaza and Staybridge Suites 50+ 20% off rooms and 10% off their restaurants. All of the above

Holiday Inn Properties have a frequent traveler club. Kids 12 and under can order free from the Kids Eat Free Program Menu. Call 800-465-4329 and visit: <http://www.holiday-inn.com>

Howard Johnsons 59+ get 50% off room rates. Free Super Miles program with one point awarded for every \$1 spent, including phone calls, restaurant, and taxes! Points are good for rooms, airline tickets, car rentals, and gift certificates. Kids 18 and under stay free with an adult. 800-406-1411 and visit: <http://www.hojo.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #24

A smart Pauper always does a tour of the hotel he's staying in. Take 15 or 20 minutes to find out where the pool is, the fire escapes, the gym, salons, and the restaurants. Be familiar with your surroundings, it not only keys you into the amenities right under your nose, but it makes you safer.

One Pauper said he was amazed at how uncrowded hotel pools usually are and takes a midnight swim before retiring. He loves the gym too for a brisk workout and a nice hot tub or steam room for relaxation. He figures he's already paid for this stuff, so why not enjoy it?

Hyatt Hotels & Resorts Discounts for AAA members and up to 50% off for those 62+ in most cities. Gold Passport Program awards

certificates for rooms and other amenities. 888-591-1234 and visit:
<http://www.hyatt.com>

La Quinta Inns 55+ get 15% off. Returns Club is frequent traveler program. Members get free check cashing, no added charge for spouses or children 18 or under. Join bonus points by joining online. Call 800-531-5900 and visit: <http://www.laquinta.com>

Marriott AARP member can get 50% off room rates. 62+ also get this discounted rate. The Marriott Rewards Program can get you a free vacation and points for frequent flier programs. Call 800-249-0800 and visit: <http://www.marriott.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #25

Check-in clerks are trained to try and get you to “upgrade” your room. They will tell you that you can now get a ‘better view’ overlooking (fill in the attraction), or a room just over the pool, or something else wonderful and ‘special’.

Don't fall for it!

A Pauper knows he will never spend enough time staring out the window of his hotel room to look at (fill in the attraction) to ever justify the additional cost.

Just say: “Thanks, but, no thanks!”

Motel 6 Discounts vary by location but usually you'll find 10% off for AARP members. Children 17 and younger stay free with an adult.

Small pets allowed, free. Call 800-466-8356 and visit

<http://www.motel6.com>

Quality Inns, Comfort Inns, Clarion and Choice Hotels: Kids 18 and under free and 60+ 10-30% off. Ask about this senior discount when you order. 800-221-2222 and visit:

<http://www.comfortinns.com>

Radisson Hotels Children 19 and under stay free with an adult, and adults 65+ are entitled to 25-40 % off rooms. Radisson Partner miles program gives 500 miles/points through 20 different travel programs,

including airlines, car rental, etc. Family discounts. Bed & Breakfast Breakaway Rates program. Also a Rewards Program. No blackout dates. Free sign up points available. Members also get 10-20% off room rates. Call 800-333-3333 and visit: <http://www.radisson.com>

Ramada and Plaza Hotels Under 18 free and 10-30% for seniors. Lots of programs, including frequent traveler, Club Ramada and more. Call 888-298-2054 and visit: <http://www.ramada.com>

Red Roof Inns 60+ get 10% off room rates. Redi Card Rewards Program gives travelers 60+ free road maps, bonus discounts on car rentals and future stays at participating Red Roof Inns. Call 800-843-7663 and visit: <http://www.redroof.com>

Sheraton Hotels under 18 stay free and 15-20% for seniors. AARP members get 50% off published rates. Non-members 60+ also get 50% discount. Call 800-325-3535 and visit <http://www.sheraton.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #26

If you're booking a room, always ask if the hotel has any new incentive programs. Many times the marketing department will spring a real doozy of a deal to pump up flagging profits at hotels in certain cities.

Some of the old programs may have been cancelled too. So always ask for your discounts, but do it after an initial room rate has been quoted to you.

That's a Pauper's negotiation technique that saves you dollars!

Westin Hotels And Resorts various rates depending on location.

Discounts range from 10 to 50% off. Call 888-625-5144 and visit:

<http://www.westin.com>

Mi Casa, You Casa? Or A Pauper's Home Is His Castle.

Home swapping allows you to go almost anywhere in the world and stay for a short while or an extended time without paying anything for accommodations.

One Pauper trades the use of his house to another to get a vacation elsewhere. You get all the comforts of home, including full kitchens and absolute privacy, with no rigid check-in or check-out times. The best part is that exotic, off-the-beaten-track places are, at last,

affordable. How about summer in the south of France? How about a little skiing in Aspen, Colorado or a dip in the ocean at Key West?

If you're planning on moving to a new place for business, this is a great way to "check it all out" first.

You can swap once or as many times as you wish in any given year. The trick, of course, is having your property located in a desirable area.

If this appeals to the Pauper in you, get a copy of *Home Exchange Vacationing* published by Rutledge Hill Press and written by Mary and Bill Barbour.

Here are some other places to learn more:

Homelink U.S.A. You get 5 directories a year. Listings are in America and range from apartments to mansions. Call 800-638-3841 and visit: <http://www.homelink.com>

International Home Exchange is an Internet company with over 1,000 members. No charge for searching lists. Call 800-898-9660 and visit: <http://www.homeexchange.com>

Intervac U.S. members get five catalogues a year with more than 10,000 homes in over 50 countries. Senior rates are cheaper. Call 415-435-3497 and visit: <http://www.intervacus.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #27

Got a good one for you last minute travelers. I went to Margarita Island, in the Caribbean and lounged on sandy beaches, golfed, had a blast with the nightlife, visited the spas and enjoyed first class shopping for 8 days for \$232.

That's with airfare, unlimited drinks, meals, and more. I used Moment's Notice. This discount club lets Paupers save on vacation packages, cruises and more. They have a Hot Deal featured on the website. Call 888-241-3366 and visit:

<http://www.moments-notice.com>

Senior Vacation And Home Exchange an Internet resource for 50+ interested in exchanging houses. Visit

<http://www.seniorshomeexchange.com>

Camping & RV's

Look around you, there are over 10 million recreation vehicles currently on the road in America alone. You think they're all retirees, huh? No, most of them are families.

Besides being a "roving home" and a very affordable alternative to hotels, it's a great way to meet people. Campground and RV parks work like the rest of the travel industry and adjust their rates according to peak seasons.

Traveling this way allows for more flexibility with impromptu trips easily undertaken. In fact, surveys shows 8 out of every 10 owners often keep their vehicles packed and ready to go. The average participant plans to log 1,800 miles and spend 25 days a year on the road.

The very affordable pop-up folding camper is hands down the most popular, usually costing around \$3,500. Other kinds include the truck camper, travel trailer, fifth wheeler, and full blown motor home, which can cost as much as \$35,000.

Inside the nicer models, you'll find walk-in closets, DSS Satellite systems, king size beds, heated tile floors, automatic awnings, slide out patios, retractable sunroofs, spiral staircases and rooftop decks.

Pauper's Secret Confession #28

If you're thinking about buying a used RV or camper be a smart Pauper and get a warrantee. Make sure a qualified mechanic checks the vehicle. Always ask the current owner why he is selling, if it's because he thinks the baby is on its last legs, and he's driven it for over 5 years---look elsewhere.

Like most things you get what you pay for, and these kinds of buys can be tricky if you haven't done your research.

Remember, the average use in mileage is 1,800 miles per year. If the RV you are looking at is 5 years old, it should have around 9000 miles on it. Anymore and you're getting a really used (maybe used up) RV.

Here are some dealers you can contact:

✓ **Coleman** Call 800-532-2318 and visit

<http://www.colemancampers.com>

✓ **Jayco** Call 219-825-5861 <http://www.jayco.com>

✓ **Starcraft RV** 800-945-4787 <http://www.starcraftrv.com>

If you're 62 or older and plan to visit America's park system you should consider the "Golden Age Passport". It's available for a one-time cost of \$10 and sometimes on site for \$0 - a Pauper's Dream! The Passport entitles you to free admission to all national parks,

monuments, forest and recreation areas, and anyone traveling with you in the same vehicle also gets in free.

You can get yours at most National Parks or at <http://www.nps.com>

What about RV'ing in Europe? Motor Homes International may be for you. They help you tour Europe by motor home Call 813-771-1027

Pauper's Secret Confession #29

Honestly, I don't know too many Paupers that own a full-fledged motor home. They are just too pricey for cost conscious travelers and they tie you down to one mode of travel. I mean you need to constantly use that RV to make it worthwhile owning a moving piece of real estate.

But, I confess we have been known to rent an RV!

Call Cruise America Rental & Sales at one of their 25 locations around the USA. 800-327-7799 and visit

<http://www.cruiseamerica.com>

Another option is to snuggle up to your neighbors that have purchased one of these massive vehicles. If it's just sitting in the garage or yard, they might want to rent it out to you. It's worth asking when you have a chat over the fence. They know where you live, right?

Pauper's Secret Confession #30

Did you know some campgrounds will trade free camping in exchange for labor? If you don't mind some cleaning, check-ins, being an activity director, guide a tour, offer some special entertainment, or do small maintenance chores--- you can stay for free.

Try *Workamper News*, which lists hundreds of job openings

across the country. Call 501-362-2637 and visit
<http://www.workamper.com>



The Pauper never gets upset or angry on the road, for he knows there are so many alternatives to choose from.

Don't Get Hostile - Just Check Into A Hostel

Hostels are not just for college-aged backpackers. Not anymore. Paupers love hostels because of the incredibly low prices for surprisingly good accommodations.

There is even a group called Elderhostel for older travelers.

This whole thing started in Europe about 100 years ago, as an inexpensive way for students to find lodging. Now hostels are more sophisticated, and while some are converted jailhouses and log cabins, you'll usually find a lot of ambiance. Sometimes you'll find one large room with many beds, while others have private rooms with only two beds in them.

But boy, will the Pauper in you celebrate the low cost of hostels. One hostel we know of, in the heart of Manhattan, mere blocks away from Times Square, is a fraction of the cost you would pay for a Big Apple hotel (which averages \$200) a night. We recently paid \$32 a night.

Pauper's Secret Confession #31

You don't have to be a member of a hostel organization, but you'll spend more money if you're not! The best place to find groups and make reservations is by visiting

<http://www.hostels.com>

This Pauper owns a copy of Hostels U.S.A. from Globe Pequot Press. Most countries have their own guides so check with your local library.

One more thing: In Europe many hostels offer private "family rooms"- so ask about them.

Love to ski? Well, I don't have to tell you that ski resorts average at least \$150 per night.

Why not take the hostel route and pay \$50 a night and get out there and ski? Lake Tahoe Mellow Mountain Hostel in Lake Tahoe, California will set you back a meager \$20 a night, and you even get free coffee and tea.

Here are some more contacts for your hostelling adventures:

Hostelling International- American Youth Hostels lets members get very low cost lodging in places like New York City, Florida, Sydney, Australia, and Paris, France. Most hostels also give you special discounts on everything from museums to ski lifts. If you join, you'll also get a directory of hostels, plus discounts on rail passes and more. They welcome all ages but offer special packages through their "50+ Young At Heart Travel" program. How much to join? Try \$20 bucks! Call 202-783-6161 and visit: <http://www.hiayh.org>

At Home Abroad offers villas and apartments in England, France, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, the Caribbean, and Mexico. Call 212-421-9165

Barclay International Group offers short-term rentals for 2,500+ apartments in London and eight buildings in Paris, more than 50 deluxe British country cottages and a few apartments, villas, and cottages in Europe, North America, Southeast Asia, and Australia. Call 800-845-6636 and visit <http://www.barclayweb.com>

Interhome with nearly 20,000 villas and apartments available in most European cities. Call 305-940-2299 and visit <http://www.interhome.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #32

One reason you'll love hostelling, --- besides the incredibly low rates for lodging--- the people! Look around any hostel and you know what you'll find?

Fellow Paupers, that's what!

They are usually very friendly folks and lack all that overblown sophistication and one-upmanship displayed at more upscale travel destinations around the globe.

Like you, they just love to travel. They bring that love with them along with plenty of money where it belongs--- in their pockets.

Chapter Seven

Say Hello To The Pauper In You!



I realize this would have been a great chapter to start my discussion with you about cheap travel. But I never travel down a well-worn path, and just couldn't resist filling you up with all the wonderful possibilities outlined in the preceding chapters.

Now that you have a true taste of the possibilities all around you to travel---and travel cheap--- I think you're primed to actually take a long, hard look at what kind of Pauper you really are.

You'll enjoy the sense of discovery found in this chapter. It will help you keep your goals and desires in full view, as you get ready to explore the world.

There are many different types of Paupers. They don't come in a cookie cutter, all-in-one design. For instance:

The Traveling Professor Pauper loves to make a learning experience out of travel. General sightseeing isn't what is sought, but an in-depth look at cultures, geography, architecture, literature and more.

The Lone Wolf Pauper does everything on her own and detests too much planned group activity. The tour bus is leaving? So what? She has her own personal itinerary. This Pauper is off on her individual journey of discovery using time as she sees fit.

The Pack Rat Pauper travels best in groups. He loves being surrounded by people and enjoys the interplay of comparing notes and sharing destinations. You'll find this gregarious Pauper in tour groups and traveling the well-known paths to established attractions.

The Show Me Pauper absolutely hates to plan itineraries and loves it when all the details are worked out for him. He joins the experts whenever he can so that he can sit back and enjoy the trip. This guy really knows how to relax and let others do the heavy lifting.

The Indiana Jones Pauper loves adventure travel and the more dangerous, risky and physically challenging the better. Many times she chooses far off, distant and nearly inaccessible locales to adventure through.

The White Rabbit Pauper rushes around because he wants to soak in as much as possible, as fast as possible. He gets up early and goes, goes, goes. He wants to see it all. There's never a lost minute of opportunity for this industrious Pauper.

The Father Time Pauper is someone who really wants to savor every minute of travel. Slow, methodical, deep experiences on the road mean the most to her. She chooses a few places and spends

plenty of time at them. There's no rush and easy does it. When she meets up with the White Rabbit Pauper, they often don't have much to say to each other.

The Pauper's Pauper is a guy that doesn't care much where he goes, with how many people, how fast or slow he travels, whether he learns a lot like the Professor, or just lays in the sun all day. He gets his kicks out of saving money. It tickles him, like all get-out, if he can pull off a dream vacation for pennies on the dollar.

Did you see a bit of yourself in all of the Paupers mentioned above? It's not an exhaustive list, I promise. You'll meet many other types of Paupers in your travels, I'm sure. Every person travels in their own way, and finds enjoyment and discovery uniquely. That's part of the fun!

But now is the time to get a clearer picture of where you fit in. The following test was developed by the *U.S. Tour Operators' Association*, which hired a group of psychologists to create this quiz:

U.S. Tour Operators' Travel Quiz

(You may wish to print this page out and take pen in hand to complete it. Just click the print icon above on the Acrobat tool bar and specify the pages you wish to print)

- 1] A. I enjoy socializing in large groups.

 B. I like being in a small group
- 2] A. I would never fall for bungee jumping or river rafting.

 B. Bungee jumping or river rafting would be exciting.
- 3] A. I would rather let others plan my fun activities

 C. I like to plan fun things to do
- 4] A. Sometimes I worry about my safety in public

 C. I feel secure in most public places
- 5] A. I prefer people who share my interests

 C. I relate to many kinds of people
- 6] A. I want to take it easy on my body

 B. I enjoy a good physical challenge
- 7] A. There is little I can do to deal with life's problems

 +C. I try to be resourceful when faced with problems
- 8] A. In my free time I try to concentrate on specific hobbies

 C. I seek out many different activities in my leisure time

- 9] A. It feels better when my social events follow a plan
- C. I like to have flexible plans for social activities
- 10]. A. I am willing to compromise with people
- C. I like to have things my way
- 11] A. I prefer to watch television
- B. I like to read
- 12] A. I would use a tour guide in a really exotic place
- C. I want to explore a place on my own, even if it is
strange
- 13] A. My idea of free time is to chill out with no demands
- B. Free time is a chance to enrich or challenge myself
- 14] A. I would like to work on a team project
- C. I prefer to work on my own tasks
- 15] A. Good things in my life are due to luck
- C. My own efforts bring me positive results

Scoring: Whatever letter you selected the most indicates the type of travel that is best for you.

A= escorted group traveler

You enjoy traveling with many people and like the comfort of being taken care of.

B= small group adventure traveler

You like to go off the beaten path and to have a theme to your vacation. You rely on experienced guides because it can be difficult to get around on your own in these kinds of places. You like small groups of travelers with similar interests. Anything goes for you, from climbing Machu Picchu to an Asian learning vacation.

C= Independent Tour/Package Traveler

You are open to new experiences, activities, and situations. You like to travel on your own or with friends and family. You like to be in charge of selecting activities, meals, and timetables, and therefore like un-tour packages that provide airfare, transfers, and accommodations but leave some planning, such as meals and activities to you.

Face to Face, Pauper To Pauper

The above quiz was very good. It gives you a general feel for the type of travel that you would most enjoy.

But I want you to come face to face with your own, very personal, inner Pauper.

In this section, I'll pose some questions for you to consider.

Please don't skip this examination. It really will help you hone your travel skills and show you clearly what you like and what you detest. At the end of this chapter, I will deliver to you a very helpful check list that you can print out and use on every trip you ever take. It will be an invaluable asset that will show you, at a glance, what you are about to experience on a particular journey. It's called **The Pauper's Travel Checklist**. You will take this list out, follow its sequence and fill in the blanks.

I created this form and used it to pattern and chart many joyful years of travel. Then, there are no surprises, I've covered my bases, know what to expect and have done some serious, but easy, planning.

Let's do it:

1.] To determine what is right for you, information is key. You need to accumulate brochures and catalogs and visit web sites from companies that offer the type of travel that you're interested in.

Look for key phrases and special wording i.e. "challenging", "lengthy", "basic", "all-inclusive", these tell you if this is a trip you'd be interested in taking. If you only have three or four days, for example, you don't

want to go on a lengthy vacation that needs a full week for you to really get anything out of the locale you're visiting.

2.] Does the itinerary excite you? In other words, are you just taking the trip because it's cheap even though the sites you want to see and the things you want to do are not listed in the brochure? The important question is, "Will you get what you want out of the trip?"

3.] Consider specifics. Here, you'll want to note any specific features of your planned trip. Exactly what is offered on this trip? The details of your trip will go here.

4.] How involved are you? Are you merely a passive traveler or an active participant in the planned activity? Will you be setting up tents, cooking breakfast etc.?

5.] How many non-travel days are involved in your trip. In other words, note how many actual days of travel you will experience. Is it 5 cities in 5 days or are your plans to travel 2 days and stay in one place for 10?

6.] What accommodations are at the destination? 3-star, 5 star? What exactly is being offered and does it meet your standards?

7.] What kind of transportation are you taking? List all the types you plan on encountering. Are you changing planes mid-trip from a 707-passenger plane to a 16-seat commuter plane? Trains, buses, ox-cart?

8.] What is the final cost? Make a reasonable estimate. Include tips that normally run from \$2 - \$5 per person per day.

9.] How many people will be traveling? Is it a solo trip or are you taking family members, friends or associates?

10.] How many meals will you be responsible for? Your airline, hotel or tour group package may offer some meals as part of your travel, but you'll surely wish to dine on your own, at least some of the time.

11.] Is your tour fully escorted? Will the tour operator actually be on the trip with you? Many trips are subcontracted so this becomes important if something is promised in your original package and not delivered; you won't have direct access to fixing the problem until you return home.

12.] Look at activities planned, how many there are in contrast to how much time you'll be spending on your own. What are you looking for in this area?

13.] What special things are available that make this a special trip, one that is out of the ordinary? Is there a special banquet? How about extra speakers or unusual tours? Make note of these extras.

14.] Is there a direct flight or do you have to switch planes with airport lay-overs? Obviously, the fewer the change-overs needed, the better. You have fewer chances to lose your luggage and, overall, the trip is likely to be less fatiguing.

15.] What time zones will you be traveling across? Is there going to be enough time for your body to adjust to the changes in time zones for you to feel energized and comfortable and enjoy this trip. Jet lag is a serious problem if your trip is too short for you to make an adjustment and should be taken into account as you plan how long your trip should be.

16.] How long has the tour operator been in business? The longer the better, especially if there have been no negative reports on them and a company that has only been around for a year or less may not be as reliable and dependable.

17.] How long has the tour company done this particular trip? If they have been going to Africa for 20 years or more they know all the “ins & outs” of this adventure you’re taking.

18.] How do you like the amenities? What is being offered? Is there a fireplace, a bar, a kitchen or a skylight? If it’s a bare bones room then you might wish to look elsewhere. The same thing with cruises where the difference between deluxe and a budget cruise can be quite striking.

19.] What time of year are you traveling? Assuming you have two packages to choose from, and they both are comparable but one is much cheaper, make sure you are traveling at a comfortable time of the year. If the summer season broils up to 110 degrees in the shade, you’re not really getting much of a bargain.

20.] Are references offered by the tour operator? There is nothing like hearing from fellow Paupers and their experiences with a particular trip.

21.] Is trip cancellation insurance offered? It is recommended that you buy this because it not only covers the cost of your trip, if cancelled, but the cost of lost luggage and emergency evacuations. Always carefully read your policy to see exactly what it covers.

Now that we have explained the items that are listed in your **Paupers' Travel Checklist**, I'll give you the form below. I suggest you print out a copy so you can fill in the blanks whenever you are planning a trip of any length or destination. It will give you a black and white overview of exactly what is offered and help you clarify your thinking.

To print this list click on the “print” icon at the top of this Adobe PDF document. Specify the page numbers you wish to print.

Pauper's Travel Checklist

List of brochures (how many?) and key words/phrases:

Will you get what you want out of this trip?

What are the specifics of this trip?

How involved are you in this trip? What is your level of participation?

Number of Non-Travel days in this trip?

What accommodations are offered?

What kind of transportation are you taking?

What is the final cost?

How many people will be traveling?

How many meals will you be responsible for?

What is the final cost?

Activities planned vs. time spent?

What is special about this trip?

Is this a direct flight or one with layovers?

What time zones will you be traveling through?

How long has the tour operator been in business?

How long has the tour operator been doing this particular trip?

How do you like the amenities? What are they?

Does the tour operator offer references? List them.

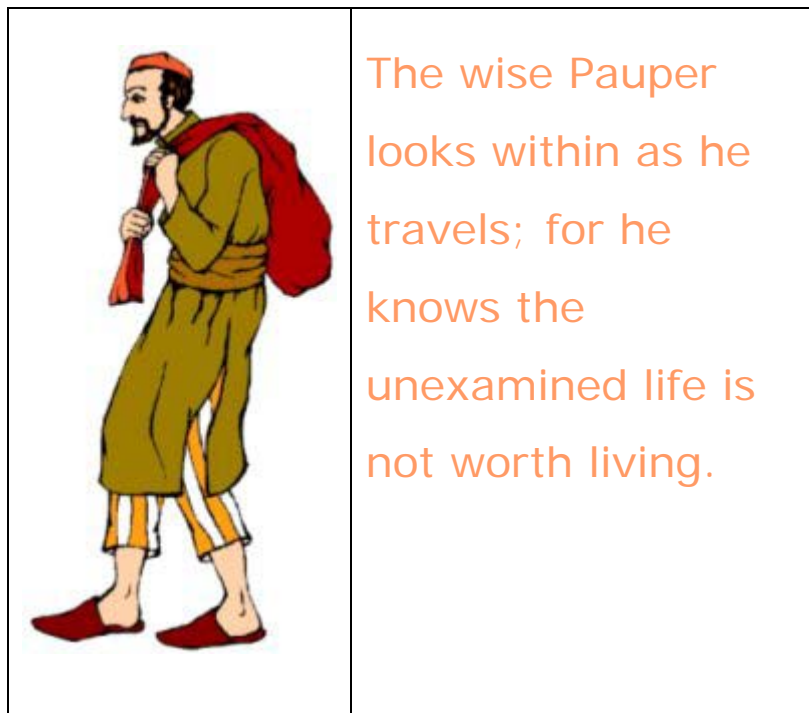
Is trip cancellation insurance offered? List highlights in policy.

This is a very revealing chapter and I hope you take advantage of the chance to fine tune your knowledge of your trip and yourself. Making a thorough examination of your self and your goals is always a beneficial exercise.

Pauper's Secret Confession #33

A Pauper that plans her trip is a wise Pauper. By making a commitment to do your homework and filling out the attached checklist you're really start thinking through the journey.

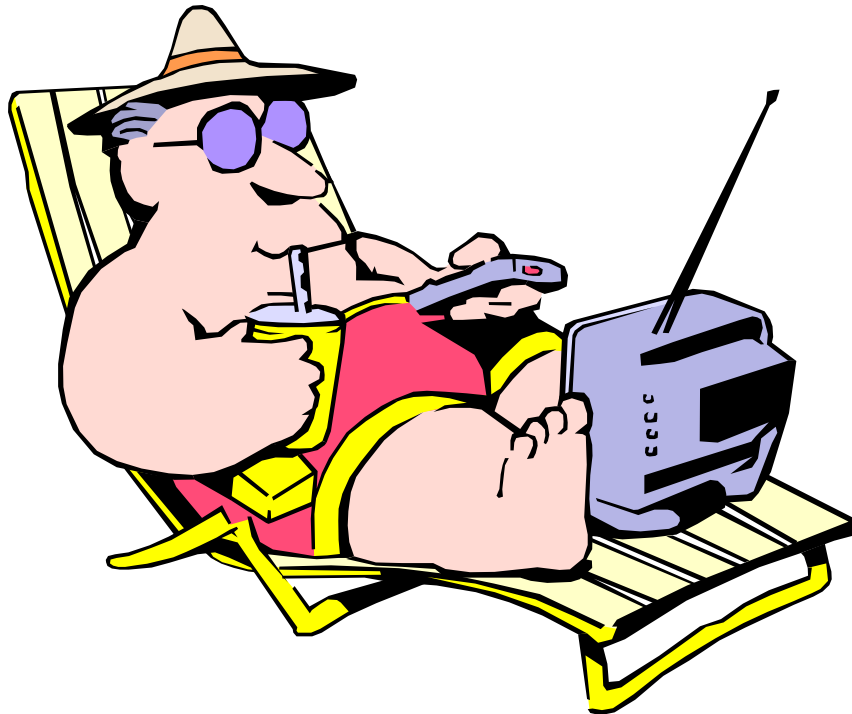
Expenses, travel itineraries or activities and touring options, won't surprise you. Never leave home without first completing your research and fine-tuning your plans.



The wise Pauper looks within as he travels; for he knows the unexamined life is not worth living.

Chapter 8

Paupers Travel Free & Get Paid To Travel



Can you imagine traveling free, or actually getting paid to travel? How wonderful to actually make a profit traveling? In this chapter, we'll look at ways to write your travel off as a tax break. We'll cover nearly forty ways you can take advantage of those breaks and squeeze every nickel out of Uncle Sam to help keep you on the road, living like the rich and famous, while spending your own cash like a Pauper.

There are lots of ways to “write-off” your travel expenses. Going to a convention, seminar or other meeting even if it's held on a luxurious

cruise ship. You are responsible for establishing the meeting as a business related event. If you use your vehicle for trade or business, there is a form for deducting mileage expenses. Even entertainment and meal costs are deductible. Primary vacations are not “write offs” but business-related travel is.

Of course, if part of your trip is business related and part is for personal pleasure then you must keep careful records related to the business aspects for your taxes.

Pauper’s Secret Confession #34

Talk to an accountant to get the real skinny on tax deductions for travel expenses. Read Internal Revenue Service publications #535 and #463. They are free booklets and you can get them by calling 703-321-8020 or online at <http://www.irs.ustres.gov>

Here are some strategies you can employ to save lots of money:

Do anything business-related when you travel. Set up a meet and greet with a potential client. Take a tour of land or property that might allow you to expand your business in a new place. Visit a related business and introduce yourself, explain how you do business and get advice and sales leads from these related business people. Let’s say you own a bowling alley, when you visit another city visit a bowling alley and introduce yourself to the owner and go to dinner with him to learn about new ways you both employ tricks of the trade

to increase business. While you may not be able to write off the entire trip, you can deduct a significant portion of it if you constantly use your trip to further your business.

When you plan a trip why not incorporate a trade show, a workshop, seminar or conference. Many trade associations gather at all items of the year and at many lovely resort areas to network. Attend these events as often as possible since the purpose of your trip can incorporate real work related events that are deductible.

Plan a full-blown business trip. Can you take your employees on a cruise to award them for outstanding performance? Or plan a sales meeting at an exotic locale where your sales people can trade strategies and gain motivation while you write the trip off as a legitimate tax deduction.

A trip is business related if you use it to add to your collection of work related properties or to consider purchase agreements from third parties. If you find a supplier in Guam, and you'd like to visit Guam, you might want to set up a business trip to look over your partner to be and his wares in person.

Volunteering for charity can make a trip tax deductible too. Contact Service Civil International for their directory of volunteer projects available in more than 50 countries. This group has been around since the 1920's, so they know their stuff. Ask for *The International Work Camp Directory* at 206-545-6585 and visit: <http://www/sci-ivs.org>

Check out newspaper ads for special volunteer travel opportunities. *Alternative Travel Directory* is a booklet of alternative travel resources and programs. Transitions Publishing at 800-293-0373 and visit <http://www.transabroad.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #35

Did you know that if you arrive on Saturday for business on Monday because you got a better airfare for a Saturday stay over the IRS considers both Saturday and Sunday as part of your business trip? All your costs on those days are fully deductible. Get a good travel-versed tax accountant to give you more useful “loopholes” like this one!

Don't overlook your place of employment. They may sponsor volunteering opportunities. Ask your boss if the company offers any “volunteer and vacation” programs.

Other Chances To Make \$\$\$ As A Traveling Pauper

We've looked at taking advantage of tax opportunities, that are perfectly legal, and charity volunteering to save money traveling. There are a wealth of great ideas that your government and local charity organizations can help you take advantage of. Look into them fully for amazing savings that would make any Pauper smile.

Now, let's look at other ways to turn your travel into a dream income!

Call your local community newspaper and see if they would be interested in a local story or photo essay about your travel destination. Not only will you be able to write off expenses incurred on your trip but the paper will pay you for your work as a ‘stringer’. You can also check out *The Writers' Market* and *The Photographers' Market* books at your local library for other publications to sell your story.

When you travel you take pictures, right? Well why not enter the best ones in a photo contest for great prizes, and in many cases, cold hard cash! Develop your photographer’s eye by studying books on photographic composition and go for it.

You can put together a slide show or multi-media travel presentation for local schools and organizations. Many groups have funds set aside to hire speakers for those who can present a compelling visual story to an audience. Just a couple of these presentations and you could pocket hundreds of dollars that you can use for your next adventure.

Add your name to any local speakers group. They usually have a “call-list” of speakers for area organizations. Here again, you can present your trip to people who regularly pay for featured speakers.

Visit your community college and see if you can present a class. They are always looking for someone who can structure a lesson plan to students. You could present a class about your trip through Europe, or How To Save Money In Italy, or What to Do When You Visit India.

You don't have to have an advanced degree to teach a class but you must develop a sense of authority about what you speak and teach.

You local artist co-op can showcase your photos or paintings, watercolors etc. if you have an artistic bent. You can price the work competitively and make extra money from your travels this way. Don't forget about local merchants and restaurants that are looking for art to adorn their walls. You can usually strike a deal to loan the paintings and place a small price tag in the lower corner or a 'sell-sheet' at the reservations desk that customers can take with them for possible purchase of your works. Libraries are usually open to placing a nice display of local artists work as well.

Pauper's Secret Confession #36

This Pauper has entered his photography in local festivals and craft shows. They are a great place to show off your collection of travel photos. You may not get rich, but you can strike up some delightful friendships, and get to be known as a traveler that captures interesting pictures. The money you do make can buy you some wonderful dinners around the world, so go for it. Rent a booth and get your pictures out there.

Do you have an entrepreneurial spirit? Then take your travel photos and turn them into sealeable items! T-shirts, postcards, posters. It could be your next photo that brings you some extra money for all those future trips. There are several online companies that can take

your image and turn it into everything from a coffee mug to a notebook cover. Try <http://www.cafepress.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession # 37

I love a TV program on *The Food Network* called: **\$40 A Day with hostess Rachael Raye**. In this show she travels around the country to different cities and is given exactly 40 bucks with which to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner (and try and slip in a nice cocktail along the way). She gives you great tips and tricks on finding real local flavor and real money saving bargains, too. If you get cable TV in the States you might like watching this show.

We've come a way in this chapter, haven't we? From tax savings and volunteer travel to other projects and plans you can undertake to "make back" money from your travel. Now, I'm going to take you well off the beaten track with a score of unusual ways to travel for \$0 yes, for free and nearly free.

You'll need an open mind for this section. But I figure you're already an adventurous spirit ready for most anything, eager to learn and experiment. That's why you bought this book, right? You want to know every trick available to travel on the cheap. Well, you can't get cheaper than ---free!

Forget about how much money is in your bank account. You won't need it here---let's get started:

1. A religious experience for traveling Paupers. Your church or other religious institution can help you travel for free or nearly free.

Convents and churches offer clean, safe, no-fancy frills in many cities worldwide for as little as \$5 a night. Usually you're best to stick with your own denomination, but the savings can be remarkable. The office of tourism at your destination will have a list of these groups.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 38

In Spain alone, there are over 70 monasteries and convents that take in travelers. 7th Day Adventists allow visitors to stay in their school dorms for as little as \$10 a night.

Give a Paupers shout: "Hallelujah"!

2. Timeshare meetings can offer you a free vacation. The timeshare companies want you to attend their meetings at resorts so they can pitch you on buying a timeshare property. In the meantime, you stay for no cost. Oh, they'll pamper you all right---but they'll also sell you, too. If you succumb to sales pressure, you might want to forget about this trick. But if you are like me and have the thick hide of an elephant and the willpower of a true Pauper—have a ball! These companies can afford it.

3. Speaking of timeshares, you can often rent one for next to nothing. Owners want to re-coup money when they are not using the property. If you're cagey you get them for dirt-cheap. You can look into this

option through <http://www.holidaygroup.com> or Time Share By Owners by calling 800-246-7653 and visit:
<http://www.timesharesbyowner.com>

4. Barter, baby, barter. It's an old idea, as ancient as mankind and it still works wonderfully in the 21st century. You have some talent, some way to make a living, even if you travel like a Pauper. Well, someone, somewhere, could use your expertise in return for a free vacation. Keep this in mind the next time you strike up a conversation with someone that owns a timeshare, a vacation site, or even a fancy restaurant.

5. It really pays if you can conduct a tour, give a speech or deliver a lecture because many out-of-the-way destinations would love to offer this to guests but don't have the budget to import such luminaries. If you fit the bill you can stay for free. Don't cut yourself short on this idea. Put together a presentation and offer it to the manager of your next vacation stay. You may be surprised how fast they will say "Yes, let me add a couple of free nights (or more) to your stay with us!"

Pauper's Secret Confession # 39

To show you how 'bartering' and 'presentations' can work for you; I intend to take this book on a little road trip. You see I think there are tons of vacation resorts that would like a presentation about how to save money while traveling. I'll trade on the knowledge contained in these pages for free accommodations. Not every resort will want it, but if I can get just a few free trips out of my work here it will be marvelous.

You can do the same with whatever you are an expert in. Don't undervalue your contribution!

6. Check into your professional organizations. Whatever you do for a living there is likely a trade association that caters to you. They need speakers, too. They will pay all expenses for you to give a talk or appear on a panel.

7. Are you a 'people person'? Love to work with groups? Try gathering up as many folks as you can, friends, family, co-workers, even strangers and then get ready to travel for free. Tour companies love group travel and will award you for your efforts at putting together a group with free accommodations for you. If you gather up just 5-9 people you can almost always enjoy a 50% discount. It gets better after that. As they say: "The more, the merrier!"

8. Contests! Win a free vacation! These contests are everywhere. You should enter them all. Don't hesitate. It only takes a few minutes to enter (usually) and someone has to win the trip. It's the law. The more you enter the better your chances of winning. You'll find vacation giveaways in newspapers, magazines, and on television and radio. You'll see offers on the Internet, too.

Pauper's Secret Confession #40

Meet Helga, a traveling Pauper I know who has become the "contest queen." She has made a hobby out of entering contests every chance she gets. And she wins too! Her last trip was to Antigua, 7 days, airfare, and hotel, even a limo! Cost? Nothing. Zero, Zilch!

She says her favorite medium is radio where your odds are the best!

Also try: <http://www.iwon.com>

We already discussed frequent flyer miles in a chapter devoted to this subject. But I wonder if you've taken action yet to start a program? You get great perks. Free upgrades, priority seating, deep discounts on rooms and unadvertised airfare deals. I could go on and on (and I did in chapter 2 "Get Your Magnificent Miles") but unless you take action you'll never enjoy the benefits. Here are nine carriers you can choose from. Each offers you free miles if you use a credit card. Pick out at least two airlines to call today and sign up for their frequent flyer programs:

Alaska Airlines 800-552-7302

British Airways 800-859-3758

Delta Airlines 800-323-2323

Southwest Airlines 800-792-8472

US Airways 800-341-7568

American Airlines 800-950- 5114

Continental Airlines 800-377-0601 Northwest Airlines 800-360-2900

United Airlines 800-537-7783

Pauper's Secret Confession # 41

Try your hand at online vacation auctions. Though it's not completely free you can win a great auction, and thus a great getaway, for pennies on the dollar. Sky Auction offers auctions that start at \$1 and increase in \$5 increments. Visit: <http://www.skyauction.com>

Are you an entertainer? Do you play an instrument, sing or do magic tricks that rises to a semi-professional level? Then talk to the entertainment director on a cruise line. Send your resume and a photo with your credits.

There is even a program for good dancers. If you would be willing to be a dance partner or instructor contact The Gentleman Host Program and if selected, you could cruise free of charge. Visit: <http://www.workingvacation.com>

You can become what is called a “referral agent” and get commissions for anyone you refer that books travel through that

company. Refer your friends, neighbors and co-workers and make hundreds of extra dollars a year for your own travel. Agencies don't risk anything, it's all based on commission, and so, they love it when you are willing to refer others. Usually you get 10%-20% commission. Check your local yellow pages for a travel agent or use any of the contacts in this book.

Do you have a bachelor's degree from any college or university? Put it to use for a summer of free travel by teaching English in many parts of the world, including China, Italy, Argentina, Thailand or Spain. Call New World Teachers 888-GO-TEACH and visit <http://www.goteach.com>

Sabbaticals are not just for teachers and professors, you know. Many companies and foundations offer time off. In fact one in every three Fortune 500 companies offer sabbaticals to employees. You can trade off responsibilities with other employees while you're gone, in return for covering for them when they take a sabbatical. Talk to your boss.

Like kids? People that are good with children can become an au pair (nannies) and get free round trip airfare, small salary, and room and board. Other perks too, like extra time off, use of a family vehicle and more. Try International Live-in Child Care Call 800-333-6056 and visit <http://www.efaupair.com>

Get a temporary job overseas. Try <http://www.payaway.co.uk>

Underground Travel at 310-670-5968 and visit

<http://www.undergroundtravel.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #42

Club Med (we've all heard of this outfit, right?) is always looking for fresh employees. They have resorts all over the world, too. You can hear a recorded message about the program by dialing 561-337-6660

or visit: <http://www.clubmed.com>

Think you need some training to become a tour escort? Lessons are available through International Tour Management with classes held in several major U.S. cities. 800-442-4864 and visit

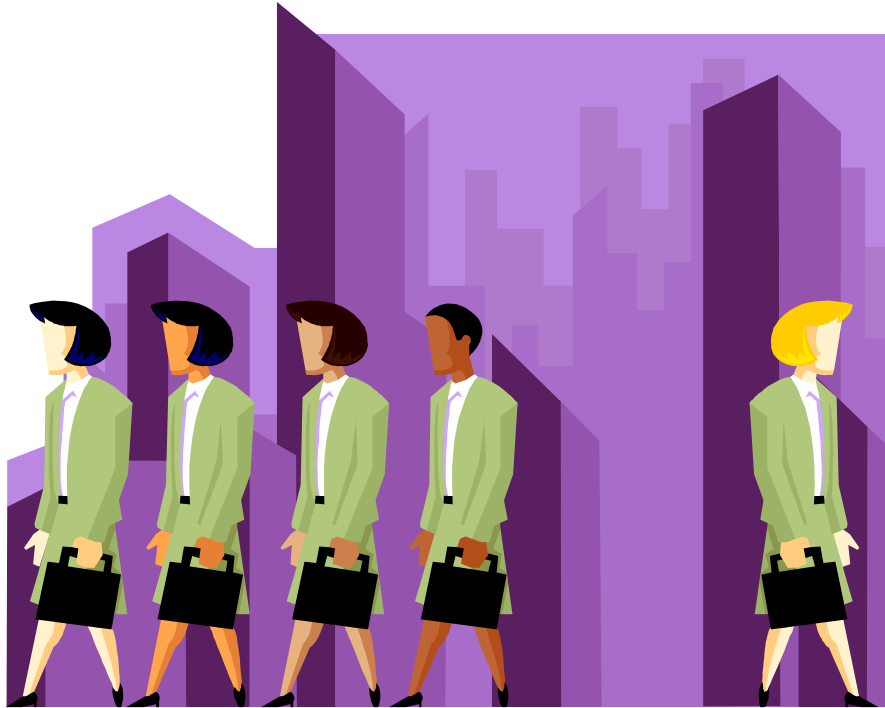
<http://www.itmitourtraining.com>

You can send your resume directly to the cruise ships also:

Cunard/Seabourn Cruise Lines 6100 Blue Lagoon Drive, Suite 400,
Miami, FL 33126

Chapter 9

The Independent Pauper



If you like to travel “off the beaten track”, on your own, spending as much time as you wish at places you love then this is the chapter for you. I must confess, this is my favorite way to travel. I’m not only a frugal cuss; I’m pretty independent too! Lots of Paupers are. It seems to come with the territory. You live so often by sheer determination, using your wits to get by, it becomes harder and harder to fall into the “herd” mentality most touring companies require.

But independent travel isn’t for everybody. You may not be comfortable making your own travel arrangements, or addressing some of the trouble spots or problems that can arise from this type of

travel. Don't beat yourself up for being a little bit dependent on others to help you plan and execute a trip. There is nothing to be ashamed of in that, at all. In fact, the vast majority of Paupers (and all travelers) use a travel agent, a tour group or some other professional travel expertise in planning their trips and vacations.

But “flying by the seat of our pants” is a way of life for some of us.

There are wonderful resources to help you out, too. For instance:

Airline packages are a true godsend for independent Paupers. Most airlines, big and tiny, domestic or international, offer packages. Go to airline websites to find out about package deals they offer. You can start here: <http://www.aol.com/directories/airlines.html>

Do you know what an airline pass is? They're a bargain, that's what! These airline passes are always cheaper than airline tickets. For instance British Airways offers their Europe Airpass, good for travel to 100 cities. Cost? Around \$90, with a 3-pass purchase minimum.

Triple A (American Automobile Association) is actually a group of 113 travel clubs that offer travel planning help with free maps, camping guides, tour books, etc. Sure, they offer roadside emergency help, but they also have a great travel agency built into your membership. Check into it at <http://www.aaa.com>

The American Association Of Retired Persons (AARP) is an extraordinary travel-planning source. Their Travel Service department

has plenty of independent travel sources. If you're over 50, you should really consider joining. <http://www.aarp.com>

I recommend City Pass if you're traveling to a city like New York, Boston, Chicago, Seattle, Hollywood, San Francisco or Philadelphia. It gives you full admission to a variety of local attractions from zoos to museums and more. Instead of paying a separate admission at each attraction it's bundled together in one City Pass. Paupers save! New cities are being added all the time so give them a call at 888-330-5008 and visit: <http://www.citypass.net>

Disney now offers the FASTPASS, which is a free way to make reservations to attractions. It beats waiting in line and I loved using it on my trip to Disney World in Orlando recently. It doesn't save you money but it does save you time in line.

Eurocamps are cheaper "self-travel family holiday" offers that work throughout Europe. This award-winning program does so much I don't want to even list all of them in this overview section. Just contact the people at Eurocamp Travel Unlimited in England. You'll be glad you did! <http://www.eurocamp.co.uk>

Pauper's Secret Confession #43

Independent Paupers don't mind holing up in a dorm. Many Universities and Colleges located in your destination city have dormitory rooms for rent mid-June through late September. The very low price is great! Just check with colleges and universities in the town you're visiting for more information or ask the local travel bureau about them. Intellectual Paupers love this little known secret. They get to re-live their carefree college days and save money too! Some dorm rooms even offer continental breakfast and/or kitchens.

Want to see a show? Plan ahead by contacting Ticketmaster in the city you are visiting. Even though this isn't a "money saving" idea, it's the best way to make reservations when you are on the road. If David Bowie or The Great Egyptian Pharaoh shows are ones you wish to see, so do many other people. Get your tickets before you leave call 800-755-400 and visit: <http://www.ticketmaster.com>

One important piece of advice about independent travel. Do your research on the Internet, it is the most expansive portal ever imagined to show you all the many possibilities for trip itineraries. Now that you own this book you will have many wonderful sites to explore, but I could never completely capture what is out there available at the click of a mouse.

Tour operators are prepared to cater to the independent Pauper, you know. You will often find their more open tour packages located at the back of brochures. The following tour package groups will give you ample freedom to discover what you want in your travels:

AATKings offers independent exploration of Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji with packages for the adventurous traveler. Call 800-353-4525 and visit: <http://www.aatkins.com>

AHI International is designed to offer travel options for those aged 25-45 traveling to Europe. Call 800-323-7373 and visit: <http://www.ahitravel.com>

Brendan Tours has value tours, cruises, and independent travel deals worldwide. Call 888-785-9696 and visit: <http://www.brendantours.com>

Gate1 offers low-cost cruises and all-inclusive worldwide travel, including photo tours and tours for independent travelers. They specialize in Italy, China and Spain. Call 800-682-3333 and visit: <http://www.gate1travel.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession # 44

Traveling at your own pace, enjoying your trip on your own timetable is a really exhilarating experience. If you have a laptop computer that is wireless ready, you can really have a blast, especially in America and Europe where finding “computer cafes” and wireless “hot spots” are becoming more common every day.

Just make sure you have this book on your hard drive. It's got everything you need! Modest of me, huh? Speaking of computers, why not do a Google search on the words “independent travel” and “un-tours” to see what you come up with.

The Independent Pauper needs to know the many vagaries involved with other types of travel besides touring, and airline travel. That's why the next section deals with trains, buses and cars. In other words: ground transportation Ground Transportation: Trains, Buses and Cars.

Trains

Traveling by train is such a romantic and revealing form of transportation. On the rails you sweep past the Rockies, seeing their majesty in a special light or wind your way through the spectacular Copper Canyon of Mexico. You can use Amtrak to hip-hop from city to city in America. The world is laced with track that will take you from one delightful destination to another, all the while allowing you to sit back and enjoy the passing scenery.

As an independent Pauper traveling by train can be accomplished in a couple of different ways. You can purchase a rail pass, or take a train tour. Train trips can vary in many ways. On some you will have many sightseeing opportunities, on others your time on the train will be for the sole purpose of going from one destination to another. You can find the type of trip that best suits your needs. In the following list of available train companies there is something for nearly every traveling Pauper.

I love the names of some of these trains. For instance there is **The Denali Star**, **The Coastal Classic** and **The Glacier Discovery**. All of these trains are part of the Alaska Railroad. They offer scenic rail trips with a lot of options like cruises, rafting, fly fishing, wildlife tours and ferry tours. Call 800-544-0552 and visit: <http://www.akrr.com>

Amtrak has the Guest Rewards program. You accumulate points on all routes and redeem them for train tickets, airline miles, or services and merchandise. The North American Rail Pass, good at 900+ destinations in the U.S. and Canada with the caveat that all travel must occur within a thirty-day period. Amtrak always offers specials throughout the year. I suggest you order *The Amtrak Travel Planner*, which is jam-packed with specific trips and travel tips. Call 800-USA-RAIL and visit <http://www.amtrak.com> Online you can also find special fares, sometimes as much as 90% off!

Maupintour Rail Adventures offers worldwide rail trips along with trekking, rafting, and exploring. You can choose either escorted or

independent tours. Call 800-255-4266 and visit

<http://www.maupintour.com>

Trains Unlimited Tours has been around since 1985 and they provide trips in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Russia, and Latin America. Call 800-359-4870 and visit:

<http://www.trainweb.com/trainsunlimitedtours>

EurailPass is the best way to see three or more countries in Europe. The EurailPass is a discounted train pass for unlimited first class travel and good in 17 countries. There is also the **Eurail Flexipass** which will allow 15 days travel in any given 2 month period and costs considerably less. You can purchase these passes from the tourist bureaus in the cities and countries you wish to visit. Just have your itinerary handy so they can customize your pass.

Pauper's Secret Confession #45

You'll usually have to get your ticket at the railroad station, not from your travel agent. Make sure you're at the correct station because some cities have more than one! When you get to the ticket window be cordial, ask for a window seat. Before you leave check the ticket, count your change and make sure the guy pressing against you isn't picking your pocket.

Savvy Use Of A Rail Pass

If you decide to use a rail pass in Europe plan on arriving at the train station about 30 minutes before departure. Remember, a rail pass allows you to board the train but it isn't a reservation. In other words, it doesn't guarantee a seat or sleeper. In Western Europe, high speed and premium trains require reservations. They are also recommended for train trips lasting 3 hours or more, unless you like standing up. Lines that need a reservation are clearly marked with an "R" on departure sheets.

If you plan on sleeping on your train you have four choices. You can sit up all night in a regular train seat and greet the morning with bleary eyes. You can try for a foldout seat and hope it actually folds out (having enough room can be tricky), you can pay a little extra for a couchette or you can splurge on a sleeper.

Always keep your rail pass safely tucked away to avoid loss or theft. If it's lost and you have a police report you may get a partial refund when you return home. But it's so much better all around if you put your pass somewhere secure and safe.

Always get a map. These trains often make very short stops and it helps to know where you are and when you wish to get off. The map can be a lifesaver, especially if you're not fluent in the local language. Just know the spelling of the place you're traveling to (even

circle it in red) and most of your fellow passengers will be able to point you in the right direction to continue your trip.

Pauper's Secret Confession #46

If you don't like the seat you're assigned, maybe the sun is in your eyes or your seat is positioned backwards to the forward motion of the train (I hate when that happens), just get up quickly and choose another one. If another traveler comes by to claim it, well so what? Just smile and move on. After all, you're a traveling Pauper and we have to do what we have to do, to be comfortable.

Trains are a great way to travel. I personally don't like to travel overnight on them, however. In fact I don't like to ride on them for longer than 4-5 hours. That's enough for me. I plan my itinerary around this preference. You should do the same, if you feel like I do. But you just can't beat the slow pace as you connect with an earlier era. There's something nostalgic about train travel, magical in a way!

Buses

All around the world you can purchase a bus ticket in any town or city. Paupers love the bus because it's really cheap transportation.

In America **Greyhound** is huge, offering 2,600 destinations in 48 states, Canada and Mexico, with 1,800 daily departures. Lots of discount opportunities too. Call 800-229-9424 and visit

<http://www.greyhound.com>

Adventure Planet/ Adventure Network is a “Hop-on”, ‘Hop off” for backpackers that travels all over California and the Southwestern United States. You’re conveniently picked up at hotels and hostels and are offered many routes and exclusive deals. Each pass is good for 6 months, too! Call 800-336-6049 and visit <http://www.theant.com>

Busabout is another “Hop On-Off” bus company in Europe. You can join their discount members club for additional savings on hotels and meals. Visit <http://www.busabout.com>

Green Tortoise Bus Tours is specifically designed for budget travel. Sleeper coaches are great. You explore by day, and at night soft music lulls you to sleep. You can gather up points on some travel destinations that add up to free trips. Call 800-TORTOISE and visit: <http://www.greentortoise.com>

Oz Experience is an Australian outfit with many different routes and you can get a 6-month pass with unlimited stops. Visit: <http://www.ozexperience.com>

Baz Bus in South Africa offers passes good for up to 3 years. Visit <http://www.bazbus.com>

Kiwi Experience is New Zealand’s premiere bus company with trips to both the north and south islands for one low rate. Visit <http://www.kiwiexperience.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession # 47

We have an old saying around here: "The rich fly, the middle class take the train and Paupers ride the bus!" That's because buses are a great deal...el cheapo! The best transportation value, bar none!

Tips on Bus Travel

Leg Room - Some buses feel cramped to taller Paupers. Their knees get scrunched up to their chins and they constantly feel the need to lay their legs across an empty seat next to them just so they can spread out! What to do? On trips longer than an hour try and get a reserved seat in the front row (more leg room), if no reservations are accepted then ask the driver informally to help you secure that seat. At worst, just get to the bus before anyone else and position yourself comfortably in the first row---and grit your teeth, and hold on to it with your life!

If you have a double decker bus, always try and get up to the top (roof) section. The seating is usually better in terms of space, fresh air and better views of the scenery.

Except in Europe and Japan, a bus usually reaches its destination faster than a train (except trains like the super fast Acela in the US) unless the bus breaks down! Most drivers are trained to fix most problems, so this is a rare occurrence.

Bring a snack on board. Some buses seem to stop every 10 minutes (that's why we like 'express' bus trips) but others can go a long time between stops. The snack makes for a more pleasant journey.

Border crossing. Bus trips always increase in price if you take them across the border from one country to another. You will always save money if you take your bus to the border, get off, travel by foot across the border, and then catch another bus. Just find out from your bus company if this possible.

Security. Not a real problem in the US, but in far off locales its wise to get off the bus and stretch your legs as passengers search for luggage. Keep your eyes open. You don't want someone walking off with yours. If your baggage is overhead lock it to the rack using one of those smaller bicycle chain locks. If it's just a carry-on piece you can place it under your feet.

There's just no getting around it. Bus travel has to be on the top of any Pauper's trip plan. You simply can't beat the price. For instance, you can ride every mile--- of every bus route--- in the kingdom of Sikkim for less than \$15.

Buses are a great way to see the nitty-gritty of a locale. It's also a great place to meet people and learn about the local culture. Some buses are surprisingly luxurious too. For instance, the Scania Super Bus travels 1,200 miles from Santiago to Arica, Chile with a bar, a bathroom, three movie screens, and a lovely waitress.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 48

Just like the train, I refuse to spend more than 5 hours on a bus. For example, if I'm traveling from Boston to Atlanta, my first stop over is always in New York (about 4 ½ hours by bus) where I take the night off, enjoy some dinner, stay in a local room and wake up in the morning for the next leg of my journey. That might be a trip to Charlotte, and then the final leg to Atlanta, for instance. I love breaking my trip up like this because then I'm relaxed and not worn out by a non-stop bus ride in cramped quarters.

Brokers cost less, don't apply taxes, and offer different types of vehicles and services. For instance a broker can set you up with a spiffy motorcycle or a luxurious motor home. They can get you a driver, make hotel reservations, and offer air, train, and barge or car packages. I'll list some brokers you can check with in a minute.

First let's look at a few more car related travel ideas.

When deciding on which car to rent, always inquire about the difference in price if you plan on leaving the car at a different location from where you picked it up. Usually they charge more, but not always.

Next, verify the drop off time on your contract, if you bring the car back late---even an hour late with some companies---you are charged for another full 24 hours. Also, make sure the car has a full tank of

gas, and don't forget you are required to return it with a full tank. If you don't they will add the cost of additional gas needed to your bill, and the catch is, --- the prices the rental agency charges for gas is nearly always at a premium rate. Paupers lose money this way! Find a gas station that offers the cheapest gas you can find before returning the car and tell the attendant to "fill it up"!

Pauper's Secret Confession #49

If you're renting a car overseas, make your reservations while still in the USA. It's cheaper (up to 50%) and easier. No language barriers, no shortage of cars with advance reservations. Get an economy car, always. Remember, you're traveling like a Pauper, not a rock star. Besides, economy cars are very popular. If they're sold out you get an instant and free upgrade! In Europe manual transmissions are the norm and you pay a premium (usually) for an automatic. And make sure you can take the car into any country you wish to visit. Some rental cars, for instance, are not allowed into Eastern Europe.

Many car agencies, like hotels, offer discounts so ask about them when you go to pick up your vehicle. Sometimes using a certain credit card will save you money on a deal. Another important tip is not to get your car at an airport. I know it's convenient, but the prices are always higher! If you're traveling with someone over 25 let him or her rent the car----it's cheaper. The younger you are the more you pay in insurance surcharges.

Speaking of insurance, this Pauper never takes out the insurance the car rental company offers. Sometimes, they really want to push you into purchasing this ‘extra’ insurance. There is no need to if you have your own car insurance on your own vehicle back home. Most policies you buy will cover you even if you’re in a rental car. Why buy double insurance? Just check with your insurance agent before deciding. If he says you’re covered then put the money you’d spend at the rental agency in your own pocket!

AutoEurope has lots of specials. They can set you up long-term or short term with chauffeured drives, (yeah right! - a Pauper with a chauffeur is an oxymoron), motor homes, motorcycles, escorted tours and safaris in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Call 800-223-5555 and visit: <http://www.autoeurope.com>

Europe By Car is a grandfather of car rental. They’ve been around since 1954 and they offer specials for teachers/ faculty or students. Call 800-252-9401 and visit: <http://www.europebycar.com>

Kimwell Holiday Autos rents cars, campers, hotel and air packages, barges, train tours in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Canada, Caribbean, Central America, and more. Call 800-678-0678 and visit <http://www.kemwel.com>

Alamo 800-327-9633 <http://www.goalamo.com>

Avis USA Call 800-331-1212 Worldwide Call 800-331-1084, <http://www.avis.com>

Budget 800-527-0700, <http://www.budget.com>

Dollar 800-800-4000, <http://www.dollar.com>

Enterprise 800-325-8007, <http://www.enterprise.com>

Hertz USA 800-654-3131 Worldwide 800-654-3001,
<http://www.hertz.com>

National USA 800-227-7368 Worldwide 800-227-3876,
<http://www.nationalcar.com>

Thrifty 800-367-2277, <http://www.thrifty.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #50

Paupers love Dial-A-Wreck where you nearly always save at least 30% on cars that are 2-3 years old. Also, you don't need a major credit card to rent, like all the other car rental agencies. 500 locations in the USA 800-535-1391, <http://www.rent-a-wreck.com>

Note: Read the fine print on your contract. Each franchise is free to set its own rules.

For the lowest gas prices where you live or travel go to
<http://www.driveandsave.com>

Don't forget that car rental companies offer small discounts (but every little bit helps) for mature drivers. Let them know you're a member of

AAA, AARP, Costco, Sam's Club or a travel club; it can save you additional money.

You can also join one of these agencies own rewards programs too. Hertz offers 10 points for every dollar spent with its Greenpoints Program. You can exchange points for free car rentals, airline tickets and merchandise.

Pauper's Secret Confession #51

The worst day to rent a car is on Wednesday. It's the highest demand day. Go figure---right in the middle of the week. Probably because people get a car after they've settled in their digs and now want to 'explore'. Also, business travelers make up a lot of this trade.

Well, now that you're comfortable with all manner of independent travel, from trains to buses and cars, I hope you feel more confident in being able to easily get around. Wherever you are in the world there is transportation to be found. Sometimes it's an oxcart, a donkey or a burro, and a few nickels in the local currency, which will get you to where you want to go. Paupers always find a way. The important thing is to get out there, explore, and live an adventure no matter what vehicle gets you there!

The value of this book, an eBook, is that you can open it on your computer and instantly get information from hundreds of different websites. You can literally, book a trip around the world---everything--

-hotel, transportation and much more. Compare prices, make a bid, get details and set an itinerary---all from the comfort of your own room. Talk about being independent!

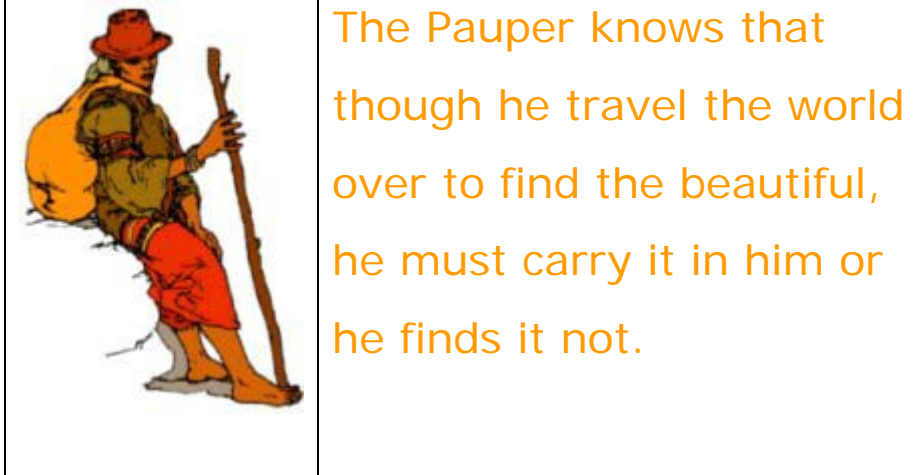
Important note: Your websites in this book should be automatically activated. In other words, you should be able to click on any web site listed and it will open your web browser and take you to the site. However, sometimes this may not be the case.

If your URL's in this book are not activated, let me tell you the easiest way to do so.

In the tool bar at the very top of this PDF document click on **tools**, then click on **locate web addresses** then click **create web links from URL's in text**.

Done.

The document will locate the hundreds of links and create active links for you. Just save the changes when it is finished doing its magic.



Chapter 10

Every Paupers Travel Resources



In this chapter we will cover a bunch of great resources you can use for your travel plans. You'll love the many ways to make your journey cheap, safe, and above all, a great adventure. You don't need to try them all, there are just too many and some actually duplicate themselves in programs and services offered. But you should choose a few to research on your own.

Join Pauper Travel.com

The very first resource I'm going to present to you is my own! If you've found this book interesting, helpful, and brilliantly written

(hmmmp!) and would like to continue our conversation, I warmly invite you to join the growing list of Paupers that gather at <http://www.paupertravel.com>

This site (our site) is a constantly expanding project dedicated to the lifestyle we've discovered together in these pages. Among other things there will be a "Paupers' Choice" trip of the week. This will be the best value (read: cheapest) travel opportunity we can find which is also the best in terms of easy access, great accommodations, and real adventure. It has to be a mind-blowing, hard to find, completely satisfying trip that makes every Pauper go.... *WOW!*

I'll also have all the links you find in this book in one convenient location, so you can really get the most out of the hundreds of resources you've found in **Travel Cheap! -Travel Well! -**
Confessions Of A Traveling Pauper.

But more importantly I can update you on any changes in these resources, add all new ones that come my way, and give you valuable feedback from other Paupers as they travel around the world! We'll have a member only section, a great forum exclusively for Paupers, a monthly newsletter, and the very latest information on cheap travel around the globe.

This is where I'll add even more "confessions", new insights, and significant interviews with some famous Paupers' and travel experts. We'll present great courses, travel commentary, reviews, and huge---huge---huge---(oh, I'm getting excited)--- huge, discounts and

bargains! So join, I'd love to have you as a member at

<http://www.paupertravel.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession #52

This is not only secret--- it's **TOP SECRET!** In fact, it is meant only for Paupers who own a copy of this book.

As a way of thanking you for joining me in these pages I'm putting together a great gift for you at our web site

<http://www.paupertravel.com>

Here is the password (magic words) to get your free gift: Yabba Dabba Doo! Just visit our site and tell me the password and I'll send your present via e-mail!

Shhhh! I told you at the start of this book we had our own little secret society. Now you know I wasn't kidding!

Travel Clubs

A lot of travel clubs charge an annual fee to become a member, but you get some pretty fine discounts on everything from travel insurance to tours. You'll have to make your own decision on whether to join or not. It really depends on your travel habits and desires. If the membership fee is too high and you don't really plan to travel on a regular basis, they may not be worth it. Many Paupers are already members of AAA and AARP, which work well enough for gaining

discount travel. My advice is to explore the resources listed here and carefully examine the benefits and advantages each club offers against your own personal goals in travel.

Adventures On Call for last minute discounts on airlines, cruises, tours, restaurants, hotels, car rentals, and theme parks. 800-638-8976

International Travel Club offers savings on airlines, car rentals, cruises, and vacation packages, dining, hotels, inns, and resorts.
<http://www.mytravelclub.com>

Insider Secrets Travel Club gives discounts on airlines, car rentals, cruises, and vacation packages. Free 30-day membership. Call 888-598-8214 and visit <http://www.insidersecrets.com>

Liberty Travel Preferred Club offers a member discount and upgrades with airlines, resorts, cruise lines, hotels, car rental, and more. They'll even help you with your passport photo. Call 800-887-1006 and visit <http://www.libertytravel.com>

Prestige Travel Club where you can get a discount dining card, coupon book, newsletter and e-mail alerts, special offers, and excellent savings on hotel rooms, cruises, car rentals, theme parks, tours, and airfare. Free limited one-year membership at
<http://www.american-unlimited.com/travelclub>

Travel & Leisure has a travel club that discounts airfares, cruises and hotels. Call 800-888-8728 and visit

<http://www.travelandleisure.com>

Plan Your Travel With these Websites

The Travel industry Association did a survey that shows 59 million people, in America alone, use the Internet to research travel and 25 million purchase travel products or services online. Why? The Internet is a great tool to use in researching your trips.

Unfortunately there is also a lot of fraud online, too. Always make sure your dealing with a reputable company before using your credit card. All of the sites I mention in this book are solid, and though I can't be personally responsible for how these companies treat you, I can be confident that they will be around for you to deal with them. If you do experience difficulties in dealing with any of them please take a moment to write me about it so I can follow up for you. In addition it will help me, and your fellow Paupers, when the next edition of this book is released; I'll constantly update the resources offered to my readers. Here's my personal e-mail address: vkp@authorsden.com

Not everything can be done online. For instance, if you need to cancel or change an airline reservation you'll need to call the airline on the phone to do it. That's why all of the resources in this book contain a telephone number as well as an online link.

Here's another word of caution. Don't depend exclusively on the Internet for your travel planning. Talk to friends, visit a travel agency, look through brochures, use the phone to call airlines and hotels and ask about current specials.

That aside, I can now extol the many virtues of online travel planning. There are literally thousands of websites that cater to travel. They offer an amazing array of different options for any Pauper. It's convenient, fast, and usually the latest most current information you can find about a particular trip, destination or transportation option.

Websites are famous for changing location, or disappearing and just plain vanishing into Internet black holes. The sites in this section have been around for quite some time, so you can rest assured they are reliable. Once in a while though, even these giants of stability can have a change or two. Let me know if this happens to you and I will make any changes necessary in the next edition of **Travel Cheap-Travel Well**.

In addition to these sites, you can use your search engines to explore new worlds of travel by entering words like: "travel", "cruises", "vacation deals", "tours", and many more. Try any of these:

America Online www.aol.com

Excite www.excite.com

Lycos www.lycos.com

Microsoft Network www.msn.com

Yahoo! www.yahoo.com

Go Click! www.goclick.com

Now here are a dozen sites you can use to plan your next adventure.
Paupers.... on your mark.... get set.... go!

1. <http://www.travelocity.com> is one of the three largest travel agencies in the USA, and winner of the Webby Award for best Internet travel site.
2. <http://www.expedia.com> offers trip planning and booking for many airlines and other travel related businesses. You can input the price you want to pay and the Expedia search engine will find a match for you.
3. <http://www.tripadvisor.com> does a great job in assisting you in planning a trip. Select a destination and they do the legwork.
4. <http://www.travelroads.com> will help you find tour operators. You can highlight the kind of activities you're interested in too!
5. <http://www.americanexpress.com> lists lots of last-minute travel deals and can process your bookings for nearly all kinds of travel.

6. <http://www.spafinder.com> if you love lounging in spas around the world. They have the most up-to-date listings for this sub-genre.
7. <http://www.izon.com> for independent travelers looking for hostels.
8. <http://www.go4less.com> where you can become a free member and get incredible last minute deals. They even offer FREE travel if you refer a friend to them.
9. <http://www.site59.com> if you only have a weekend trip in mind. This is their specialty for last minute deals in most major US cities.
10. <http://www.seniors.com> is a great site to help seniors (50+) to find great travel deals.
11. <http://www.freedomtrek.com> will help you with maps, facts, tips, hostel info, rail passes, travel advisories, weather forecasts, and work/study programs.
12. <http://www.icruise.com> is a cruise consolidator.

Pauper's Secret Confession #53

There are six websites this Pauper uses constantly when traveling. I've placed them all in my "favorites" section of my laptop computer

so I can call on them whenever I need their help. Each specializes in information like maps, exchange rates, language prompts, weather, restaurants and even subway routes around the world.

<http://www.onanda.com> for money conversion rates around the world.

<http://www.delorme.com> creates customized maps.

<http://www.subwaynavigator.com> for subway schedules around the globe. <http://www.zagat.com> offers guides to 20,000 major US and International restaurants.

<http://www.weather.com> gets your latest forecast for anywhere you're headed.

Here is another wonderful site that will help you find important phrases, even pronunciation, gadgets and resources in foreign countries. <http://www.travlang.com>

As you plan your trip online you will no doubt need to look into the health issues in different countries. Here is a site that allows you to type in a zip code and destination to find the nearest health clinic where you can get inoculations for upcoming travel. Medicine Planet also tells you which inoculations are needed for different countries, as well as important disease risks you may encounter.

<http://www.medicineplanet.com>

Choosing A Guidebook

Guidebooks can be a trusted travel buddy for Paupers. Finding a concise, well researched and well written guidebook will save you

time, money, frustration and build your confidence because you'll have the information you need.

On the other hand, it can constrict you if it becomes your only way to experience a destination. You want a guidebook to do what its title says: "Guide You", without constricting your own experiments and sense of adventure.

Most new guidebooks cost from \$14 - \$35 so you shouldn't start by buying them, instead borrow from fellow Paupers, go to the library and check some out. Then after you have found one that really appeals to you, go ahead and order a copy you can take on your trip with you.

Inside a good guidebook you can find answers to most of your questions. What the country or city has to offer, whether travel is easy or difficult, whether costs are high or low, and which are the best seasons to visit.

First, just read a guidebook to find out if a certain destination holds strong interest for you. Don't worry about finding rooms, yachts, bus routes, and restaurants etc. etc. Your first read through should just give you a general overview of the locale.

Once you decide to buy a guidebook, make sure you get the most current edition available. The best authors lose some accuracy quickly due to changing exchange rates, political machinations, and other vagaries. You need current information.

In evaluating a guidebook remember three things: facts, facts, and facts. That's what you need. Solid information about a destination; is transportation reliable, what happens at border crossings, are there bureaucratic problems, and what is daily life like?

You want to know if a certain steamboat leaves only once a week, and if you miss it, you'll be stuck waiting on the banks in the cold of winter shivering while you wait for a taxi, which is nonexistent.

Other questions you should get answers for (and a good guidebook will answer these) include:

Are there any current scams discovered in this part of the world?

What behavior would offend local customs?

Are the prices and places recommended by the guidebook in the range of your budget?

Is the index extensive enough to enable you to look things up quickly?

Does the author's tone appeal to your ear?

Are there some good insights being offered or is the book just rushing from one site to another?

Pauper's Secret Confession # 54

Some guidebooks (like the Lonely Planet series) solicit your comments, corrections, and criticisms of their books. If accepted they send you a free copy of your choice of their books. It's easy; just write your ideas down in the margins of the book or make notes in a travel notebook.

Note price changes, attitudes, services, people, new experiences, and discoveries.

When you return home take your notes and send off a letter. You not only save yourself around \$25. but you sleep well knowing you helped other travelers around the world!

Though there are many reliable guidebooks, with sterling reputations like Berlitz, Frommer, Knopf, Cook, and Michelin, these are often written with the more affluent traveler in mind. They might not be the right choice for a true-to-the-name Pauper.

What you want is a guidebook that can find low cost alternatives, places that are off the beaten path and ones that aren't afraid to help you hike independently into the deep outback.

I recommend **Lonely Planet Guides, Moon Travel Handbooks, Through The Back Door, Let's Go, Berkley Guides, Maverick Guides, and The Rough Guides**. All of these offer guides that are not only in depth, but sensitive to budget minded travelers.

For **Lonely Planet** guidebooks call 800-275-8555.

Moon Travel Handbooks come from 800-345-5473

The Harvard Student Association at 1 Story Street, Cambridge, MA 02138 presents the **Let's Go Series**.

The Rough Guides is from Penguin Book in the UK

Maverick Guides from Pelican Publishing Company Gretna LA 70053

Once again, even though guidebooks are a real help and can make you a wiser Pauper, they should never take the place of your own spur-of-the-moment travel decisions. Jump off the bus, rent a bike, take a walk and explore places that no guidebook could ever cover. It will save you from all those other tourists gathered en masse at the 'popular' sites and frees you to be a real adventurer!

There is much more help in this book for traveling Paupers that wish to plan trips. If you like the security of knowing exactly where you are going, how much you are paying, when you'll arrive and depart, and what you'll be doing while you're there, the next chapter will be a godsend.

Paupers Secret Confession # 55

To get really psyched up for a trip some Paupers put down their guidebooks and slap on a travel video or DVD.

International Video Network sells 60 minutes Video Visits, and Rand McNally offers a series of inexpensive 30-minute videos covering many countries.

You can find other video presentations for rent and sale at your local video store, on TV with The History Channel, A&E, or The Travel Channel.

As you watch each show, it will make you pant in anticipation because soon you'll see these same sights in person!

Chapter 11

Valuable Forms To Help Paupers Plan



In this chapter I'll offer you some forms that will assist you in your travel planning. You can print them out and fill in the blanks. Even though I presented a planning tool (**see Chapter 7- “*The Traveler's Checklist*”**) I think you will find that these are more detailed and require you to answer all of the important questions you're faced with when planning an adventure. Use the checklist first, it will help you choose whether a particular trip is even possible or interesting to you now; then move on to the forms in this chapter to zero in on your trip and plan it with precision.

My Travel Agent:

Address:

Phone #

Emergency Toll Free #

My Credit Card #:

Expiration Date:

Credit Card Company Phone #:

2nd Credit Card #:

Expiration Date:

Credit Card Company Phone #:

My Passport #:

Expiration Date:

My Flight Information:

Fight

#1 _____

Flight

#2 _____

Flight

#3 _____

Flight #

4 _____

My Hotel/Hostel/ Rental Information:

Name:

Address:

Phone #:

Dates Of Visit:

Special Notes:

2nd Hotel/Hostel/ Rental Information:

Name:

Address:

Phone #:

Dates Of Visit:

Special Notes:

My Tour Company:

Address:

Phone #:

Contact Person:

Cost Of Tour:

Items Included In Itinerary:

In Emergency Contact:

Name:

Phone #:

Relationship:

Names & Addresses of people I wish To Send Postcards To:

#1.

#2.

#3.

#4.

#5.

#6.

#7.

#8.

#9.

#10

Others:

Other important Information About Me:

Age:

Physical Description:

Accomplishments:

Main Employment:

Hobbies:

Skills:

Other:

Keep the previous five pages with you. Print them out and make two copies; give one copy to a trusted friend or relative in case of an emergency. Keep your copy on your person at all times. You can use the information to easily fill out immigration forms, give an address to a cab driver, or send off a postcard.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 56

Here's what I do. I place this same information in a travel journal. It's more compact, fits easily into a hip pocket and allows me more pages to make travel notes. I get my lovely moleskin travel journals from <http://www.modoemodo.com>

For two centuries now, the moleskin has been the legendary notebook of European artists and intellectuals, from Van Gogh to Henri Matisse and Ernest Hemingway. Many are sketchbooks others, notebooks. Travelers like Bruce Chatwin who used to buy his moleskins at a Paris stationary store, would stock up before embarking on one of his journeys. He would always write a message in the front cover page, offering a reward to anyone who should find it and return it to him. That tradition is now built into each copy of the moleskin notebook.

I love the feel of these little notebooks, too. They are rugged and you can get them lined or with blank pages. Taking notes is a habit that is good to get into. Make suggestions to yourself, remark about what you see and experience. Jot down the names and addresses of people you meet in your travels. Complain, criticize, extol, rave, detail and draw pictures of the sites you see; write down all of your ideas and thoughts. It's like having a record made during your days abroad, and returning, you can sit peaceably by your home fireside and re-live your many adventures as a traveling Pauper. Captured forever in your trusty

travel journal.

My Handy List Of Favorites

MY FAVORITE TOUR OPERATORS

MY FAVORITE AIRLINES

MY FAVORITE CRUISE LINES

MY FAVORITE CONSOLIDATORS

MY FAVORITE ACCOMMODATIONS

MY FAVORITE INDEPENDENT TRAVEL SOURCES

MY FAVORITE CAR BROKERS AND RENTAL AGENCIES

FAVORITE RESOURCES

FAVORITE WEB SITES

FAVORITE PAUPER TIPS

Here's what to do with the above list of favorites. First, fill it out. I know you're probably thinking: why bother? I'll tell you why. As you become a more seasoned traveler you will naturally begin to develop a preference for certain providers. They simply do their

job to your liking. By making note of them you will start excluding the not-so-desirable operators and your life will be much enhanced.

Once you've completed this section I recommend you place all the contacts here in your e-mail contact software (I.E; Outlook) so they are handy for you on your computer.

Let's Do Some Dreaming

Part of the planning process is to give full range to your imagination. In this section I want you to list at least five or more places you would like to visit in the next five years. Let your fancy drift to the most exotic, far-fetched and delightful destinations. Choose places you've always dreamed about visiting. And then write them down here:

Destination #1:

Type Of Travel:

Estimated Cost:

Destination #2:

Type Of Travel:

Estimated Cost:

Destination #3

Type Of Travel:

Estimated Cost:

Destination #4

Type Of Travel:

Estimated Cost:

Destination #5

Type Of Travel:

Estimated Cost:

Now, give this list to your travel agent so he can notify you about any specials to these places.

The next section will be very valuable to you, especially if you're a disorganized Pauper like me. In it you will find all of the necessary steps to make your trip a reality---in a step-by-step- process.

Print out your copy of this list when you've done all of your homework and follow it religiously. If you do, I promise you will have all the bases covered before you step out of your door to explore the world.

I've divided this list into three sections. We start with the Pre-Planning Stage, then the Booking Stage, and end with the "I'm Outta-Here" Stage.

I've said it over and over again in this book; a well-planned trip is always the best route for a Pauper to take. You'll really enjoy your vacation or journey of discovery so much more when your mind can rest at ease and you know you've got all the little details out of the way. Now you can relax!

But before you can take it easy, you need to commit to this plan. I promise you, you'll be glad you did.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 57

I can hear some Pauper in the back row yell out: "What about all that stuff concerning 'last-minute' trips and 'seat-of-the-pants' travel you wrote about earlier?"

Look, if you want to jump on an airplane to Borneo, or Papua, New Guinea* without planning it--- be my guest. But if you get stuck because your passport expired while you were there just don't come crying to me!

* I have been known to skip this list myself, but only on really short 'in country' trips.

Do your own search for bargains. Call and visit websites offering this trip. Ask for brochures.

Check the consolidators for their best deal.

Now, determine which trip is best for you. Consider cost, itineraries and most of all, what you want out of the trip. Get a good guidebook about your destination and make notes. Check the library and get a video too.

Make sure you're dealing with a reputable company. How long have they been in business, any referrals by satisfied travelers?

For heaven's sake, you haven't forgotten to inquire about special discounts, booking early, paying in full early, senior fares, government rates---all the money saving tips in this book, have you?

Booking Stage

It's time to book your dream vacation! Look over the cancellation and refund policy. Find out if any visas are needed.

Look over your travel documents for expiration dates. You don't want them to expire while you're on the road. This includes credit cards and passports.

Get immunized, if needed. The Health Department will know. Get the required ones and the recommended inoculations. Of course, if you haven't already, get the needed visas.

Buy required tickets. Airline, cruise, tour etc.

Start packing. The earlier the better. Include traveler's checks and camera batteries. Split clothing between you and your travel mate. If one gets lost you each have something to wear. Pack tickets, medications, eyeglasses, cameras, and 'important' items in your carry-on along with one change of clothes and underwear.

I'm 'Out-Of-Here' Stage

Make arrangements for your absence. Board pets, stop the newspaper and mail or get a house sitter. Lock the house down

including out building and the garage. Put your lights on a timer. Let one trusted neighbor know you're leaving and to keep an eye out for you. Send them a postcard and maybe a small gift on your return.

Make sure you have all your travel documents. If not contact your travel agent.

Fill out the "Travelers Checklist" from chapter 7 and make a copy.

Verify the flight departure by calling the airport the day of your flight.

Water your plants, drop the kitty or dog off at the sitters, lower the thermostat, turn on the answering machine and fill your gas tank. Put aside enough dough to take care of return costs and airport parking.

There you have it! Now, double check again. Look this list over one final time, then scoot out the door and have a magnificent Pauper's trip!

Pauper's Secret # 58

You know, I have seen tons of lists in hundreds of “how-to” books. They are really pretty helpful in the end. But I always look for ways to personalize them. In the list just outlined there are probably a couple of items that would make you more comfortable as you leave on your trip.

Don't hesitate to add them to your planning list! Like the Old saying goes: “if it feels good, do it!”



When a Pauper encounters the remarkable he sears the image of it in his mind and soul; not just for himself, but that he may later share it with others

Chapter 12

To Travel Solo Or Not?

That Is The Question!



Look, some Paupers love to travel alone. Others wouldn't consider leaving on a trip without someone else. If you already know which camp you fall into then, I suppose you can skip this chapter, ---it's just not much of an issue for you.

But I've found there is a vast middle group of travelers that are undecided, and it is true that there is a vast difference between an excursion by yourself and one taken with others. One isn't necessarily better than the other--- just different.

Even if you travel with someone you know, you might be surprised at what is revealed about your relationship once you hit the road together. Travel has a way of exposing the roots of a relationship, testing it, stretching it in new, unexpected directions.

Traveling with a partner is like synchronized swimming. If you're not making the same moves at the right times, you're likely to either

drown or look awfully foolish floundering about in the water. My best advice is to tackle a short trip before moving onto a longer adventure together.

Let's start by looking at the positives of each decision.

Solo Travel Benefits

► Traveling alone is the ultimate freedom. What do you want to do? You set the itinerary, make all the decisions. No one to second-guess you, argue and complain, no, --- you're the master of your time and place.

► It's a confidence builder, too. You can amaze yourself sometimes at how adroit you are at solving problems, defeating the odds, and finding cool hidden treasures, all by your little self!

► Often, it's easier to meet people when you are alone. Folks have a tendency to approach single travelers and strike up a friendly conversation, and you find yourself taking the initiative more too.

► Thomas Jefferson once said: "One travels more usefully when alone because he reflects more." As a solo Pauper you can meditate to your hearts content, soaking in the environment, the customs and culture for as long as you wish.

► We're all moody, let's be honest. It comes with the territory called "human nature". As a solo Pauper you don't have to put up with

anybody's moods (good or otherwise) and, you know what? Nobody has to but up with yours either.

► If learning a local language is important to you, then a solo trip helps you learn faster because you must. There is no one to stand by and help you carry on a conversation in your native tongue, while you stumble with your phrase book or try and decipher a guidebook. You have to step up to the plate and “speak”!

► Then again, with a solo trip your romantic options increase too. You are more likely to meet someone that could prove very valuable to your life in the future. Love on the road is never a bad thing.

► It's really all about personality type. If you're a very independent person by nature, don't berate that fact. Accept it. Know you're probably better off traveling alone and not having to put up with the idiosyncrasies of anyone else.

Partner Travel Benefits

► Travel usually costs less when you have a partner. For instance, a single room is about 80% less than the price of a double room, so you split the rent fifty-fifty and save a nice stash of cash. The same goes for expenses like taxis, guidebooks, film, and touring costs.

► The many tasks involved in travel can be shared. These daily chores may include laundry, changing money, buying tickets, and finding a room or making reservations.

- ▶ Safety. You are usually safer when you have a companion. This is especially true for women who aren't approached as readily when there is a partner around.
- ▶ Getting rid of those lonesome blues. When your mood is a bit sour, or you're homesick and lonely, a partner can brighten things up for you, and you can do the same for them.
- ▶ If you can find a traveling companion that speaks the local language they can be a real help with daily life abroad.
- ▶ Reality checks. You can bounce ideas off of each other and brainstorm over what path or action to take next.
- ▶ Illness. If you or your partner gets sick, it's a godsend to have someone to attend to matters.
- ▶ When the trip is over, you have someone to share wonderful memories with in the years to come.

Pauper's Secret Confession #59

Where do I come down on this issue of traveling alone vs. with a partner? I'm more of a solo Pauper, than not. I'm also sometimes sorry I have to travel alone. It really depends on the trip. The shorter ones are a blast with almost anyone. But anything longer than a week and almost everyone in the world gets on my nerves. Sorry, but it's true, --- I must confess.

Money & Your Partner

Money can come between the best of traveling companions. Paupers take money pretty seriously, if you hadn't noticed through the past 180 pages, or so, of this book. That's why this issue needs to be addressed right up front. In fact, I suggest you have your friend read this section before you both decide to travel together, so you can have a basic and mutual understanding.

Here are some basic questions to ask and answer right now:

- ? Do you both feel comfortable accounting for every dollar spent or not? This is important because some Paupers are really budget conscious and want to know where the money goes each and every day. Some even keep detailed ledger books, others are much more carefree and work off a general 'feel' of what is allowed for each day. So decide now if you both approach this issue in the same way.

- ? Do you wish to pay for restaurant bills right down the middle or only pay for what you have eaten? This has caused more resentment than you can imagine on the road. Some Paupers have a larger appetite than others and eat more food. When the bill arrives one person can feel slighted if they pay a larger share of the bill and eat half the amount of food. So, ask yourselves: do we split the tabs down the middle or figure out who owes what? Then stick to your decision throughout the trip.

- ? Who keeps track of the expenditures? Believe me, you'll be glad you chose one person to be the 'banker' on the trip. They save all the receipts (you don't lose them as often when one person is in charge), they carry and cash the traveler's checks, and they keep a responsible tally of money spent and on what. This person must be detail oriented and enjoy frugality. If not, you're better off alternating this responsibility.

The Mad Money Fund. I heartily suggest you both place a certain amount of money aside for incidentals that pop up on your trip together. This 'mad-money fund' is open to each person who contributes to it, and helps pay for odd incidentals that always appear on any trip. It could be a taxi fare, when you're running late for a theatre engagement and neither of you wants to 'split the cost down the middle', you could use it for a 'tip' for the doorman, or baggage handler etc. etc. This fund saves you from squabbling about the 'small stuff'.

Trust me, the amount of time you spend answering the above questions is time well spent. Don't let 'filthy lucre' stand in the way of a good friendship and an exciting adventure.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 60

Money is not only the root of all evil; it's a downright nuisance when traveling with a fellow Pauper. Let's face it, --- we're both cheapskates!

That's why, in spite of all the good advice I've just given you, I'm so unreasonable about money I just flat out tell my partner: "You're on your own. I pay my way (on everything) and you pay your way (on everything)."

However, I have been known to pick up a lot of tabs, and even pay for the whole trip if traveling with a fellow Pauper that happens to be of the 'fairer sex.' What else can I do? Love conquers even the Pauper in me!

The Ideal Travel Partner

I'd like to direct your attention to the attributes of an ideal traveling companion. Although we are each made of unique stuff, and like snowflakes and galaxies, each an individual unlike any other, there are some common characteristics that make sense when choosing a partner to travel with.

1. *Someone you like.* Sounds so simple, but I've known Paupers who only chose a particular partner because they 'could afford' the trip. That's a big mistake. Ask yourself: "Do I like this person?" It's really paramount since you're both going to be

spending a lot of intimate time together in all-new environments.

2. *You both take the same trip.* In other words, are you both on the same page concerning the journey? If one of you sees long afternoons lounging on the beach, and the other is in it for the pure adventure and active, physical participation in activities, you may be headed for a train wreck. One wants to hike everywhere, the other keeps looking for a taxi. One wants to visit a new place every day, the other wants to keep returning to their 'favorite spot'. Talk this over, feel each other out.
3. *Risk Assessment.* Some Paupers want to sleep in the wild, and the wilder the better. Others can only imagine a comfortable hotel room. One is unconcerned about safety and is a daredevil; the other is timid, cautious and very careful. Try and judge your mutual ability to take risks while traveling.
4. *Budget Assessment.* Here comes that money issue again. If one doesn't want to spend any more than \$12 a night on a room and the other won't settle for less than \$150 you have a problem waiting to explode. What about splurging on something? Does one follow the urge and the other stand by horrified? Make sure you're both compatible on the issue of money and assess your goals.
5. *The Tick Tock Factor.* Do you both live on the generally same inner clock? Is one a 'morning person' and the other a 'night

- owl?’ When do you both like to eat breakfast, lunch or dinner? Believe me, this can become a real hassle if you don’t address the issue up front.
6. *Pacing Is Everything.* Do you both operate on the same level of energy? Is one upbeat and peppy, the other lethargic and slow? This little problem can be a real irritant if one of you is racing to the next location while the other is snoozing at the café.
7. *The Flexibility Factor.* On every trip I’ve ever taken there is something unexpected that happens. There is a problem that needs a solution. How flexible is your partner? Can they handle a little stress or do they blow up in a temper tantrum at situations that confuse them? How about a sense of humor? Do they have a good one?
8. *Reality Check.* If your partner snores like a locomotive and you’re a light sleeper--- boy, are you in trouble. Hate cigarette smoking? But, your partner is a three pack a day guy? Watch out! Look over personal habits you both have, and without judging the other person, just decide if its something you can live with. No hard feelings if you can’t. But decide before your plane leaves the tarmac.
9. *Sweet Solitude.* All of us need time alone. Time to reflect and think. If your partner is a chatterbox, and couldn’t leave a conversation because there is simply too much to be said, you

better look for someone else to leave with. Quiet time is absolutely essential to a good trip. Make sure you and your partner know the value of time alone and make sure you both give each other permission to exercise this option.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 61

There is an old Angolan proverb that states: "To be sure that your friend is a friend, you must go with him on a journey".

That's the old chicken and the egg routine. You can't always know if your compatible on a journey with someone until you take it. Then it may be too late. It's happened. I've come back from a couple of journeys and cooled to having anything more to do with my travel partner. Conversely, I've enriched and deepened several relationships upon my return.

Finding A Fellow Traveling Pauper

Why stay home, grumbling about not wanting to travel alone and waiting for the partner of your dreams to appear as if by magic? Instead let's get proactive and find a partner. In this section I'll give you some ways to scout out potential traveling companions.

You can look at ads placed in many different travel magazines. They often feature people wanting to travel with you. Try *Travel News* and *International Living*, to name just two.

Take a gander at bulletin boards at colleges and bookstores. Right where you live there might be a fellow Pauper just waiting to get hooked up.

The *Travel Companion Exchange* is a reputable service that has been around for 20 years. They offer profiles of fellow adventurers like you willing to confer about a trip together. Call 800-392-1256 and visit <http://www.whytravelalone.com>

It cost \$28 to join but *The Connecting Travel Network* may be just what you need. They offer monthly advice, reader reports, travel tales and profiles of travelers looking to hook up. Call 800-557-1757 and visit <http://www.CSTN.org>

Over 50? Try Golden Age Travelers Club Call 800-258-8880 and visit <http://www.gatclub.com>

Pauper's Secret Confession # 62

Hey, I found the perfect travel partner----and lost her in Khartoum!

It can happen. You get lost. Your partner was right behind you, but then took the wrong flight, turned left instead of right, went up instead of down. You can spend a lot of miserable hours trying to locate each other again. Solution? Have a plan.

If you're staying at a hotel, call the front desk and leave a message for your partner concerning exactly where you are---then stay there and wait for them to find you.

Remember you both can't find each other at the same time. Only one person should be designated as 'the searcher' the other as the 'stay putter'. Otherwise you just cross paths.

Are you in-between hotel stays? Then pick out a place to leave a message for each other. It could be your travel agent, or someone back home. If you think of it, always scope out your current surroundings and choose a place, like the Information Desk at an attraction to meet if you get parted from each other.

Now do this! Don't wait until you're in Cairo and he's in Bolivia!



Our traveling Pauper
uses her enthusiasm to
greatly benefit her
companion on the road
for she knows
enthusiasm is from the
Greek word: En-Theus=
to be filled with God.

Chapter 13

Paperwork: Passports, Visas, Money and More!



It's time to dedicate a complete chapter to the nuts and bolts of travel. Some readers will already be familiar with passports, visas and the other important issues presented in this chapter. But if you're relatively new to travel this chapter will completely explain all the important documents you need to get from one country to another. I'll cover insurance matters and money issues. It's time to get all of your ducks in a row.

Passports

You're very close to becoming a citizen of the world as a traveling Pauper. But to make it official you'll need a passport. Once you have it, it will be awfully hard to resist putting it to use. Getting all those exotic stamps from countries around the world will make your passport a kind of badge of honor--- you'll see.

Simply put, a passport is a form of identification issued by a government permitting the holder to enter and leave his or her *own country*. Yet, if you want to enter or leave most any foreign country, its government requires presenting a valid passport, as well. If you're a US citizen, this requirement is waived in Mexico, Canada, and many destinations in the Caribbean.

How To Get Your Passport

In the US, the Department of State issues passports through its Passport Agency. To get your first passport, if you are age 13 or older, you must apply in person at a Passport Agency office, a state or federal court, or at a post office authorized to accept passport applications.

U.S. Passport Agency Offices:

Boston...617-565-6990

Chicago...312-353-7155

Honolulu...808-541-1918

Houston...713-653-3153

Los Angeles...310-575-7075

Miami...305-536-4681

New Orleans...504-589-6161

New York...212-399-7710

Philadelphia...215-597-7480

Stamford...203-325-3538

Seattle...206-220-7788 Washington D.C.... 202-647-0518

San Francisco...415-744-4010

Fill out form DSP-11 that comes from a Passport Agency office, post office or travel agent. You can find them on the Internet too at

<http://www.travel.state.gov>

Show proof of citizenship via a birth certificate, naturalization certificate, or proof that you were a U.S. citizen born abroad. The agency can give you alternatives to these documents if you don't have them.

Present proof of identity such as a drivers' license or government/military ID.

Submit identical 2X2 inch photos. Front view, no hat, or sunglasses, with a plain white background).

Pay the fee (credit cards are not accepted). Ten-year passports are \$60.

Please make sure you fill out your forms correctly, since a mistake will require you to wait while another application is processed.

If you had a passport within the last 12 years, but it expired, you can send in for an automatic renewal by using form DSP-82.

The process of application approval takes about five weeks or more. If you want it processed within 3 days you must pay an additional \$35.

Paupers should try and send in for their passports at least 3 months prior to leaving on a foreign trip. Save the extra \$35 and leave plenty of time for its processing.

Of course, you can have your travel agent get your passport for you, or use a private company but you'll pay at least \$35. to have it done. Paupers are do-it-yourself kind of travelers, I must say.

The pages inside a passport are where visas are stamped; so get the largest book available (48 pages). It doesn't cost you anymore.

Above all keep you passport current. If it expires while you're on the road you may be refused a visa, and if it expires when you return home you have to pay \$100 for a renewal. To be safe, if your passport only has six months left to go on it, get it renewed early.

Some countries don't like to issue visas on passports that are about to expire.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 63

How's your memory? Do yourself a favor and memorize your passport number, and the dates of issue and expiration. Do it like you do your home phone number. Otherwise, you'll have to pull out your book every time you meet someone in immigration or register in a hotel.

It's a good number to know, in case someone robs you, you lose your passport or some other horrendous occurrence happens while you're in a country that is totally new to you.

Visas

It's hard to believe but you and I don't really have any "right" to travel. That's why there are visas. It's a document issued by a foreign government that gives us permission to enter a country and stay for a limited period of time. A visa usually takes the form of a rubber stamp, but it also may be what looks like a postage stamp or a sheet of paper stapled into the passport.

Right now about 90 countries require visas. Not all countries require visas, though. For instance, Canada, Mexico, Caribbean and Western Europe countries don't require U.S. citizens to have a visa. This

means lots of times you can breeze from one country to another with little delay.

To find out if the country you plan to visit requires a visa you can get a copy of the *Foreign Entry Requirements of Foreign Governments* from the Consumer Information center. 719-948-3334 or write to PO Box 100, Pueblo, CO 81009.

You can also call the State department Citizens Emergency Center at 202-647-5225.

When You Arrive At The Border

Having a visa doesn't guarantee entry into a country. Some places want to know you have enough money for your stay and have an outbound ticket to leave. Sounds kind of unfriendly doesn't it? Anyway, this is rare, but prepare yourself because it does happen.

Ask your travel agent if the country you're visiting requires an 'onward ticket', that's the ticket out of the country I just mentioned in the paragraph above.

It's indeed rare when a person is turned back at a border. But it's always a good idea to be you, dress normally, smile, and be courteous and patient. If you decide to assert just how important you are, how obscene your language can get, and how impatient you are with this inefficient official.... don't be surprised if you are allowed to return home, where you can be your disgruntled, contrary self.

Types Of Visas

There are transit, business, student, resident, and tourist visas. Of these the transit, business and tourist are the most important to travelers. A transit visa permits a short-term visit only. Its purpose is to give you time to dash into a city, or visit a site, and then continue your journey. This is when you will usually be asked for your 'onward ticket' and about enough money to complete your visit.

A business visa speaks for itself. You may be asked for an invitation from a local person or a government ministry official, or be coming for a specific business event for such a visa to be issued to you.

The tourist visa is the one used by...yes, tourists. It's the one you'll probably be using most.

Normally a visa allows for one entry, however if you plan to enter, stay, leave and then re-enter the same country you'll need a multiple-entry visa. Make sure of your itinerary so you can plan on getting a multiple entry visa to save yourself money and a great deal of time.

Most visas are only good for 30 to 60 days, but they can also range from a week to a year. Most start from the day you request it.

Getting Your Visa

Basically, the government of the country you wish to visit wants to know why you're entering, and where you want to go. On forms you

can write down your occupation, where you are currently staying, and other simple questions to help identify you.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 64

Here are a couple of pointers:

If the form asks for your itinerary make sure you list all of the places you plan on visiting and when asked about length of stay, make sure you ask for the maximum amount of time allowed for that visa. This will give you the most latitude during your stay. Also, it's a good idea to carry an extra passport photo with you in case the official issuing the visa requires it for the form.

You shouldn't put a time limit on how soon a visa will be issued. Sometimes it's automatic, other times it may take a considerable amount of time, from a few days to a few weeks. Again, be patient, each country is different. If you have a real problem develop don't hesitate to ask for a supervisor, or the person in charge. Just do this in an open and friendly way, so you can resolve whatever issue is causing any delay.

Another important thing to keep in mind is that getting your visa before you leave home is usually much quicker than if you wait to get one while you are in the middle of your journey.

If you're adamant about only getting a visa once you are trekking around the globe, then call the official issuing consulate of the country and ask where you can specifically get a proper visa to enter.

Special Permits

Permits are required to go certain places and do certain things depending on the country you visit and what you wish to do there. Sometimes you need one to take pictures, protect natural resources, and other things that local bureaucracies want to keep tabs on and regulate. Fortunately permits are seldom required and many can only be obtained on the spot. So if you need one, you can decide whether the time spent waiting for it to be issued, or the price of it, is worth your time and money.

Work permits are necessary if you're considering getting a job while you are aboard. It's unwise to depend on a work permit, since they don't come readily while you're traveling. Refugees flooding into many countries looking for work have put a real stranglehold on obtaining these kinds of permissions. However, if you have a specialized field or skill that is short supply it may be easier. If you find an employer that will make a written request on your behalf for a work permit, you may also have some luck. But don't expect to do so on the spot, these kinds of agreements are best made before you leave home.

Permits are just a fact of life when you travel. If you stick to most tried and true tourist attractions you won't have to get a permit, other than

the admission ticket you pay to see them, of course. **Travel & Health Insurance**

Can there be anything more boring than talk about insurance? Well, the fact of the matter is that spending a little time on this subject can help you stay in the winner's circle as a Traveling Pauper.

Try and imagine these nightmare scenarios: your expensive camera is lost, there's a sudden bill for medical services in a foreign hospital, and it becomes necessary to cancel a trip after sending in a large deposit.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 65

It is possible to get some work, even on a tourist visa that is “off the books”. Usually this is with a restaurant or on a farm, many times your proficiency with English is a real plus and you can even get free meals or rooms by simply correcting the grammar or wording on an establishments signage.

Keep you eyes open for opportunities to make a few (whatever the local currency is) by doing odd jobs or being helpful in the areas just mentioned. Paupers are not averse to making a buck or two, while being helpful.

What stands between you and a great deal of money lost, and losing ground to that helpless, sinking feeling that occurs when life isn't so rosy?

Insurance.

We don't understand this insurance business until we have to, that's just human nature. But right now let me arm you with the basic divisions of travel insurance so you'll be a wiser, more prepared and safer Pauper.

Travel insurance can be broken into three kinds of coverage: Personal property, trip interruption or cancellation, and medical.

Personal Property

Do you have homeowner's, renter's, or automobile insurance back home? Check with your agent to see if your property is already covered while you are traveling. Many times it is. You can usually purchase a low cost rider on that insurance to cover any additional needs.

If you're not covered, first consider how much you have at stake and what risks you would be insuring against before making an insurance purchase for personal property. Insurance companies state that about 50% of all losses are baggage claims. Airlines only offer limited coverage, and there is a deductible.

When getting a policy ask:

1. Is luggage covered?
2. Is cash covered?

3. Are specific items covered? Jewelry, cameras, other valuables?
4. Do you need a police report to make a claim?
5. What about costs incurred by delays?
6. Are you covered for harm you cause to others and their possessions, perhaps through the use of an automobile?
7. What exclusions are there? (Certain parts of the world?)

All of this matters, and you're smart to get details from your insurance agent. A standard policy covers luggage only if you can prove if it's stolen, while an "all-risks" policy covers you whatever the circumstances.

So should you buy traveler's insurance? My advice is to shop around and get the lowest premium, and consider what you're comfortable with, personally. Some paupers don't mind taking risks others hate it.

Pauper's Secret Confession #66

I always take out insurance on my property because I usually travel with very expensive cameras worth thousands of dollars, (I'm a photographer as well as a writer) and replacing them is paramount to me should they get lost or stolen.

No matter what you personally decide, remember no insurance company will reimburse you for loss of your journal, exposed film, or passport.

The best coverage you can have is: "Stay Alert!"

Trip Interruption or Cancellation

Travel Guard International, an insurer, reports that about 3% of people who buy trip cancellation insurance actually cancel a trip. That's not very high. Only you know how likely it may be that health or business obligations might interfere with your trip and whether the odds are in your favor if you buy insurance for cancellations/interruptions.

You need to know:

1. When does the coverage begin and end.

2. Under what conditions would the policy reimburse you for penalties and deposits if you cancelled after your deposit with the tour company operator became non-refundable?
3. Would you be covered for unexpected illness?
4. Would you be covered for a pre-existing medical condition?
5. What about acts of God like hurricanes, terrorism, or communicable diseases interfered with your trip?
6. Could you extend the policy if you extend your trip?
7. What sort of failure by the tour/cruise operator would result in payment to you?
8. Oh yeah, and how much is the premium?

Pauper's Secret Confession # 67

Do I buy trip cancellation or interruption insurance? In short: No.

I think the odds are against me canceling a trip for health or business. I have a job that I control and am generally in good health.

Plus, as you've seen throughout this book, there is a lot of planning I do BEFORE a trip. Yes, I actually practice what I preach. So there is little room for major surprises when I travel. But that's just me. Be honest with yourself. Know yourself, and then decide what is best for you!

Here are the stats: The State Department reports that of the 16 million adult U.S. citizens who flew overseas in a recent year 23,000 were hospitalized abroad. That's 1 ½ per thousand.

If you already have health insurance see if your policy covers you overseas. Blue Cross/Blue Shield covers most emergency care and they get bills directly for care that occurs overseas. Medicare covers no one overseas. So check out your policy.

Travel medical insurance should cover illness incurred abroad and prescription drugs. Don't expect dental care though.

Also find out:

1. What is the premium?
2. What are the deductibles?
3. Any co-payments?
4. Any exclusion like pre-existing conditions or pregnancy?
5. When must you purchase the policy before your trip for it to be in effect?
6. Do you need to call home for elective or surgical procedures?
7. What about sports injuries? You know, when you're skydiving off the Himalayas, or deep sea diving in the Indian Ocean?

Payments for medical insurance usually fall into one of two categories. You may be reimbursed for expenses you've already paid or the company pays for the medical care directly. One costs you first, while you're on the road, and the second doesn't dip into your current travel moneybag. Keep that in mind when you come to your decision.

Here are a couple of programs to look into:

The MedPass program from Global Emergency Medical Services 800-860-111 will connect you with a high quality medical team. Leave a medical history form with them and if you need assistance on the

road, you get an English speaking health care professional that will get your history by fax from the home company. You pay for all care and the cost for the program is \$95 per year.

The Blood Care Foundation will dispatch a safe supply of blood for transfusion to a Pauper in need in any country. This could be important in countries where blood is not safely screened for HIV and other diseases. This will set you back \$60 to register and an annual fee of \$52 bucks. Contact: Box 7, Seven oaks, Kent TN13 2SZ England. 44-732-742427.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 68

No way around it, health is such a personal issue that I wouldn't dare recommend what you should do about getting medical insurance when you travel. So I won't.

I won't even tell you what I do (this is the only confession I won't confess to) because that might influence your decision.

I will offer this advice: if you have a pre-existing condition you should wear a Medic Alert tag which signals medical personnel of allergies and special health conditions. You can get one at the Medic Alert Foundation 800-344-3226 for around \$35.

Companies That Sell Medical Insurance

Berkeley Care 800-645-2424 Carefree Travel insurance 800-323-3149

Corporate Assist 800-756-5900 Global Care 800-779-1017

Health Care Abroad 800-237-6615 Safe Passage International 800-777-7665

The Travelers 800-243-3174 Trip Mate 800-888-0432

Now we turn to the other kind of paperwork. You know, the green colored paper (in most countries, anyway)...money.

Explorers and Paupers of old carried their funds in hard currency, like precious metals or minerals. Everyone was relieved when soft currency came along. Paper currency is not only convenient but it makes it easier to trade in, change over, and study all the pretty pictures on each bill.

However, it is vulnerable to being lost or stolen. Many have chosen to walk around with traveler's checks instead of carrying cash. But let's look carefully at this choice.

If you open a variety of guidebooks you will find they recommend that you carry more than one easily convertible currency. The easiest are the U.S. Dollar, the German mark, the British pound, the Japanese yen, Canadian dollar, French franc and Swiss franc. There are even hotels that won't accept any currency but these.

Coins are pretty useless when traveling. Tip the porter or waiter an American quarter and the local bank won't give him anything for it unless he accumulates a bunch of them. So it's dollar bills you really want on the road, it's by far the most welcomed currency in the world and I'm not being chauvinistic about it, --- it's just a fact at this time in history.

Travelers' Checks

Let's face it, travelers' checks are the safest way to transport money around the world, you're protected in case of loss or theft. So why not just use them and carry no hard cash around?

1. There may be nowhere to exchange a traveler's check for cash at the time you really need cash, like when banks are closed on the weekend. In fact, in many underdeveloped countries travelers' checks aren't accepted at all!
2. There are merchants that have been burned by fake travelers' checks and so they won't accept them for that priceless item you had your heart set on for your nephew back home.
3. You may get double charged. Once when you purchase your checks and again when you exchange them for the local currency.
4. The exchange rate may be lower for travelers' checks vs. cash.
5. If you like creative financing on the road, the black market (which is widely used as an underground economy in many countries overseas) travelers' checks will not help you make a purchase.

You usually will be charged a 1% fee by the company issuing the checks to you, but remember this may be negotiable, especially if you get them from your friendly local banker. Tell her you are a constant and good customer and ask that the fee be waived. You'd be surprised how often this works. Also if you belong to AAA you don't have to pay for travelers' checks, this is true with other organizations as well.

Only carry the top brand names in travelers' checks:

Amex

Thomas Cook

Citicorp

Barclays Bank

Visa

Bank of America

Pauper's Secret Confession # 69

What's the best denomination to carry? I suggest that the majority of your cash be in the \$10 range for the most flexibility, but that does bulk up your money belt. So compromise and get \$20 some \$50's and a few hundreds when it comes to travelers' checks.

Remember too, you can use a credit card while on the road to purchase more checks, as you need them.

Lost or Stolen Traveler's Checks

The one thing you can count on if you use traveler's checks is that companies, which issue them, stand behind each one and promise to refund on checks that are lost or stolen. But you have to play by the rules.

Sign travelers' checks when you first get them and sign only once. Never countersign a check until you are right in front of the person accepting it.

When you purchase the checks learn about the replacement process, usually there will be a booklet offering this information along with a hotline number for you to call.

It's always a good habit to record the number, amount, date, and place of transaction when you cash each check. If you don't, a clever thief could steal a few checks and you wouldn't know about it immediately. You might even lose a few checks yourself and not having kept any record of expenditures, you might not ever realize it!

To report a lost or stolen travelers' check abroad, contact the nearest office of the issuer. If you have the original receipt, or a record of the check numbers and denominations purchased, you can expect quick replacement. Without the proper information, though, there will have to be a delay while it's obtained. Then you may only get a partial refund until enough time has passed for the issuer to be sure exactly which checks are missing. See? It's so much better to make notes in your trusty travel journal about each check you cash.

Another good idea is to keep your receipts separate from where you keep your checks. You don't want to lose your checks and receipts all in one fell swoop.

Credit Cards

Don't be tempted to just chuck all of your travelers' checks and go exclusively with credit cards. Plastic alone is still not recognized in some of the most exotic places on earth. It depends on where you

are going, of course, but even if it's a very modern country where credit cards are *de rigueur* you will probably want to use the card at a particular hotel or as a way to stretch your payments out, especially working on a Pauper's budget.

Don't get me wrong, unless you have a really wonderful, low interest rate, using credit cards extensively on a trip can get you in trouble. That's why I encourage you to use traveler's checks. It takes real money to secure your traveler's checks, not some promise of credit where you will get stuck with a 21% interest rate, compounded, of course.

Your credit card is merely a travel tool. They provide a cushion that may become needed, because no matter how well you plan your trip with the many assists in this book, unexpected things can be addressed with a credit card. The important thing is to realize that you're going to have to pay this balance off at the end of your trip, so be judicious in how and when you use them.

Some other reasons credit cards make a good tool for paupers that have the discipline to use them properly include:

1. They reduce the amount of cash you need to carry around with you
2. You benefit from the imbedded protections most credit cards offer customers including those times when there is an issue with a particular purchase

3. You benefit from the exchange rate you get when using a credit card because the international corporate rate is better than the rate you get from a local bank or currency dealer
4. It's always a safety net if you lose all your cash money, took too many yoga lessons, dined at a restaurant that cost you much more than you anticipated, etc. etc.

Pauper's Secret Confession # 70

Which is the most/ best credit card for a traveling Pauper? I don't really know. But I'll tell you a story I read in Travelers' Magazine recently:

It seems that a bus was held up in Guatemala in which all the bandits asked passengers for their money and credit cards. These desperados refused to take American Express. Only Visa, MasterCard were allowed.

Visa is the most widely accepted of all the credit cards, even though American Express and Master Card are indeed popular. Amex requires merchants to pay a percentage of the bill for processing an Amex transaction. They don't much like that, so Visa is more acceptable to them. Old "don't leave home without it", (American Express) has one great benefit to frugal Paupers though. You're FORCED to pay the balance on the card each month. No exorbitant (I call it extortion) interest rates.

Getting Money While You're Overseas

It happens. You've planned and planned. You're pretty good with staying on budget, but by golly, even you have to get replenished once in a blue moon while lounging/adventuring in a distant and exotic country. So it's time to do the "E.T." and--- "phone home".

Here are a few tips on ways to make your life better (and save \$\$) when you find yourself in this position:

1. Have someone from home send you a check payable in a foreign currency from a U.S. bank. If you need 35 English pounds, that's what should be sent. Otherwise a hefty surcharge fee between \$7.50 and \$35 on top of the \$25 to wire the money could sock you and your trusting family or friend back home right between the eyes (pocketbook). Too much for a Pauper!
2. Have home send a money order to Western Union, in fact it saves you dough to purchase the money order form Western Union that will send it for you to an overseas bank. Otherwise the receiving bank will hand over your money at the current exchange rate and it could only be good until you cross the border. You lose.
3. The best is to use Reusch International, in Washington D.C which will compare the foreign currency rate against the amount you request and tell you the exchange rate and the U.S. dollar equivalent. For \$2 they'll mail you a bank draft payable in foreign funds or, for \$5 mail a draft to someone overseas, and they'll wire it for only \$15---that's more like it!

Call 800-424-2923

Exchanging Your Money

You can usually find an exchange window in the airport you arrive at, just look around or ask someone in charge. If you're traveling by train exchange windows are usually to be found at the border stations, and if you're traveling by foot, bus or automobile there should be an exchange desk near the immigration office.

Roughly calculate how much local currency you should get for your money, for instance, you roughly get 3 of theirs to 1 of yours. You'll also notice a board at the exchange window that lists currency exchange rates. One side will say "Buying Cash", the amount exchanged if you buy the local currency and "Selling Cash" column for the time when you wish to sell back any leftover currency to get your home currency back.

There is always a 'spread', or difference between buying and selling cash. And you'll notice you never do as well when you "cash out". Here's the moral of the story, then, be wise in your spending, get just what you need and get rid of as much of it as you can during your stay. It's more economical that way. Unless you like to collect cash that's useless back home, but pretty to look at.

Since exchange rates are always poor where travelers enter a country, make sure you only exchange enough to get you into town and grab a night's lodging and a dinner. The next day, after you're settled find a reputable bank to complete the exchange for the rest of the money you'll need while in country.

How much should you get of the local currency? That depends on many factors including whether you holed up in the Ritz Carlton or the local hostel, where you plan to dine, and the other activities you have planned. Just remember most of your major expenses don't require the local currency and your traveler's checks or credit cards will work just fine. However, you might wish to have the equivalent of about

\$50 to 100 dollars in local currency in your pocket for incidentals or gifts you wish to buy at smaller less centralized locations, as well as for local transportation and tips.

Pauper's Secret Confession #71

Some countries are really tricky with money. For instance in South America and India when a bank note becomes worn or torn, banks no longer accept it---so, local merchants won't either. You're stuck! The best thing to do when exchanging money in the first place is to check each bills condition. If it looks tattered, smile and give it back to the banker. He'll trade it in for a fresher one for you then...but not later.

One more important note: remember when you're better off NOT exchanging U.S. dollars for the local currency. You'll find (especially in third world countries) that the American dollar gets charged a "premium" in exchange. That means you have bargaining power. When a vendor, hotel or other transaction quotes a higher price in dollars than in the local currency, just say

“no”! Don’t get flimflammed into playing this ‘tourist’ game.

Chapter 14

Speak To Me...In Any Language!



One of the main reasons people are afraid to travel is language. They feel that they'll be lost in a strange land while whole crowds of strangers start yakking away in wild vocalizations, using words they couldn't imagine ever understanding.

They imagine the helplessness of needing something, say a trip to the bathroom, or worse, exact directions from where they are currently lost, to the comfort of their hotel, all the while not being able to ask and, in their imaginations, seeing themselves forever cast away, stranded without a friend.

These sorts of fears are not uncommon. Let's be honest, we can feel like a 'foreigner' when everyone around us is conversing in a strange tongue. I happen to think its part of the charm of travel. It's what makes the trip unusual, different and exotic to my mind. I love it. But then again I know a few things that you don't. You'll learn to be completely at ease in any country by the time you finish this chapter.

First, if you can learn 20 to 100 words in any language you'll get by much better than you can imagine. That's not too difficult either. When visiting a country that is not based in English, simply start picking up a few words (and phrases) before you leave. A good phrase book is just fine. Later in this chapter I'll show you the most important phrases you need.

For now, realize that even if you put together about a dozen of these phrases and couple them with a few gestures, your two hands, your remarkably expressive face---you can communicate with your fellow humans easily.

Remember too, most people love it when you try and speak their language and I have found them universally patient in trying to understand you, as long as you're friendly and show facial signs of kindness and appreciation.

The old feeling that the French are the exception, and hate foreigners, especially those whose native language is English, is overstated. The French can be homophobic it's true. They are known to be protective of their language. I've always found its best to use my

English rather than their French. That's part of their history based on a desperate battle to keep their culture from being assimilated by others around them. But, as I've said, it's overstated. Everywhere, around the globe, most of a country's population will be more than ready to help you out. After all, we are all human beings with many of the same needs, desires, emotions and difficulties. In fact, this is one thing you will learn more deeply because you're entering a world not totally of your own making, or of your own culture.

Remember too, in the vast majority of countries in the world you will constantly encounter English. Next in popularity are Spanish, French, and Arabic. English has been planted firmly in countries over the past century, so you'll find it is a remarkable favorite as a 'second language' for those living abroad.

The nicest experience you'll discover, besides how helpful and generous people can be, is the eagerness with which many people in your travels *want to* exercise their comprehension of English. They just love 'testing' themselves and will gladly try and communicate with you in English because they have spent long hours developing a proficiency in it.

You should always be very considerate to such people. English is an extremely difficult language to master.

So, don't worry. You are much more likely to run into someone who speaks English than you imagine. Shortly, I'll tell you exactly who to look for when searching out an English speaking individual.

So why bother to learn another language? If English is so prevalent overseas, why not just use it to the exclusion of anything more local?

Well, all of the above being true, you will, nonetheless, be short changing yourself by leaning strictly on your mother tongue while traveling. With just a little effort you can make more friends, experience greater satisfaction, get more out of your interpersonal relationships with people of another country and get tremendous feelings of affection and added self-esteem by learning a bit of language.

I would also encourage you to join a class while you're at home to get a greater handle on any language. You don't have to, but it will greatly enhance your travel experience in a country if you have a deeper knowledge of the language. Many local colleges and adult continuing education centers offer language labs and tutors to help you learn.

The American Institute for Foreign Study can introduce you to travel-study programs at 203-869-9090. This is particularly attractive to Paupers who wish to really immerse themselves into a country and its language. You actually learn the language while living in the country.

Then there are immersion classes. These classes really delve deeply into the language in a short period of time, making for an intensive exposure to the language of choice. In the U.S. these are offered by Language Schools at 802-388-3711.

Pauper's Secret Confession #72

You will find additional language help in most cities at the more upscale hotels. If you need an English speaking person to communicate with, try dropping into one of these higher priced hotels. You don't have to stay in them as a thrifty Pauper, but that doesn't mean you can't use this little trick to get what you want in your own language.

Key Words And Phrases

All right, so you don't wish to go to a class and learn a language. You're not much interested in 'immersing' yourself or living abroad for the sole purpose of learning a language. Then here is a section that you will need to commit to. It's the least you need to make things much more pleasant in a country that is not based on your language.

Instead of desperately flipping through a phrase book to get your question answered or your point made, write down or memorize these appropriate words and phrases:

Greeting and Expressions of Courtesy.

These include "hello", "good day", "goodbye", "please", "thank you", "pardon me", "my name is..." and "what is your name?"

Yes & No

You have to know these two simple words.

Directions

This includes word phrases like: “where is....”, “best by car, train or walking?”, “how far away?” and “which direction?”

Toilet

Just use that word. Forget about washroom, bathroom, rest room, and little boys or girls room.... use anything else and you'll have gathered only weird looks and not the directions you seek.

Food Words

“May I have the bill?” “You recommend?” “Best Local Dish, Please”

Lodging Words

“Room with two beds”, “least expensive room”, “Check out time?”

Transport Words

“Airport”, “bus station”, “train station”, “subway station”, and “gasoline”.

Marketplace Bargaining

“How much?”, “that’s too much”

Personal Pronouns

“I”, “You”, “He”, “She”, “They”

Numbers

Not all of them. Just learn to say 1-10. If you have to add more try using your hands, a calculator, or a fellow traveling Pauper who’s a banker/mathematician.

Time Of Day

You don’t need to read a clock (unless you’d like to) I’ve found simply “morning,” “afternoon” and “nighttime” work in most situations.

Verbs

“to be”, “to have”, and “to go” and try to learn how to combine these with the Pronouns mentioned above.

The Help Words

Very useful phrases like: “speak more slowly, please”, “I don’t understand”, “stop”, “help”, “go away”, and “get a doctor”.

Pauper's Secret Confession #73

Here are some tips on finding a person that speaks English:

Look around for young people; the idea is that they are more likely to be studying English.

Tourist information centers usually hire someone proficient in English.

Your hotel staff probably can help you with local purchases and transportation with someone on staff who speaks English.

Fellow travelers. You can spot them a mile away. They look like you. They may know more about the locale than you.

Hire an interpreter. Many students at local schools and colleges will act as a daylong interpreter or tour guide using your language. Pay them according to your best bargaining abilities.

Don't Fear Language!

Among the five biggest reasons people don't travel, language is right up there at number one. The other four are fear of flying, lethargy, lack of time, and lack of money. None of them are good reasons, but they all stop entirely too many of us from doing what would make our lives rich and rewarding.

Language is not a great stumbling block. If you follow the simple prompts mentioned in this chapter I promise you will find your experience in a new culture very enriching. People are the same in many more ways than they are different, no matter what part of the world you travel in. This sameness of humanity transcends language barriers.

Since the Tower of Babel caused confusion of language in mankind, we have all struggled to speak to each other. However, in our desire to become a more global community your efforts to learn even a rudimentary level of language will make you an ambassador for love and peace in the world. A communicating Pauper is a wonder to see!

Pauper's Secret Confession #74

Paupers should remember another great tip when traveling. Try “show & tell” instead of language when you can. Use your hands, play a small game of charades, or simply write out a picture or map on a napkin. Show & Tell works universally around the globe. So don't worry about looking like a fool. Communicate!

Afterword

It's always a surprise; how I'm always oddly unaccustomed to this ritual of return. I turn the key to my old oaken wood door and turn on the lights. It's still here, my home. The furniture doesn't seem to have missed me a bit.

I start a fire, and slip my shoes off, knurling my toes into the plush carpet, sipping on a glass of burgundy. There is a silence in my living room that envelops me as I turn the highlights of my trip over in my mind.

The fire is warm, the air is filling the room from the open windows I have slid high, and I pick up the phone to chat with a dear old friend. We speak for nearly an hour and I tell him the highlights of my travels. What are his desires? Where is his adventure? He tells me he plans on visiting Italy, and I bubble up with my exploits in that great country, telling of my favorite spots, my hidden restaurants, those off the beaten track discoveries. It surprises me how much I remember, having come from a completely different destination, as I have tonight. He listens, and shares his plans. I realize how wonderful it is to share the experience of travel with others.

Hanging up the phone, I carry my luggage to the library, pull back the curtains on the picture window that leads to the back porch and look out onto a nightscape as familiar as the back of my hand. I'm in a state of mind that might be called 'road sickness', the opposite of homesickness; it is the road I miss now. I roll the memories of people,

faces, events and places in my minds eye and long for them. I can almost smell the smells again and feel the wonder of discovery all over.

Every time I travel I take a chance. I risk what I think I know against what really is. I challenge my preconceived ideas to stand up against the new, the fresh, and the unknown. On my return I notice how I'm in possession of a larger sense of self, the interior and exterior worlds have a new, expanded meaning. I often have to take weeks of contemplation about the travel experience before a whole can be made from the slips of cloth that each venture brings to me, like shreds of bright and wondrous colored material, from which a coat of many colors can be made and wrapped around my adventurous shoulders.

I travel to fulfill my own goals; far too often my friends can't grasp what changes and experiences I've been through. To them it may have been a place that's just too far away for them to understand, or they can only see my tan, or that I lost a little weight. Everyone sees the outer me, not knowing the great distances I traveled inwardly.

Standing at the window, looking out at my friend, that back yard of my home, I snicker to myself:

"I traveled as a Pauper, again", and a chuckle spurts out from under my breath.

I tricked them again, cajoled them again, I dismayed myself again, used creative alternatives again, and found sneaky ways to outwit the megalith called the travel industry, *again!* They never saw me coming. I slipped past their many defenses using some good old Pauper ingenuity, and found ways to experience the world without dropping a load of cash into their hands. My bank account is still relatively healthy. I have no unearthly credit card bills to wade through and anguish over. My conscience is clear; I did nothing illegal, --- just what was smart, what was savvy.

During the next weeks and months I'll peer into my travel journal and onto my photographs, reliving the whole thing. These memory prompts will add to my knowledge and help me be an even better Pauper. I will see the small notes, the last minute photographs with new eyes. They will detonate new insights that I didn't anticipate while on the road. I just jotted those notes down willy-nilly, and quickly fired off the Leica, the shutter snapping open with a mind of its own, not knowing that months later I'd see or read something that was once inane to me at the time, now become a very purposeful insight, brimming with meaning.

I know that soon enough I'll start to save clippings out of the newspaper travel section again and take odd ramblings online to websites I like, --- dreaming up another journey. I can't stop myself. I know that travel is affordable now--- I can do this. I can live a life filled with adventure, without worry. So preparing for the next foray is like breathing in and breathing out.

As Alfred Lord Tennyson once wrote in *Ulysses*:

“I cannot rest from travel, I will drink Life to the lees; all times have I enjoyed greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those that loved me, and alone; I am become a name; for always roaming with a hungry heart much have I seen and known...”

I am joined to a worldwide brotherhood of Paupers. I’m joined to all those who admire Columbus, --- not for having discovered a new world, --- but for having searched for it in the first place. Holding our ideals high, knowing that each one lights the way on our various roads. Each trip brings us closer to those standards of courage, facing life with cheer, kindness, beauty and truth.

I wrote this book for people like that. I know I didn't cover it all; I couldn't. But, as an old proverb puts it: *the travel will teach you how to do it*. The act of traveling will teach you all you need to know, all the fascinating turns in the road, the bizarre and useful; all of it. You can only learn it by traveling yourself. No armchair escape or detailed guidebook can replace the act itself. Reading about travel is like wrapping a present and not giving it. Until you venture out and become the Pauper, you can't find the exquisite. That bright beam lives only on the soles of your shoes, in the next turn, on the mountainside against your right shoulder, in the sunlit seascape just waiting for your presence.

Victor K. Pryles

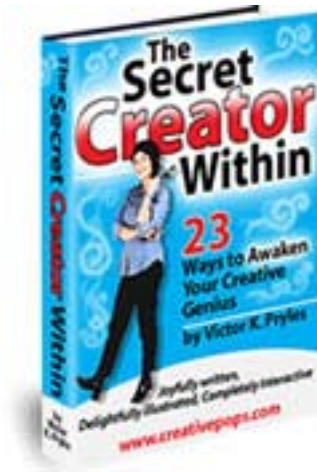
I'd love to hear about your travels and would appreciate any comments or feedback about this book. Please write me at:

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The Pauper knows the end of each journey is only the beginning of the next. It will be that way until he expels his last breath.... and then...will begin the greatest journey of them all.

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