

Talley's Rules of Travel

- 1. Make sure to have your first nights stay booked before you leave. You can move around after that, but have a definite bed and pillow before you leave home*
- 2. Carry \$200 in cash. Don't bring Dollars to Europe – they aren't accepted anywhere. More and more third-world country small scale capitalists (and I am told even hookers in Thailand) are requesting Euros instead of dollars.*
- 3. Don't rely on a guide book printed last year as your only source of destination and travel information. They are great for the big sights, but for real up to date information, hit the internet and spend a couple of days on travel forums talking to people who have recently been to your destination and look up review to hotels, B&Bs and Hostels before you give them any deposit money. This will save you the horror of having a radio active-sized cockroach crawling across you face at 3:30am in a dank, smelly flophouse with hourly rates in the wilds of urban New Jersey.*
- 4. Always have an unlocked cell phone with a full battery, a written list of home and destination contact numbers, and a SIM card that will work in your desired region of travel BEFORE you ever leave the house. This will both keep you from being stranded in say, a in the middle of a major European city and keep both you and you partner/buddy from having homicidal thoughts while hunkered under a bush while it is pouring rain.*
- 5. If someone walks up to you and is nice to you out of the blue it is a scam and they want something from you. They are not your friend. Walk away or side step them without acknowledging their existence. If they follow for more than a few paces you're fucked – start screaming RAPE!! and run toward a group of people. If someone is nice AFTER you ask for directions or help it is another thing entirely. Some of my favorite travel memories happened because I struck up a conversation with a stranger that led to a cool campsite, an amazing hotel or a hidden “locals only” beach.*

6. *Always plan your ride to and from the airport in advance. Once you are at your destination feel free to play it free and easy with transport, but ALWAYS make airport pick up and drop off arrangements in advance. London airport taxis can be over \$150 for a ride into town if you book at the airport...*
7. *Call you bank before you leave and tell them you plans so they don't freeze you card. Carry a high limit spare card and call them too.*
8. *Buy Travel Health insurance!! One trip to a doctor will pay for a years worth of premiums.*
9. *NEVER eat at Burger King, KFC, McDonalds or the like when traveling (Starbucks is my one exception to this rule). Always eat where the locals eat – look for large crowds of LOCALS. Stay away from the places crammed with tourists – the food sucks and is pricy. Take your shots before you leave and get a prescription for a strong diarrhea stopper if you have an 'English belly'*
10. *When traveling with another couple, schedule at least every other night in a private room so that both couples can have some privacy. Any thing less leads to friction.*
11. *Scan in all your important documents (Passport, a list of contact numbers, credit card information, drivers license, transit cards, ID cards, foreign medical insurance policy, foreign visas, Aufenthaltstitel, Meldebescheinigung, etc...) and put them in a passworded folder on a slim USB stick that stays on you at all times. This is less bulky than fifty sheets of photocopies. Also include a scanned sheet of passport sized pictures of yourself – 1 picture 12+ times on a single sheet. This will save you time and money if the countries you are visiting need them or if you need pictures to replace lost documents.*
12. *Never assume your host in a foreign land will have plans for you or a guide book you can use. Always bring your own and have some idea of places to go and things to do.*
13. *Never access bank information on a public terminal at a cyber café. If you have to, you can go to a bank, speak to a manager and most of the time if it is a dire emergency they will let you use one of their machines – I got charged the*

- equivalent of \$10 to do this in India once, but my security and piece of mind was so worth it.*
14. **“It’s best not to trust anything with the word ‘cozy’ in the title” – Emilie Louie**
 15. *There was a time when you could find super cheap fares online everyday. Not the case anymore. You can still find deals, but it is getting harder. I have had such great luck with using a travel agent that I use her almost exclusively to book my business and personal travel. Check the cheapest rates online, so you will have an idea, e-mail them your requested itinerary along with the web price and see if they can match or beat it. Find an independent agency – it keeps your funds local, include them on all you trip details, bring them back a little something – they will love you for it and work that much harder for you next time.*
 16. *Drink bottled water when abroad – no matter what the restaurant says. Make sure you feel or hear the seal break. I once saw kitchen staff filling Evian bottles with tap water for guests at a four-star hotel in Nairobi.*
 17. *When traveling with the ladies you will need to at some point try to find a bathroom in a major city. Good luck. The easiest thing to do is while you are in a store shopping ask to use the restroom and if told “no” the requesting lady just needs to look intently at the shop matron and say “I’m sorry but I am pregnant and I REALLY need to go. This works best if the sales lady is over 30. While this is social engineering, when you have to go you have to go.*
 18. *Always carry a corkscrew in Europe. Buy a bottle from a local vintner or wine shop and enjoy it on while picnicking in the shade. Cheap food, great time people watching, and a taste of the local Vino without restaurant prices or corkage fee. Pack a bottle opener in California, Oregon, Washington and Colorado – all fine beer states.*
 19. *Never screw with your buddies gear “for his own good.” That unsafe helmet or harness might just be a keepsake that he plans on retiring right after the trip. “replacing” it for him will lead to hurt feelings and dirty words.*

20. *When booking your flight ask for an exit row or bulkhead seat. Before hearing the word 'no,' say that you get airsick really easily and want to be able to make a run for the lavatory with as little inconvenience to the other passengers as possible. This will ensure you plenty of legroom.*
21. *Never talk shit in English about your food while sitting in a restaurant abroad. While the wait staff might not speak English to you, the chances are REALLY high that they speak and understand the language better than you understand theirs. Talking smack is a guaranteed way to get your food spit in, receive poor service, be thrown out of the place, cussed at in 4-5 languages or all of the above. It will also make it hard for all those English speakers that come after you.*
22. *Take off your hat if you go into ANY church or holy place abroad. I was behind a guy that had his ball cap removed and crumpled for him by an attendant in Venice. He was a prick about it and a very stern priest appeared and roughly explained to him in Italian accented English that hats in a house of God and hats were only tolerated on ladies and saints. Be respectful*
23. *While it is commendable to make space in your bag for your running shoes and gym clothes on a business trip, leave it all at home whilst on a real vacation. Take a training break – you deserve it. It will give your body a bit of time to rest so that you can punish it just a little more when you get home.*
24. *Stay the HELL away from the Newark Airport and only board a Continental Airlines flight in the case of Rapture, but pack a snack, because you will be routed through Houston and will be the last to arrive at the Pearly Gates.*