



“Party Travel”

The Easy Guide To Fun, Exciting And Affordable Traveling For Singles!

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Introduction To The Fun World Of Singles Travel

Believe it or not, you can have a blast traveling to some of the hottest and exciting places in the world and party with awesome people from all over the world for just a few hundred dollars!

Yes, it's true. You don't have to spend thousands of dollars just to get out of your home and take a fun vacation...in fact, there are ways you can start to travel all around the world with interesting and single people just like you for a very affordable price.

And that is exactly what this guide is all about!

But before we get started, I must admit it:

The singles tours I'm going to talk about in this book are not for everyone. On some tours there is a lot of drinking and yes even some nudity.

This guide in no way promotes excessive drinking or anything related to that. The tours I went on are great fun and you can choose what activities you participate in, nothing is forced on you.

I personally am a non drinker, smoker or drug taker and I had a blast traveling the world with all these amazing people, so not everything you hear about these tours are correct.

You literally have every nationality possible with you on tour, and you learn so much about other cultures and you make friends from all over the world.

Ok, so now that I have that disclaimer out of the way, let me tell you about the wonderful world of singles travel and how I fell upon it!

There are certain companies out there who specialize solely on getting single people on trips with other single people. Most of the time these people aren't looking for love, they just want to travel the world with a group of people of the same age, which was my goal when I first started this journey.

I had just broken up with my girlfriend and I just wanted to see Europe, but I didn't want to go by myself or backpack it like most people my age do, that really didn't appeal to me.

So, I searched for months and months before I found exactly what I was looking for! Contiki Tours.

Now there are so many companies that offer all sorts of travel deals, but Contiki at the time was what I wanted to do as they had the trip I wanted to do.

I had always wanted to go to Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany and they had a trip that went during this time and they spent 2 (glorious) days there.

I had the best fun of my life and I haven't looked back since. I've been on over 15 tours to nearly 40 countries.

So What Actually Happens On A Singles Tour?

These are great questions, and questions I asked myself and a whole host of other people who had been on trips already, and here are mine and their answers together.

So what happens on a singles tour?

On singles tours like Contiki you travel around the country in a big bright bus with about 40 other people, depending on where you want to go.

You see the sights of where ever you are, you get most breakfasts and dinners throw in to the price of the tour (which usually does not include airfares) and you get your accommodation and travel taken care of for you (which is included in the price of the tour).

The only bad thing about these sorts of tours is flexibility, you don't get much of it. So if you are in France and there's something you want to see but the tour bus does not go that way, you will more then likely not get to see it.

Since the bus has to keep up with a schedule, you only spend short amounts of time in each place to. So you won't get the in-depth knowledge of a country with this sort of tour, but it's great for a first timer who wants to get their bearings then come back by themselves at a later date.

What Do You Do?

Well (using the Contiki example) during the day you are usually on a bus traveling around the country side (whether that be in Europe, Australia or America) stopping occasionally to view the sights.

Some days you can spend up to 8 hours a day on the bus and there is one big problem with that. While there are toilets on the bus, you can only do number #1's, not number #2's in the loo, but luckily the bus driver by law has to stop every 2 hours.

Some days are called free days, where you can go and see the city you are in at your own leisure and there is very little bus travel at those times.

At night, depending on the tour you are either booked into your hotel or camp site and go out for dinner with the group.

There may or may not be an optional excursion which costs extra money.

What Makes It Different? Why Would I Want To Travel With A Group Of Strangers?

The people make it different!

Ever wondered where these "An Irishman an Englishman and an Australian were sitting in a pub" jokes come from?

This is where, I swear it! I've never met a more diverse group of people in my life then on one of these tours.

The people make the tour, I'm still great friends with a heck of a lot of people from my trips, we have reunions all over the world every year (or few years) for every trip. Last year I went to 3 reunions and went on 4 new trips.

Contiki!

Contiki tours - <http://www.contiki.com> would have to be my favorite tour group out of them all.

They do just about everything for you, all you need to do is pick what trip you want to go on, and that's a hard task since they offer so many great options.

Contiki has 3 distinct types of tours. Camping, Concept and Time out.

Camping is just that, camping. You pitch tents, you help with the cooking and cleaning up and you sleep in the great outdoors.

Everything about the trip is the same as the others, except for this one difference. It of course is the cheapest option available.

Concept tours are my favorite, you always get a good age range, from 18 to 35 and 80% are singles traveling by themselves. You sleep in cabins and you help with some chores.

Time out tours are the upper class tours that Contiki offers. You stay in hotels, (nothing 5 star) and the people on the tour seem to be

a bit older and probably 30 to 50% go with partners.

Contiki also has resorts in Bali, Australia and Greece. I stayed at a Contiki resort in Greece for 5 days and had a blast. It's usually full of people who are taking a break from a tour and just want to sit back and relax for a few days before they get back on a tour.

On Contiki tours you spend a lot of time on a bus with your fellow tour mates so if you get bored easily, bring a good book, Mp3 player or something to keep you amused.

Most people sleep on the bus during the day and party at night.

I've done 6 Contiki tours in the past 5 years. 4 concept tours and 2 time out tours and I had a blast every time.

The most popular tours seem to be....

- European Experience
- European Adventurer
- European Vista
- Simply Italy
- European Whirl

Those are just the trips to Europe. Contiki also goes to America, New Zealand, Australia, UK, and even the Middle East.

Go Contiki is all I can say, you will make friends for life, see the world in an organized fashion with genuinely nice people.

It's funny how so many nice people can be on one tour, and on every tour I go on. Contiki attracts a good crowd and very fun crowd.

Top Deck Tours

Top Deck is much like Contiki and you can see their website at:

<http://www.Topdecktravel.co.uk>

They also offer 3 different types of travel options, Hotels, Cabins, Camping, but with Top Deck it's not as organized and rigid as Contiki.

You have more freedom to choose what you want to do but I also found you didn't get as close to the people as you did on Contiki.

Top Deck offers many fewer travel destinations but I found the trips I went on were to more exotic destinations, like Russia.

Also the thing I liked about Top Deck is they throw in lunches in the price of your trip which Contiki do not. Top Deck is also A LOT cheaper than Contiki in most instances.

If you were taking your first trip, I'd say go with Contiki no doubt, because your money will be well spent, but if you want more freedom of choice and your on a tighter budget, go with Top Deck.

Club 18-30

I think a lot of the people who read this book will probably know or have heard of Club 18-30. As the name suggests, it is for 18 to 30 year olds.

Unlike Contiki and Top Deck, 18-30 isn't a tour, it's a resort, or I should say resorts. They have close to 10 resorts all over the world.

The most famous or infamous of the resorts would be the one in Ibiza. Sex, drinking, drugs are all apparently rampant at these resorts.

NOT TRUE.

I had a blast and I was completely sober through out the whole week. Yes, people drink, yes people have sex and yes people do drugs, but that's everywhere you go and not exclusive to Club 18-30.

Here is a quote from their website
<http://www.Club18-30.co.uk>

"We are not moral guardians - what you do on your holiday is 100% down to you. If you want to drink on holiday, you drink, if you don't, you don't - simple as that! Young people drinking abroad is not exclusive to Club 18-30.

Just because you go on holiday with us, it doesn't mean you are going to have sex! We operate in young, lively resorts and do our utmost to make sure you have a fantastic holiday experience, however, we urge guests to be responsible and be aware of the importance of safe sex. Our reps' contact details are displayed at your accommodation if you do need our assistance. "

I won't be doing another 18-30 trip again unless a couple of friends go with me. I've been twice and each time I went by my own and it was fun, but I'm sure it would be more fun with friends you already know.

Also, since you're really not seeing the sights of the places you are going and really are just there to party with friends, once or twice is enough.

The accommodation is also very lacking and isn't top notch at all, but you don't go there to sleep, you go to have fun.

So what can you expect from a Club 18-30 trip? Lots of British women and men looking to have a lot of fun.

Club 18-30 organize group activities and they have "reps" who run the place who are in that 18 to 30 age bracket.

Reps jobs are to set up games and introduce people and basically make sure people are having fun.

It is a drinking resort, lots of people drink and like usual the odd few have one too many and make fools of themselves, but things are supervised pretty damn well.

Singles Cruises

I'll be honest, singles cruises are not for me at all. It really is like a meat market with people pairing off left right and centre, pretty much because there is nothing else to do.

I've been on 2 singles cruises. One was with a large liner, P&O, and the other was on a small sailing boat, called Wind Jammer cruises.

I had an absolute blast sailing around the Caribbean with other singles. It's not like a normal cruise, it's more intimate, fewer people, and a lot more fun.

You don't feel like you are there to "hook up" with other singles.

This is what they say on their website.

"Singles cruises are the singular most popular theme cruise to date, and it's pretty clear why-they're fun, laid-back and guaranteed to put a spring in your step. Windjammer's casual and intimate atmosphere is ideal for meeting others, so if you're looking for someone special, cupid couldn't think of a better place to try his luck. We do our best to ensure that there are equal numbers of rogues and wenches aboard. These cruises book very quickly, so be sure to book your berth well in advance."

You can see their website at

http://www.windjammer.com/theme_cruises.html

Like I said before, I had a blast on this trip. If beautiful beaches, amazingly clear water, great food and sun appeal to you, this is the trip for you.

Then there was the trip with the cruise liner, which I will never do again.

The problem with this cruise was half of the boat load of people were not single, the other half were and it was kind of awkward at the best of times.

If the whole boat had been only singles, maybe this would have worked. This is also not a good trip for younger singles as it was mainly older males on the boat even though they said it was going to be an even number of women to men.

If this however is something you would like to know more about, visit the two websites below.

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

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

Club Getaway

Club Getaway is a little different from anything else I've talked about yet. Club Getaway is a massive 300 acre property in the middle of no where Connecticut, USA.

The best way to understand what Club Getaway is, is to go to their website at....

<http://www.clubgetaway.com>

It's not really a singles tour as such, but you go there for a weekend or a week and the premise is you choose what activities you want to do.

I went on a sports activity weekend, where every hour there is a new activity you can join in on with other people. I went with a friend and thank god for that.

Hardly anyone went by themselves, even tho it was touted as being a "great way to meet singles, with the same interests".

But while saying that, while I was there, I noticed they had another group on the grounds as well and it was for Jewish professionals. I think this would be a great way for Jewish people to meet other like minded Jewish people.

They also offer a weekend for anyone born before 1964. They call it the boomers weekend and I'm sure that would be a lot of fun as well.

Ibiza!

I think everyone has heard of Ibiza. Most people probably know it as this sleazy haven of euro trash and dance music, and sometimes you are right.

If you have not heard of Ibiza, let me fill you in. Ibiza is a little island off the coast of Spain that has been turned into a tourist Mecca by nightclub promoters and singles tour promoters.

Ibiza is like one big party 24/7, with more nightclubs crammed into one little space than I've ever seen before.

It's especially popular with young English lads and lassies that go there to listen to dance music, drink lots and hook up.

Ibiza also has an abundance of very cheap accommodation, food and alcohol. Ibiza also has a lot of really great beaches, especially if you're a fan of nudist beaches.

Some of the very best DJ's in the world play regularly at Ibiza nightclubs. Just type Ibiza into Google.com and you will find plenty of search results.

Now onto my "version" of Ibiza.

I had a great time. Amazing, wonderful, crazy, CRAZY time in Ibiza.

I've been to Ibiza twice, once on a Contiki tour and once as I said before with Club 18-30.

I had a blast on both times, but more so with Contiki. If you want to go to Ibiza for the first time and you are traveling by yourself, go with Contiki as it can be quite a daunting place.

I spent 9 days with my Contiki buddies in Spain and Ibiza. We went to nightclubs,

watched the best DJ's in the world work their magic, ate great food, met lots of really interesting people and got really great tans.

The best time to go is during the English winter!

The accommodation is cheap like I said, but it's not great by any means. When I say not great, I really mean it.

If you choose to go to Ibiza by yourself for the first time, I'd say you were crazy. Find someone to go with, or make sure you no someone while you are down there.

Club Med

Everyone knows of Club Med!

The idea of flying off to some South Pacific island for fun, sun and scuba diving calls to the desperate need to escape work, So how about a really distant scuba trip to Moorea, Tahiti in the heart of the South Pacific?

Getting there is only the beginning of the adventure... there are only two airlines that service Tahiti, and one is called AOM. This airline will truly test the limits of your flying durability. The in-flight service is minimal at best, the plane is typically filled to capacity, and movies leave a great

deal to be desired, however, kudos where they belong.. on the flight deck. The pilots kept the ride fairly calm and both their takeoffs and landings were "comfortable."

To get to Moorea requires a 40-minute second leg flight on a STOL (short takeoff and landing) turbo-prop aircraft. The aircraft is small enough that it only seats 20 people, and even from the back of the plane you can easily read the cockpit gauges and hear the flight crew calling for clearances.

Once on Moorea you are met by a loudly decorated Club Med bus, hustled aboard and driven for several miles along a scenic winding shoreline road to the main entrance of the Club Med Moorea resort. As the bus pulls through the long drive, past bungalows and palm trees, it stops in front of an open air foyer where employees gather, playing a eukalele and singing a welcoming song (which you will later come to dislike as it is played everyday for each new bus load of vacationers).

The facilities are nice, Spartan, and the food, well, that's another review all by itself. Suffice it to say, some folks will think it was terrific and ask for seconds, and still others will be asking where the "real" food is?

Now to the diving, Club Med Moorea is not the place to go if you are an experienced diver

and want to be able to get several dives in during the day, night dives, and shore dives, forget it! One of the mantras of Club Med is to "leave your watch behind..." If you do that, you will not get aboard any dive boat while at Club Med Moorea. You cannot just go to their dive shop, sign up for a same day or next day dive and expect to go... no its more involved than that... you have to standing in line at the dive shop at 6:50PM so that you can put your name on a first come, first serve list and when the number of divers meets the number carried on the boat... well, that's it until the following evening when you get to do that ritual all over again. If you miss this narrow timeslot to sign up for diving, there are NO other diving accommodations available, so you will be relegated to snorkelling along the shore. They do not permit shore diving, or night diving inside the inlets.

When you manage to get out to go diving and if the dive master is feeling fresh and excited, you will get to dive some very spectacular areas around the island many of which were just incredible. The reef near the Club Med resort are badly damaged from many previous hurricanes, so don't expect to see beautiful reefs on that side of the island, the other side is another matter entirely.

Hostels and Backpacking in Europe!

A Few Words About Hostelling

Hostels are generally fantastic places to be. The people who are there are passionate about travelling, there is lots of camaraderie and a strong sense of community between travellers. It is in the hostel, not a guidebook that you will find out the best places to go, great places to get discounts at and loads of other tips about what is worth the money and what isn't. It is also common for groups of people to travel together for a few days after meeting at a hostel.

This relaxed, communal atmosphere does not mean, however, that you can be completely naive about leaving your stuff in plain sight. If you are going to be out for long periods of the day, it is probably best to buy a Pac Safe. This is essentially a slash-proof wire net that you can lock around your pack so pesky fingers cannot explore while you're out on the town.

Older hostels generally offer dorm style rooms separated by sex but the trend is for most modern hostels to offer single, double and four-bedded accommodation as well. Private accommodation is more expensive but having a room to yourself can be a luxurious treat, especially when the thought of having another night's sleep interrupted by selection from the Snoring Chorus is enough to bring on

a nervous breakdown.

It is traditional for hostels to ask their guests to help with the some chores during their stay. Most city hostels just ask you to put your linen in the laundry but some rural hostels will expect more of a commitment. If you have completely blown your budget, it is possible to negotiate a free night's accommodation in exchange for doing some extra housekeeping chores. Don't count on this every night however, or you'll end up spending your entire vacation doing dishes.

If you are planning to do a lot of hostelling, it is wise to investigate the situation from home first. The Youth Hostelling Association, for example offers a membership card that entitles you to a reduced rate whilst staying at recognised sites. Hostelling International (HI) is the largest chain of hostels in the world. All HI sites require a YHA membership card to be presented when you turn up. These cards should be purchased in your home country before you leave.

There are plenty of private hostels available as well, but tales of infantile curfews, bedbug infestations and slightly deranged owners abound so if at all possible; it is best to stick with recognised brand. If you are thinking of booking a private hostel, do Google search first so see if there is anything untoward written about it.

You may have realised that you and your friends are not the only people that are going to be backpacking through Europe in the summer. If you are travelling in July and August, it is best to try and book your hostel ahead:

<http://www.canuckabroad.com/hotelshostels/hotelshostels.shtml>

For some places, especially popular cities like Rome, Paris, London and Venice. Although it is tempting to be completely spontaneous, you may find yourself without a place to stay, especially at the weekend.

Hostelling is where you'll make some of the best memories of your travels!

Matt Reider is the owner of [CanuckAbroad.com](http://www.CanuckAbroad.com) which provides budget travel and backpacking advice for travellers and expatriates alike.

Here's and idea: Studying overseas!

Ever wanted to learn another language in the country of origin? This is something I've really wanted to do for a long time but haven't had the chance yet.

Want to study German in Berlin or Vienna?
Want to study French in Quebec or Paris?

You can do so with STA.

You can choose from any of these following languages.

- Spanish
- French,
- Portuguese
- Italian
- German
- Russian
- Japanese
- Arabic
- Chinese
- English

Go to

<http://www.statravel.ch/globallanguages/index.html>

And have a look around.

Useful Travel Resources

Here are a list of the most useful web links on singles travel and travel in general.

Xe.Net/UCC

This is a great free tool to convert currencies from all over the world. Check out how much your currency is able to be exchanged for the in the country you are touring.

Contiki.com

Want to know more about Contiki? Their website is full of useful information and pictures. You can find out about every one of the trips they offer at this site. You can even chat to other past Contiki tourists.

<http://p205.ezboard.com/bcontikieuropemessageboard>

This is a great site. This site is a forum which all Contiki goer's get together on and chat about their trips or their up coming trips. Lots of websites you can visit to see photos of other people's trips as well.

Well worth a visit.

LonelyPlanet.com

I think everyone has heard of the book series done by Lonely Planet. They offer travel guides to every country on Earth and are an invaluable source of useful info.

Travconnect.com

This is a book I brought a few months ago and it offers really great ways to save on airfares. The guy who wrote the book is a travel agent and knows what he's talking about.

Travelsecretsguide.com

This is another book I really recommend. It shows you how to save on airfares, hotels, car rental, food, you name it...Worth a look.

Singlestravel.com.au/

This is a website for another smaller singles (solo traveler) travel agent. They offer all sorts of singles travel deals.

Singlestravelintl.com/

This is a larger singles travel agency and their website offers lots of great tips for solo travelers.

Theworldoutdoors.com/documents/solotravelers.html

This is an adventure travel website for solo travelers. So if you are after something a little more exciting then sight seeing, visit this website.

Cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/

The CIA "world fact book" gives you a fairly comprehensive guide to every country in the world, for free. Tells you what languages they speak in that country, population, political situations, and all sorts of other useful info.

Travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

This is a travel warning site from the American government. It tells you about all the countries that currently have travel warnings posted on them and these are definitely countries you want to avoid traveling to.

Smartraveller.gov.au

This is another travel warning website run by the Australian government. It's much, much more concise than the American version. You should really read both websites before you leave on your trip.

Things To Pack When Going On A Tour

These are the items I brought with me on my tours and some things I wish I brought last time. It's an ever growing list.

- backpack
- day pack
- hip bag
- change purse (I'd get one with at least two pockets for multiple currencies)
- money belt
- health card
- hostel card
- driver's license (even though you're not driving,
- Is used for security deposit on keys, etc.)
- ATM, credit cards with cash advance PINs
- currency for first three countries
- traveler's checks in foreign currency for countries you'll be most
- calculator
- 2 small locks

- bungee cord (for wrapping around door and rack on trains)
- compass
- binoculars (small pair for seeing frescos)
- large envelopes for important documents in your pack (I mailed these home from different cities)
- small light
- pocket knife,
- eating utensil
- cup
- 1st aid kit with Band-Aids, tape, and antibiotic ointment
- antacid
- cold medicine
- vitamin C
- film
- camera

- batteries (camera, recorder)
- small bag of detergent
- Recorder, tapes (I made audio tapes that were great to send home.)
- pen
- paper
- journal
- plastic bags (sandwich size, ziplock, 5)
-
- separate currencies, leaking
- Items, etc.
- guidebook
- book to read
- Language ref.
- Plenty of contact solution, holder, etc.
- toothpaste, brush, floss
- nail clippers
- ear plugs

- Q-tips
- lotion
- Kleenex
- razor
- hand wipes
- shampoo/conditioner
- hair ties
- fem stuff
- sleeping sheet (thin and light)
- windbreaker/raincoat
- two pairs of pants (jeans/a pair of kaki pants)
- six pairs of socks
- 6 pairs of underwear
- three bras
- two pairs of shoes (hiking boots/tennis shoes)

- a pairs of light cheap thongs (need to dry quick
- on the pack)
- turtleneck
- two T-shirts (you will buy more as needed)
- one sweater
- gloves
- ear/headband or hat
- one pair boxers/shorts
- leggings
- 1 Pair Of Jeans
- 1 Pair Of Khakis 3/4 Length
- 1 Pair Of Shorts
- 1 Pair Of Sandals
- 1 Pair Of Thongs
- 1 Snow/waterproof Jacket
- Thermal Underwear

- Thermal Socks
- 3 Pair Of Underwear
- 1 Pair Of Gloves
- 1 Beanie
- 1 Pair of sunglasses
- 1 Sweater
- 2 Dress Shirts
- 1 Quick Dry Towel
- 1 Large Backpack
- 1 Day Bag
- 1 Hip Bag
- 2 Small Locks
- Bungee Cord
- large envelopes for important documents
in your
- pack
- small light

- Anti-Diarrhea and anti-Nausea tablets
- Needle and thread
- Panadol
- toothpaste, brush, floss
- Anti Inflammatory Tablets
- Tissues
- Hand wipes
- Razor
- Tweezers
- Rubber Bands
- Water Bottle

Guest Article

From a seasoned Contiki Traveller

PACK LIGHT!! I cannot reiterate this enough! Popular advice says to pack and then take out half. It is good advice, follow it! In some of the hotels there are no lifts, so it's up to you if you want to drag an extra 10 kilos up them. Most of the campsites have gravel so it would be hard to drag a suitcase across them. Think about investing in a backpack. Afterwards when you find you have no space for all your souvenirs the plastic bags you use will eventually cut off the circulation in your fingers. No one is going to care that you've worn those jeans 3 days in a row, everybody else is.

There are few laundry services on the tour. But when they come up, DO YOUR WASHING! You never know when your next opportunity will come up. Find out beforehand from your Tour Manager where the facilities are, then when you come to the campsite jump off the bus, run for the laundry and sit on that washing machine. Then bribe your friends to bring your washing with the promise that they can go next. When 50 people decide to do their washing all at once you will be thankful for this advice, especially when there is only one machine working. (Note: The dryers in Florence won't dry properly if you pack all your washing into it. Put in half, then about 20 mins later put in the other half.)

I shouldn't need to tell you this but when on the ferry STOCK UP ON DUTY FREE. Upon

deciding, take into consideration "Can you drink it straight?" You may not have access to mixers, coke, milk etc. Remember vodka can be hidden in water bottles (Beware: The Apple Sourz on the ferry may be cheap but is shit quality and the bottle leaks!)

Take GOOD WALKING SHOES and wear socks. There is a lot of walking and you need shoes that won't give you blisters.

Take bandaids all the same because you'll still probably get them anyway.

Take a mini FIRST-AID KIT. This should include Berocca, pain relief pills, cold & flu tablets, bandaids, tissues and multivitamins. Start the vitamins course before you leave. It is very easy to get sick on that bus.

Buy souvenirs, you may not go back there again. Maybe go with a theme, buy a shot glass from each country or something, spoons are for old grannies.

The Diamond Factory in Amsterdam is only good for one thing. Go straight to the exit for free drinks!

The optional meals are worth it. Especially the first and definitely the last one. First dinner is good for getting to know everyone. Last dinner, hey you'll probably never see these guys again, great for photo ops.

Take the optional cultural entertainment in Amsterdam, funniest thing ever!

If in Austria you are asked to "Go Around The World" - do it!!!!

Pringles and coke do not maketh a meal, vary from this option at the pit stops.

Metro systems are easy - use them!

If you plan on going up the Jungfrau or will be travelling at the start of the tour season (March-May) take gloves, scarfs, warm jacket etc. When going out onto the Plateau on the Jungfrau wear all your socks, pj pants, jeans, 5 tops, jacket, scarf, beanie, balaclava and buy the gloves on sale at the campsite supermarket. Normal gloves will not cut it.

Take CD's and discman. Chillout is good for bus trips.

Buy film at home and take with you. Film is ridiculously expensive in UK and Europe. Better yet take a digital and if you can't upload at Net Cafes take to photo shops and they will burn pics onto a disc for you. Take big memory card for convenience. Also, take your camera with you at all times.

Do not plan on flying out the day or even the day after you get back from tour. One, you'll

want to have drinks with your new buddies back at the London Pub and two, you will be buggered. Spend the money and pay for a night at the Royal National when you come back.

You cannot control the weather, live with it.

Don't expect everyone in Europe to speak English, that's just ignorant. Try and learn a few phrases in each language; Hello, Please Thank you etc, people appreciate it. Even better take a language course before you leave. French and German are widely spoken in Western Europe.

Learn about Contiki time. They can be late (they usually aren't), but you can't. They will leave you behind!

Take a diary, writing in it passes the time on the bus trips and it allows you to remember things when your long term memory has mysteriously vanished when you return home.

When you come home, keep in touch with everyone.

If you get asked to buy stuff from Louis Vuitton on Champs Elysées in Paris, remember to keep money and use a credit card. The store will not accept cash and will only allow you one item. They are onto this scam so you will have to play the part, don't just walk in, pick up something, take it to the

counter and shove them a wad of cash with a timid look on your face. They will be onto you! Plus if they are suspicious a security guard will follow you outside to see if you give the bag to someone else. Plan ahead!

If you go to Monte Carlo, check out the toilets in the Grand Casino, do it, trust me!

When in Pisa, watch your pockets. If anyone throws a baby at you, don't catch it! It's probably just a piece of rope anyway...probably. Basically don't let strangers, especially dodgy looking ones, into your personal space. They are there for a reason.

When you see the "Dancing Mickey Mouse", look closely and use your common sense! Cmon!

If you are a girl, don't wear a bra to the Fusina Bar. Or should that be; wear a bra?! You'll find out. (Oh, take your camera to this one!)

Good places to send postcards from are;
Vatican City - They have their own stamps and postal system, different from Italy. Jungfrau in Switzerland - Highest Post Office in the world. Liechtenstein - Stamps may be worth something one day.

When in Liechtenstein you can get your passport stamped for about 2 Euro at the Tourist Office.

What to pack is always a big concern on everyone's mind before they leave the country. After all, the stuff you take will have to last you for as long as you're away, and if you need that one little gadget late one evening and you don't have it with you, you're stuck. On the other hand, if you're carrying that three volume dictionary with you that you never end up using, that is a waste of space and energy.

I guess it all comes down in a large part to philosophy, and how much you can put up with inconveniences and how much you are willing to carry. My philosophy, let me be up front, is minimalist: take half of what you think you will need. If you run out of something, unless you're in Siberia, chances are you'll be able to buy it. Yes, they do have razor blades and contact lens solution in Europe...

I'd have to agree with most of what Carol suggests, with a few notable exceptions.

First of all, a good, comfortable backpack is a must. A daypack -- a little bag you can take out for a day hike -- is almost as essential.

Good shoes are another priority -- I learned this the hard way. What makes the choice harder is that you're not likely to be taking two pairs of shoes with you (not counting sandals/flip-flops, which I found less useful

than I expected), so these things had better do everything you want to do. I ended up being very happy with a pair of black, low cut shoes (made by Cat; the style is similar to Doc Martens). What made these shoes nice was that they were very durable and comfortable, but cleaned up a little bit in the men's room they looked entirely adequate for a night on the town. Not that as a back-packer you're ever going to be fashionable, but freshly washed jeans and a clean t-shirt and decent shoes go a long way to making you feel a part of society again.

The crappy weather I experienced in Europe this summer has made me a bit biased on the part of warm clothes, but I think a waterproof jacket -- Gore-Tex is heaven-sent -- and a thick fleece or sweater are essential. A woolen hat, or something that covers you're ears, is also very useful -- ounce for ounce, a hat keeps you warmer than any other piece of clothing you own.

I had two pairs of jeans, though I probably could have done with one pair, and of the three pairs of shorts I brought, I only used one pair, exactly twice.

Good socks are important, and carry exactly twice as many socks as you carry underwear (I won't go into the duality of feet here, but having everything run out at once spares you the agony of deciding if you can wait with laundry until tomorrow) I carried five pairs,

and this was adequate. Light laundry is very conveniently performed in just a sink and hung on a string which you shouldn't forget. Don't, for god's sake, bring powdered laundry detergent in a little sandwich bag. After the third wash it will be a monstrous mess. Better use bar laundry soap, or just plain regular soap.

A few t-shirts that you know are going to put up with a bit of abuse, a shirt you can put on to perhaps go out, and that should round out the minimalist wardrobe that should see you for a few weeks of summer travelling.

A first-aid kit with the normal bandaids, etc. is very important, and put in it some pain medicine, antacid, and a needle and thread (just get a very small piece of cardboard, wrap the thread around it, and stick the needle through everything so the point is hidden. Guys, ask your moms how to sew on buttons). A swiss army knife is very useful -- I got mine in Switzerland!

An alarm clock, the smaller the better. Sunglasses, a flashlight, a lighter. Rubber bands, safety pins, those little cable ties that go click click and that you can't open. They're good as locks.

Everyone says to bring a sleep sheet, but I'm a bit ambivalent on this point. True, some hostels require them but in my experience, many didn't. I think this is a regional

thing. And at any hostel that required them, you can rent them. I brought my own and a few weeks later lost it to an overzealous cleaning lady and never got it back. For the remainder of my trip I was sleepsheets and happy for it. They are surprisingly bulky and heavy, and over the course the remaining six weeks I might have spent \$5 renting sleep sheets and not having to worry about carrying one. Your call. If you do decide to take one, just fold an old bedsheet in half and sew with a sewing machine (while asking mom about the buttons) the bottom and 2/3 of the way up the side (so you can stick your arm out while having your head on the sheet still).

Indispensable is a water bottle. Keep it filled at all times, because you never know when on a train you'll be parched and not have 28 kronar for a bottle of water. I had one of those water bags (MSR Dromedary?) that I use for hiking. It is wonderful because it holds a lot of water, but collapses when empty to take up hardly any space. Take a towel!!!

I disagree strongly about taking cash for the first umpteen countries you're going to visit. First, if you're anything like me you don't know which countries you're going to hit. Second, the exchange rate is the most favorable 1) out of an ATM or Credit card (if you buy something. If you use credit card for a cash advance you'll be paying through the nose), followed by 2) cash exchanged in the

country you're in (rates vary, and watch the commission) In other words, don't buy Deutsche Marks in Britain. Since there's always the frightening scenario that you arrive at a country and the ATM doesn't work, bring US dollars with you. I had a \$100 bill tucked in somewhere for just this case, but I never had to use it for emergency reasons (unless you call beer an emergency...) The US dollar, along with the GB Pound, German Mark, are among the most easily exchangeable currencies in Europe.

All the stuff I mentioned here should fit easily into a medium-sized backpack, and it should be enough to last you for a long time. You will want to, of course, bring a few more personal things, but remember, keep it light and keep it small. I have seen people with huge packs on their backs and their daypacks, also filled, on their stomachs. In my opinion, they have way, way too much stuff -- carrying around so much is just punishment.

Adios,

-Matt

Best Party Destinations In The World

Ok, so you don't want to go on a tour, but you still want to party all night with your

mates with beautiful people and in exotic and beautiful destinations.

Well do I have the list for you! Below is a list of the hottest destinations in the world for young people. Young people from all over the world come to these spots just to party.

- Olu Deniz, Turkey
- Ios, Greece
- The Ould Bridge Bar, Ireland
- Cinque-Terre, Italy
- Oktoberfest, Munich, Germany
- Corfu, Greece
- Santorini, Greece
- Castellana BLVD, Madrid, Spain
- Flying Pig's Hostel, Amsterdam
- Rotterdam, Netherlands
- Ibiza, Spain
- San Sebastian Jazz Festival, Spain
- Kabul Youth Hostel, Barcelona, Spain

- Palma, Majorca
- Interlaken, Switzerland,
- The Youth Hostel, Salzburg, Austria
- Ayia Napa, Cyprus
- Oscars Bar, Prague, Czech. Republic
- The Yellow Submarine Youth Hostel, Budapest
- The NoName Bar, Tallinn, Estonia

How To Take Your Dream Bahamas Cruise

The Bahamas is arguably the most popular cruise destination for U.S. travellers, and is especially popular with first-time cruisers from the U.S. Only 75kms from mainland USA, the outer islands that make up the group can be reached within a matter of hours.

This makes the Bahamas an excellent choice of location for a short Bahamas cruise break of two, three or four nights away from home.

Some 700 islands make up the archipelago of the Bahamas, of which only around 50 are inhabited. Cruise lines generally focus on just two Bahaman ports - Nassau and Freeport.

Nassau is Bahamas' capital, and is located on the island of New Providence. It is a beautiful compact city that is easy to explore inside a day's shore excursion.

The city's charm is in its architecture - and of course its people. Late 18th century and early 19th century colonial buildings stand as reminders of Bahamas' British past.

Parliament Square in downtown Nassau offers a unique perspective on the city's architecture, watched over, as always, by a grandiose marble statue of Queen Victoria.

But Nassau is not just about history. It has a vibrant modern side too. Quality shops, fine restaurants and golden beaches, up onto which the inviting warm transparent waters of the Caribbean lap, are all there to be sampled. Activities such as snorkelling, diving and passenger submarine rides make for an exciting time in this tropical paradise. The nightlife in Nassau is buzzing too, with casinos and nightclubs offering the best of Bahamian life.

A Bahamas cruise to Freeport on the island of

Grand Bahamas offers tropical paradise that is very close to home.

Easily accessible on a two-night Bahamas cruise, Freeport is a city that welcomes cruisers and tourists with open arms. Duty-free shopping is one of the biggest draws of Freeport, and the city itself features a 10-acre international bazaar - a real shopping paradise in the tropics!

The nightlife in Freeport is world-renowned.

Casinos, nightclubs and live entertainment in Freeport are amongst the best in the Caribbean, and make for a great night out when you're on a Bahamas cruise.

For travellers looking for a Bahamas cruise of a longer duration than four nights, some cruise lines offer special extended cruises, several of which incorporate a port call at a private island owned by the cruise company.

Bahamas cruises generally depart from ports in Florida. Port Canaveral, Fort Lauderdale and Miami port are the big three which offer cruises to the Bahamas.

So, if you're looking to take a short romantic break, or just fancy a change of scenery for the weekend, why not get yourself down to Florida and book a Bahamas cruise.

Bahamas cruises are reasonably priced, and I

guarantee you that the experience will be one that lives long in the memory...

-John Metcalfe is the author and web publisher of A to Z Cruises your #1 source for cruise information, discounts and great deals! Visit <http://www.azcruises.com> now to book your very own dream cruise

In Conclusion

If you are single, relatively young, like people and love to party than there is no better way to experience the time of your life than going on a singles travel tour!

And the best part is, it doesn't have to cost a fortune! So save up some money, hit those websites I've told you about and maybe I'll bump into you at one of the hottest party destinations in the world!

See You There!