



# Exploration

## The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel



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# World, Here You Come

There's a world outside your window,  
just waiting for you.

Now is your chance to explore new places and cultures, sample food and languages, and be the person you aspire to be. Make your way around the globe one trip at a time with Girl Scout travel. Just by reading **Exploration: The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel**, you'll already be on the road to changing your life forever.

Consider **Exploration: The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel** your step-by-step manual to exploring the world. Whether you choose a Girl Scout *destination* (trip exclusively designed for Girl Scouts) or travel with your Girl Scout group, the Girl's Guide is like having your own personal travel agent. It provides the structure, timeline, tips, and to-do's to start your adventure. Since travel and destinations information is updated on the Girl Scout Web site regularly, be sure to bookmark [www.studio2b.org/destinations](http://www.studio2b.org/destinations) for important announcements and current details.

One of the best parts of going on an international trip with Girl Scouts is that you'll share the excitement and passion of your travels with others by creating a Take Action project inspired by your experiences.



Plan and make decisions about your trip—location, purpose, cost, and itinerary.



**Discover** your inner strength, your values, and new skills as you look at the world from different points of view.



**Connect** with others by working together towards a goal. You'll develop healthy relationships, feel a connection to the community you'll be visiting, and share your trip with family, friends, and neighbors in your own community.



Have an amazingly crazy good time, and a meaningful one, too. You'll feel empowered to **Take Action** on something you care about, whether it's in the place you're visiting or in your own backyard. You'll want your Take Action plan to truly make a difference by effectively sustaining itself long after you've moved on.





# Trip Planning at a Glance

**18-24  
Months**

Choose Your Location  
Develop the Purpose of Your Trip  
Brainstorm Trip Details

**12-16  
Months**

Create a Budget  
Plan Money-Earning Projects  
Build An Adult Network  
Check Your R (Readiness) Quotient

**8-12  
Months**

Build Your Itinerary  
Focus on Team Building  
Determine Your Fitness Level  
Get Travel Documents in Order

**3-8  
Months**

Define Your Own Culture  
Explore the Culture You'll Be Visiting  
Know How to Deal with Culture Shock

**6-12  
Weeks**

Finalize Itinerary Details  
Check Paperwork  
Confirm Plans

**4-6  
Weeks**

Pack Smart  
Take Inventory on You

**On your  
trip**

Be Safe and Savvy  
Journal Your Heart Out  
Be a Global Advocate

**Back at  
home**

Reflect on Your Trip  
Get Back into the Groove  
Spread the Word  
Take Action

**Your progress is  
shown here!**

Track yourself throughout  
this guide by using this key.



Progress

18-24  
Months

12-16  
Months

8-12  
Months

**3-8  
Months**

6-8  
Weeks

4-6  
Weeks

On Your  
Trip

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# 18-24 Months Prior to Trip

## Your Journey as a Globetrotter

Start planning your dreams right now! Want to backpack in Switzerland? Be part of a conservation project in the Galapagos? Learn about dolphins in Honduras? The very first item on your to-do list is to think about where you want to go. Get excited about the details of the trip. Traveling with your Girl Scout group? Start with a kickoff meeting so everyone gets a chance to voice her ideas.

### The Travelers

Who's going? Does everyone have the time and commitment needed for planning and money-earning? Planning and prep time can be anywhere from one to two years or longer.

### Give Your Trip a Purpose

What do you want to get out of your trip? This can be as broad as learning about another culture or as specific as exploring a particular language, the arts, environment, an historical event, or a social issue. Your purpose will guide where you go and what you do.

### Location Scout

Research countries you're interested in visiting. If you're traveling with a group, encourage everyone to gather information, then hash it out democracy-style. Everyone gets a chance to make a case for her location. Then make a decision as a team.

### Itinerary

Once you have your location, pull together ideas for an itinerary—a detailed outline of your proposed journey. Keep your trip's purpose in mind as you determine where you want to go and when. See “8–12 Months Prior to Trip” for tips on building your itinerary.

### All in the Timing

When is the best time to travel? Consider cost, weather, and school, family, and/or holiday obligations. How long can you be away? Consider the time it will take to earn and save the money you'll need. Let your family know of your big plans. You'll also need to designate an adult as your trip adviser, someone to guide and coach you through the big stuff. Need help selecting an adviser? Find more information on this under “Your Adult Network” on page 12.

## Deal Makers & BREAKERS

To participate in a Girl Scout international trip you must:

- Be a registered Girl Scout (Cadette or older)
- Travel as/with a group
- Have at least two accompanying adults on your trip
- Have prepared for an international trip by taking shorter trips with your group (Girl Scout Progression)
- Get approval from your Girl Scout council
- Submit all the required forms

### Trip Tip:

The Girl Scout Travel Log is the perfect companion to *Exploration: The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel*. Use it to assess yourself as a traveler, record important planning notes, and reflect on your experiences. The journal is filled with writing prompts to get you in the perfect mindset for your trip. Download the travel log at: [www.studio2b.org/destinations](http://www.studio2b.org/destinations) or create your own journal.

Progress

18-24  
Months

12-16  
Months

8-12  
Months

3-8  
Months

6-8  
Weeks

4-6  
Weeks

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# Trip-Planning Timeline

*A visual timeline that shows the steps leading to your departure date is a handy tool. It can help you plan, accomplish goals, and gauge the time leading up to your exciting departure.*

Use the timeline below to chart your adventure—or create your own. Be sure to add important dates to your timeline: the benchmarks and smaller tasks you'll need to complete to accomplish your goals. Copy it, decorate it, enlarge it—do whatever you need to keep yourself on task. Post it on a wall or locker or set it as your opening page when you turn on your computer. Place it somewhere you'll see everyday.

18-24  
Months

12-16  
Months

8-12  
Months

3-8  
Months

Progress

18-24  
Months

12-16  
Months

8-12  
Months

3-8  
Months

6-8  
Weeks

4-6  
Weeks

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# Trip-Planning Timeline *(continued)*

6-12  
Weeks

4-6  
Weeks

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Trip

Back  
home

Progress

18-24  
Months

12-16  
Months

8-12  
Months

3-8  
Months

6-8  
Weeks

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Weeks

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**Trip Tip:**

Not everyone who travels will be on a two-year planning cycle. Adjust your timeline accordingly, but don't skip steps.



# Checkpoint 18-24 Months

Talk to people you know who have already been on at least one other destinations trip.

—Yelean, 14

Connect with your global sisters through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)/world centers (<http://www.wagggsworld.org/en/world/centres>). Interested in England, Switzerland, India, or Mexico? These countries are home to the four world centers, where girls from around the globe can learn more about each other, the Girl Guide/Girl Scout movements, and the countries they are visiting. The centers offer special programs and the facilities provide inexpensive lodging for Girl Scouts. Visit the world centers through our destinations program as well.

The world centers:

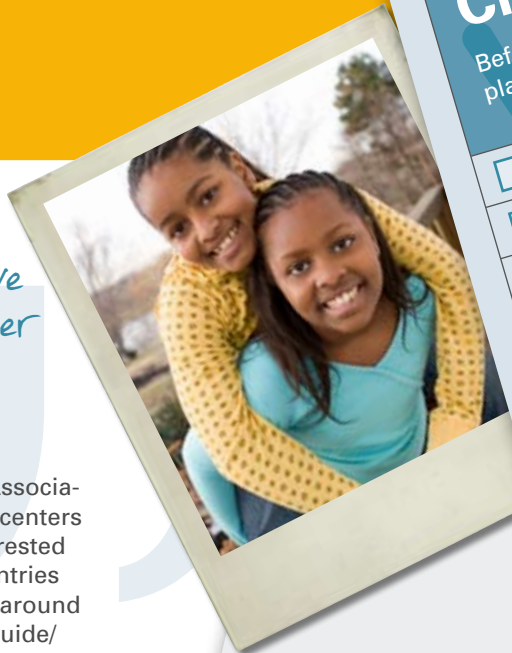
- [Our Chalet \(Switzerland\)](#)
- [Pax Lodge \(United Kingdom\)](#)
- [Our Cabaña \(Mexico\)](#)
- [Sangam \(India\)](#)

For additional Girl Scout travel advice and information, visit the Travel section of Girl Scout Central on the GSUSA Web site: [www.girlscouts.org/program/gs\\_central/travel/](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/travel/)



## Trip Tip:

Book group reservations early for world center summer programs—at least one year in advance. Visit the Girl Scout Web site, [www.girlscouts.org/who\\_we\\_are/global/wagggs/world\\_centers.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/global/wagggs/world_centers.asp), or check out [www.wagggsworld.org](http://www.wagggsworld.org) for descriptions.



## Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your international trip, did you:

- ☐ Determine your trip location?
- ☐ Identify your trip purpose?
- ☐ Choose the group or individuals you are going with?
- ☐ Brainstorm ideas for trip activities?
- ☐ Plant the travel seed with your family?
- ☐ Check with your Girl Scout adviser and obtain permission from your council?

## Notes & Ideas

Progress

18-24  
Months

12-16  
Months

8-12  
Months

3-8  
Months

6-8  
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# 12-16 Months Prior to Your Trip

## Money Makes YOU Go Round the World

Before you go money-earning crazy, you'll need to know how much money your trip will cost. Fill in the boxes below to create a budget. Remember to check exchange rates—the rate at which the U.S. dollar may be converted into another currency—when creating your daily expenses.

### Travel Budget

Expenses	\$ for Group	\$ for You
Passport	\$ _____	\$ _____
Airfare	\$ _____	\$ _____
Lodging	\$ _____	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____	\$ _____
Event fees	\$ _____	\$ _____
Souvenirs, gifts	\$ _____	\$ _____
Local transportation	\$ _____	\$ _____
Miscellaneous	\$ _____	\$ _____
Emergency money	\$ _____	\$ _____
Admission fees (museums, theater, etc.)	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____

\*Note: See page 13 in the appendix for a full-page printable version of this budget work sheet as well as a work sheet for individuals.

### Help Yourself and the Community at the Same Time!

A Massachusetts Girl Scout spent almost three years collecting cans and bottles to redeem. The action she took not only helped the environment, but also covered the full cost of her trip to Australia.

## think about this...

- Where are you going to stay?
- What will airfare cost?
- Will you be attending events?
- Are there registration costs?
- Will you sightsee?
- How much will you spend on museums, performances, etc.?
- How much will you need for food?
- Have you included personal expenses: souvenirs, film, post cards, gifts, etc.?
- How much for local travel: trains, buses, taxis, airport shuttle, etc.?
- What do you need for emergencies?
- Have you considered the cost of tips for tour guides, taxi drivers, etc.?



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# Earning & Saving for your Trip

Now that you have an idea of how much the trip is going to cost, how much do you need to earn?

If you're traveling with a group, decide how much money each girl and her family can contribute. Then determine how much you can earn and contribute on your own. What's left is the amount you'll need to raise through money-earning projects.

Establish a group goal. How much will your group need to earn together? Everyone needs to agree on who does the work and who benefits. For example, what if someone decides not to travel with the group after she helped earn money? How will money be managed? The group must create a team agreement in advance. Be money smart. Consult with your adult adviser about ways to keep money safe.

Here's the cool thing about working on money-earning projects: You'll not only be working towards your trip, but you'll be building skills like budgeting, goal setting, marketing, and working with customers. You'll also learn good business practices you'll own forever!

## Cool Ideas for Earning Money

- Participate in the Girl Scout Cookie program
- Provide childcare at an event such as a community meeting or celebration dinner
- Pick up litter after sports events
- Organize a car wash
- Do face-painting at a neighborhood event
- Hold a can or bottle drive
- Teach dance or cooking
- Care for pets
- Create your own product or service

Look around your community and note what needs there are to be filled and how these needs match up with interests the girls in your group have.

## MONEY-EARNING Guidelines

\$

- Get council approval for all money-earning projects.
- Always check with your council before requesting funds from local organizations, foundations, or businesses. Imagine if they gave you \$50 when your council could have gotten \$5,000 if you had coordinated the request?
- Present travel plans to potential contributors—but leave the “ask” to adults. In other words, share your excitement about your goal, but let the adults ask for donations.
- Set up a group travel bank account overseen by a designated adult.
- Review the money-earning information on the GSUSA Website: [www.girlscouts.org/program/gs-central/money\\_earning/](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs-central/money_earning/)



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# Been There, Done That

Girl Scouts have traveled everywhere, so why not benefit from their experience? Here are ways Girl Scouts have earned money for travel:

"I know of troops in small communities that have put on big money-earning dinners and breakfasts. The key is to sell tickets ahead of time, so you only buy enough food to feed those who RSVP. Otherwise, you are out the money for extra food."

"We sell roses for Mother's Day. We partner with a flower wholesaler who sells us roses for \$9 a dozen and we sell them for \$20 a dozen. There is no out-of-pocket expense, and we get money from the customer at the time of the order. Then, we pick up and deliver the flowers the day before Mother's Day. The girls prepare nice boxes and each rose has a water vial on its base, so they are really fresh."

"We made and sold 'Jolly Jars,' jars with layered ingredients to make cookies or hot chocolate."

"We collect pop cans. Of course, Oregon, which is where I am, has a five cent deposit on pop cans, so it pays off. A garbage bag full of pop cans is worth about \$10. So, we collect cans from friends and neighbors all year long."

"We run the town Father/Daughter Square Dance and Spaghetti Supper."



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# Your Adult Network

Your network of trusted adults includes your parents or guardians, Girl Scout adviser, volunteers and council staff, friends or relatives who have traveled, and others. Perhaps your doctor, teacher, or guidance counselor can offer information, hands-on help, or advice as well.

## Parental Buy-In

If you want to go on an international trip, you'll have to partner with your adult adviser and let your parents or guardians in on your big plans. Once you have figured out the trip basics, organize a meeting with families and Girl Scout adults to discuss details, timelines, and finances. Put a professional spin on it by presenting your trip like a business plan. Use PowerPoint, for example, to make a slick slideshow. Include your purpose, itinerary, budget, money-earning projects, and more. Consider holding family update meetings every two to three months.

Besides the group meeting, you'll need to talk to your family individually. Review your council's guidelines and qualifications for trips together. Talk to your parent or guardian about the trip—where you want to go, why, the cost, etc. Once you have their approval, use your timeline to keep you moving full steam ahead, adding dates for completing applications (for *destinations*), earning money, etc. Give yourself plenty of time to get references and review your application.



### Progress

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Months

3-8  
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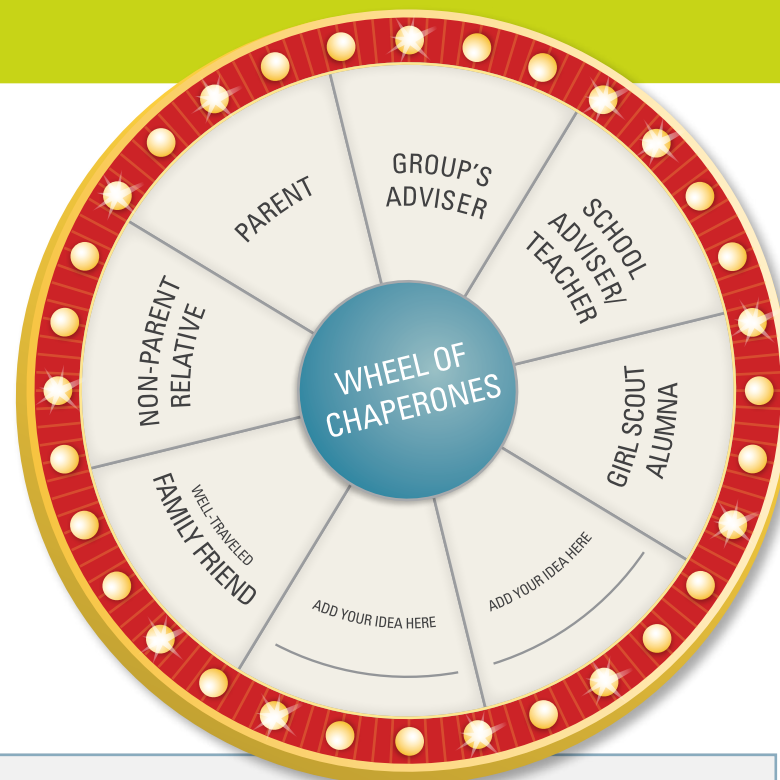
# Wheel of Chaperones

## Wheel of Chaperones

Outside of giving you moral and financial support, you'll need adults to accompany you on your trip. These individuals might be Girl Scout volunteers, relatives, teachers, or someone completely different. Chaperones can have a big impact on your traveling experience, so make sure you have a say. Check with adults to make sure you have the right number of adults for your group.

Check out the Wheel of Chaperones. Think about each person (and add two of your own). What are the pros and cons of having each person chaperone? Who do you think would make the best chaperone? Consider age, travel experience, safety skills, temperament, level of responsibility, and familiarity with Girl Scouts.

Take it a step further by writing the name of at least one person from each category who could be a potential chaperone.



### Who do you know in each category?

Parent \_\_\_\_\_  
 Group's Adviser \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Adviser/Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
 Girl Scout Alumna \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Your Category) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Your Category) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Well-traveled Family Friend \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-parent Relative \_\_\_\_\_

### 5 Things to look for in a Chaperone—

Quality/Characteristic	Potential chaperone <b>Maritza (a part-time volunteer with your group)</b>
25 years old or older	She is 28.
Has prior traveling experience with girls	She's been on local trips with our group before and she went on a trip to Our Chalet with another group last year.
Is someone I could trust/turn to for help	I went to her when I was having that problem with Morgan. She gave me good advice and kept it just between us.
Is knowledgeable (or willing to be) about Girl Scout travel	Definitely! She's already helped our group learn about the world centers.
Handles pressure and stress well	When the bus never showed up for our whale-watching trip, all the girls freaked out, but Maritza calmed everyone down and figured out a way to get us to the boat in time.

Sounds like Maritza would make an excellent travel chaperone!

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# The You Factor



Take a break from trip planning and focus on you planning. How ready are you to travel the globe? Readiness means more than just packing the right shoes or being a good planner. It's about having the maturity to handle situations that arise when you are traveling internationally. After all, being a globetrotter doesn't just happen overnight! Take the "R U Ready?" quiz below to find out how much readiness you have and how much you have yet to attain.

## What's Your R (Readiness) Quotient?

Read each statement. Rate yourself on a scale 1–5 in terms of how true each statement is to/for you, with 1 being nothing like you and 5 being totally like you.

## R U READY? Super Quiz

- |           |   |           |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| <b>01</b> | I have visited another country before.                          | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>02</b> | I am interested in other cultures.                              | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>03</b> | I've been away from home for more than one week.                | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>04</b> | I'm open to trying new things, even foods.                      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>05</b> | I've traveled without my family.                                | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>06</b> | I adapt well in new situations.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>07</b> | If I got separated from my group, I would be able to stay calm. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>08</b> | I have a positive attitude.                                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>09</b> | I follow the rules.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>10</b> | I get along with different personalities.                       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <b>11</b> | I communicate my frustrations and fears openly.                 | 1 2 3 4 5 |

## results Your Readiness Quotient

**If you scored 16 or less—  
your R quotient is on the low side.**

Discuss with your family if traveling internationally is right for you. You may need to get a little more travel experience under your belt. Check out the tips in the "Up Your R Quotient" box. There's plenty of time before your trip to up your level.

**If you scored 17 or 27—  
your R quotient is somewhere in the middle.**

Being in the middle means there's room to improve! Which statements did you rate yourself low on? Focus on turning those statements into 4's and you'll be "ready" to go in no time!

**If you scored 28 or more—  
your R quotient is high.**

You are so ready to travel the globe! Not only will you make a great leader for your group, but you'll be a great role model as well. Reach out to a girl in your group who could benefit from your high R quotient.

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# Checkpoint 12-16 Months

save lots of money, plan to do a lot of stuff, and get help planning from someone who's familiar with where you are going.

— Catherine, 17

work hard to earn the money for your trip. It'll be worth it!

— Alexandra, 14

We promised to pay for the trip ourselves. We worked hard to earn the money. With the help of our community (through our bake sales), we were able to go!

— Ruth, 15

- Talk to Girl Scouts who have traveled. Ask about what worked and what didn't with their money-earning projects.
- With council approval, talk to local organizations and media outlets about your travel plans. Planting seeds here and there can bring an unexpected and happy harvest of financial support.
- Remember, you have a great money-earning project you're already a natural at: the Girl Scout Cookie program. Put a lot of effort into this year's sale!

## Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your international trip, did you:

- ☐ Determine costs and create a budget?
- ☐ Decide which money-earning projects you're going to do?
- ☐ Identify potential chaperones?
- ☐ Present the trip to your family individually and as part of a group?



## Notes & Ideas

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# 8-12 Months Prior to Trip



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## Build Your Itinerary

An itinerary is simply a plan for what you want to do on your trip. You can plan an itinerary that is tightly packed so you won't miss all the exciting sights or you can keep it loose for a more leisurely approach. Determine with your group an itinerary that fits everyone.

Research activities you would like to do during each day of the trip. Do you need to buy tickets in advance or book additional travel? Check out opening and closing times for the sights you plan to visit and make sure they fit into your schedule. Keep in mind that it's important to be flexible and open-minded. How much can you really squeeze into a day? Create space for a last-minute addition you may learn about while on your trip. Also, be realistic about travel times, and have a backup plan—something unexpected is bound to happen. Being spontaneous is part of the fun, but is less fun if you don't have a plan B.

Use the daily itinerary below as a sample; a template is available in the appendix.

## When creating your itinerary, consider:

- Departure and arrival times
- Designated group meeting spots
- Transportation modes
- How many miles you will walk each day.
- Do you have appropriate shoes and clothes?
- Breaks for meals, snacks, water, bathroom
- Lodging locations, contact information, and check-in/check-out times
- Sites and event details
- Rituals for night time, including bed-check
- Potential airline and other delays—weather, accidents, strikes, holidays, etc.

When you have your itinerary set, check out page 7 in *The Girl Scout Travel Log* and choose an itinerary item to get obsessed with!



DATE

6/2/08

## DAILY TRAVEL ITINERARY

Notes

Group meets in lobby

Cost 1.40 euro per girl  
Girls split into small groups

Eat individually in small groups

Notes

MORNING

Time	Schedule
7:00	Breakfast
8:00	
9:00	Take Metro to Notre Dame Cathedral
10:00	Tour Notre Dame!!
11:00	Take Metro to the Louvre
12:00	Lunch

Time	Schedule
1:00	Tour the Louvre

AFTERNOON



# Go Girl Scout Green!

*As you travel to unfamiliar lands and explore new cultures, remember you're not just Susie Q. from Anytown, USA. You're a Girl Scout of the USA—and that's pretty special. As corny as it may sound, it's true. As a Girl Scout, you represent the largest voluntary organization for girls in the world. The name "Girl Scouts" and your uniform can open doors for you. Maintain the positive image of the organization and practice good manners. You're representing the entire organization when you travel as a Girl Scout. Follow the tips below to show your "Girl Scout green."*

Call or write ahead to make reservations. Wherever you go, inform whomever is in charge that a Girl Scout group is coming. Tell them how many are in the group and what you will be doing.

Decide with your group on rules for personal equipment (cell phones, CD players, iPods, etc.). Remember you will need international calling service if you want to dial home on your cell phone. Consider purchasing calling cards.

Girl Scouts leave a place cleaner than they found it.

Whether buddies are chosen or assigned, make sure no one feels left out or unwelcome.

Practice living the Girl Scout Law by being a sister to everyone.

Be sensitive to others' needs, habits, and customs.

Don't forget to say "thank you" to your host, and to show your appreciation afterward.

Maybe you're living up to your greenness, but what if someone else on your trip isn't? It could create one sticky situation and may even be embarrassing. Bring up the topic with your group.



## Travel Responsibly

Girl Scouts are responsible for what they say and do—and this applies to travel, too. Responsible travel means respecting and benefitting local people, their culture, and the environment. When possible, take public transportation, eat in small-scale, locally owned restaurants, and try to meet local people.



A single arrow is easily broken, but not ten in a bundle. —Japanese proverb



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# What would you do?

Talk about the tips listed on the previous page, and, as group, agree on how you want to travel together. Commit to helping and holding each other responsible for rules of travel. Don't just make rules for the sake of making rules, however. Make it count. Talk about what will happen if someone breaks the agreement. Talk about what you'll do if someone...

Wanders off on her own:

.....  
.....

Lacks a positive attitude:

.....  
.....

Refuses to be open-minded,  
flexible, or try new things:

.....  
.....

Disrespects another person:

.....  
.....

Is cranky or mean:

.....  
.....

Disrespects the local customs of the  
country in which you are traveling:

.....  
.....



## Trip Tip:

### Five Responsible Traveler Tips

- Learn as much as you can about customs, values, practices, and religion.
- Be aware of people's behavior, dress, and body language.
- Ask before you take someone's photo and offer to send copies.
- Respect the environment.

## How will you handle it as a group?

Things aren't going to go 100 percent smoothly the entire time. Try this suggestion to get you started: Come up with a catchphrase, like "scout shout," as a reminder if things are starting to go south. Use the catchphrase as a way of refocusing the group.



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Months

8-12  
Months

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# Fit to Travel?

Chances are you'll be doing a lot of walking, carrying your own luggage, and having some long days. Perhaps you'll be taking a trip where you will hike, ski, or kayak. Ready for the challenge? Start by rating your fitness level; a good measure of this is how easily you can do everyday things. Can you run for the bus without your heart pounding like crazy? Can you carry a stack of books home from school with no problem?

Take the fitness test below to help determine your physical condition.

- 01** Run up two flights of stairs (at least 32 steps) without stopping. How do you feel?
  - a. I can talk comfortably and could run up another two flights.
  - b. I'm too winded to talk.
  - c. Where's the ambulance?
- 02** Take a three-hour hike. How do you feel?
  - a. I could do another three hours.
  - b. The first hour and a half was a breeze. But, now I'm tired.
  - c. I'll just lie here until someone rescues me.
- 03** Carry a 30-pound bag for 20 minutes. How do you feel?
  - a. No problem. Where to now?
  - b. I did it, but I'm ready to put this thing down now.
  - c. I had to ditch the bag after five minutes.
- 04** How do you feel after completing this test?
  - a. What test? I feel great!
  - b. I'm a little bit sore and tired.
  - c. I'm ready for a vacation.



## results

### If your answers were mostly A's:

Your fitness level is a 3.  
You're in great condition. Keep it going!

### If your answers were mostly B's:

You're right in the middle of the fitness meter. If your trip has intense physical activities, you're going to need to bump your fitness level up a notch.

### If your answers were mostly C's:

Your fitness level is a 1.  
Your international trip will be physically challenging for you. The good news: You have plenty of time to get yourself into better condition. Ask your doctor or an adviser for health and fitness recommendations that will prepare you for your trip.



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# How Strenuous Will Your Trip Be?

The physical activity level of your trip can range from mild to strenuous, depending on where you're going and what activities you will be enjoying. Go back to your itinerary and rate each activity using the scale below. Assign one, two, or three bullets depending on how much physical exercise your trip will require.

- Light walking and hiking for an hour or two a day. Bags stay at our place of lodging the whole time.
- Moderate hiking, biking, rafting, kayaking, and other activities that require only an average/moderate level of fitness to enjoy. We have to pick up and go with our bags every couple of days.
- Hiking, trekking, or cycling of up to eight hours a day or other activities that require a high level of fitness. And those bags go where we go.

How does the physical activity level required for your trip match your personal fitness level? If there's a gap, use your preparation time to get in shape. Marathon runners don't just one day decide to run 26 miles—they build up endurance and stamina over time. You may not be running a marathon, but follow their example by gradually building up your personal fitness so you're ready when trip-day arrives. Take frequent hikes or brisk walks so you will be prepared to endure long days on the road. Work out at the gym, play sports, take a dance class, lift light weights, and take the stairs instead of the elevator. Grab a buddy and find your own enjoyable way to get in shape.



## Trip Tip:

Is everyone in your group at the fitness level demanded by the trip? What can you do to help a sister travel whose fitness level is lower than what's needed? What if it's one of the chaperones? Incorporate physical activity into your group meetings. Suggest a walking, hiking, or biking club as a component of your group's trip preparation.

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## Checkpoint 8-12 Months

Don't cram too many activities into a short trip. Instead, spend lots of time on things you really want to see—unless, of course, you only want an overview.

— Melissa, 17

Have an open mind... Not everything goes according to plan, but that's what makes it more exciting!

— Sarah, 16

There was a lot of communication in the months before the trip—through online groups and message boards. The girls and adults were able to discuss what we wanted to do, what to expect, and who was going to do what.

— Della, 13

- Check with your Girl Scout council to make sure you've completed the proper forms and have met the necessary requirements for travel. Some councils require girls to participate in specific training.
- Does your group have a designated first-aider? Check with your group adviser or chaperone. This is a must!
- If you don't have a passport, apply now. Also, look into visa, vaccination, or other requirements for entering the country you are visiting. Make all necessary preparations.

### Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your international trip, did you:

- ☐ Apply for a passport?
- ☐ Create a detailed daily itinerary?
- ☐ Agree on a code of behavior with your group?
- ☐ Discuss safety and communication agreements for the group such as having phone calling cards and wearing the same color t-shirts?
- ☐ Prepare your emergency contact card?
- ☐ Identify your fitness level?
- ☐ Rate the physical activity level of your trip activities?
- ☐ Determine if you need to make adjustments in your fitness level?
- ☐ Get approval from your local Girl Scout council?

### Notes & Ideas

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# 3-8 Months Prior to Trip

## Culture Quest

What makes one country different from another? What distinguishes one group of people from another beyond geography, language, and food? Culture!

Culture is defined as a shared set of values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors widely held by members of the same group or community. But wait, culture is much more than meets the eye, literally. Certain features of cultures are visible (foods and clothing) but some aspects are not so easy to see (values, importance of family, etc.).



### Visible Features of Culture

- Styles of dress
- Ways of greeting people
- Paintings, sculpture, and other art
- Literature
- Facial expressions and hand gestures
- Holiday customs
- Music
- Dance
- Celebrations
- Foods
- Greetings
- Religious rituals



### Invisible Features of Culture

- Beliefs about hospitality
- Importance of time
- Values
- Childrearing practices (children and teens)
- Attitudes about personal space/privacy
- Responsibilities of children and teens
- Concepts of fairness
- Nature of friendship
- Ideas about clothing
- Concept of self
- Work ethic
- Religious beliefs
- Concepts of beauty
- Rules of polite behavior
- Attitudes toward age
- Role of family
- General world view



## Ways to Learn

About the Culture of a Country

- Explore Web sites and visit the library for books, magazines, newspapers, movies, and travel DVDs.
- Contact your council to see if other girls or adults who have visited your destination would be willing to talk to you.
- Find cultural, civic, or exchange organizations that offer information.
- Contact chambers of commerce or travel agencies willing to provide resources.
- Don't leave out your friends and family. Your aunt may have never been to Costa Rica, but maybe her friend has.

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# Your Own Culture

*Before you “cross” into another culture, think about the culture that defines you. Look at the questions below then write your responses in your Girl Scout Travel Log.*

What languages do you speak?

What music do you listen to? What dances do you know?

What foods do you eat at home?

In your family, what is considered polite and what is considered rude? What manners have you been taught? (Think about such things as table manners, behavior toward guests in your home, what to say when answering the telephone, how to say thank you for a meal.)

What do you wear on special occasions? What do you wear every day?

How often do you see your extended family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins)? What role do they play in your life?

What holidays and ceremonies are important in your family?

Describe something you value: it could be an aspect of behavior like respect or honesty. It could be a person such as a mother, father, brother, sister, or friend. It could be a goal, such as going to college or designing a Web site. What do you like to do?

Based on your answers, how would you describe your culture?



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# Crossing Cultures

The more you know about the culture you'll be visiting, the less likely you'll make a cultural faux pas. Could shaking someone's hand, drinking milk, or sitting down cause a cultural misunderstanding? It depends on where you are.

**Check out these stories of girls who traveled abroad. What would you do?**

## Akina's Kisses

Although France is known for amour, Akina didn't expect kisses every time she met someone. When she traveled to Paris and put out her hand to shake, she was in for a surprise. On more than one occasion, the Parisians she'd met pulled her in and kissed her on both cheeks. Her new friends' expressions of greeting were a little unsettling at first, but with time Akina grew to appreciate their warmth.

## Susana's Shoes

Susana welcomed her Indian host mom's invitation to have a seat after a long day of exploring the city. She sat down in a chair, threw up her legs, and kicked back. Her host mother's reacted in horror. Little did Susana know it was an insult to let the bottom of her feet (or shoes) face someone because that is considered the dirtiest part of the body.

## Kate's Cereal

After a long journey and a restless night's sleep, Kate couldn't wait for breakfast at her German host family's house. "Perfect. They

have cereal. Just like in the USA.", Or so she thought. After the first spoonful she realized the milk was warm. Her host family explained that cold beverages are not good for your health. Warm milk with cereal isn't so bad after all, Kate realized.

## Annie's Flowers

Annie was excited to present a bouquet of flowers to her new Senegalese friends. However, instead of looking happy, they looked a bit insulted. Annie didn't realize that it's considered "unclean" to use your left hand for such things as eating, paying the bill, shaking hands, and presenting gifts. From then on, Annie made sure to use her right hand.

What would you do if you were in these situations? Avoid cultural pitfalls by doing your homework and finding out about cultural practices. It also helps to be aware of your surroundings. How are people reacting to you? Take visual cues from the locals. If someone is reacting to you strangely, stop and think about what you're doing!



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# You Could Be in for a

# SHOCK!

Culture shock is more common than you realize. It doesn't matter how short or long a trip is; everyone experiences some culture shock. That doesn't mean you are destined to spend the entire time in your room freaking out. Everyone handles culture shock in different ways and just as quickly as it comes, it may go. Your best defense is to understand what culture shock is and use the "Ward Off Culture Shock" tips listed here.



**1.** You start off with over-the-top happiness or feeling totally excited about a new culture. Everything is new and you can't wait to explore.



**2.** Then, a feeling of nervousness or stress about being in an unfamiliar place may start to set in. You may feel homesick. It's perfectly natural to be a little anxious by new surroundings or like "I just don't fit in here."



**3.** Negativity is often the next phase. You may make judgments: things not only feel different, but wrong. But, remember, it's not up to us to decide what is good or bad in other cultures.



**4.** Finally, things start to come together and you adjust to your surroundings. Maybe you don't love everything, but now you can see the positive.

## Ward Off Culture Shock

- Be open minded and receptive.
- Find humor. When does laughing not make you feel better?
- Be flexible. It's not the end of the world if things don't go exactly as planned.
- Communicate your feelings and concerns. Talking it out always helps and lets others know what's going on with you.
- Accept that things may be unclear. Don't judge because you don't understand.
- Have positive, realistic expectations about where you're going and what you'll be doing.
- Express warmth, empathy, and respect for others.
- Ask questions. If someone responds to what you say or do in an unexpected way, inquire about that response. It can lead to an opportunity for cultural exchange.

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Months

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## Checkpoint 3-8 Months

Try to immerse yourself in the culture as fully as possible.

— Brenna, 17

Really get to know where you are going before you get there; it will mean more when you get there.

— Anna, 18

Since coming back from my trip, I realized I shouldn't judge people before really getting to know them.

— Patrice, 13

- Spend time with a person or group who are part of a culture different than yours. Think of it as life practice for your trip. Analyze your experience. What went well? What did you learn? What surprised you? What didn't go so well? Think about how you may have contributed to the positive or awkward moments. How can you apply what you learned to your upcoming trip?
- Create a "language card" with common words and phrases to carry on your trip.

Ciao

Bonjour

Hola

Adios



## Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your international trip, did you:

- ☐ Investigate the visible and invisible features that make up a culture?
- ☐ Define characteristics that make up your own culture?
- ☐ Explore the culture you'll be visiting inside and out?
- ☐ Get familiar with the stages of culture shock?
- ☐ Submit an Intent to Travel form to GSUSA? (See Appendix)
- ☐ Make airline and lodging reservations?

## Notes & Ideas

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# 6-12 Weeks Prior to Trip

## ✓ Get Down to Details

With less than three months before you leave, you've entered the nitty-gritty finalize details zone! If you're traveling with a group, now's the time to pull together a meeting; remember to include chaperones and other adults. Look at all the information you and the other girls have gathered. What's left to do?

## ✓ Revisit the Itinerary

Pull out your daily itineraries and go over them with a magnifying glass (not literally!). Has anything changed? Double-check places, dates, and times. Confirm your lodging. Even if nothing has changed on your end, it doesn't mean that the hotel you are staying at didn't have a computer failure and lost your reservation or that popular tourist attraction had a last-minute closing for renovations.

## ✓ Safety Check

As a group, go over all international travel safety guidelines again. Do you know:

- What to do if accidentally separated from the group?
- What to do if emergency help is needed?
- How to navigate a crowd?
- How to perform basic first-aid procedures?
- How to represent Girl Scouts?

## ✓ Family Meeting

Just like you did all those months ago, hold a group family meeting. This time, go over the final details. Whoo Hoo! Your family will definitely be impressed with your ability to plan a solid international trip. Going over the details also will create clear communication with your family, so they'll know where you'll be at all times and be as excited as you are about the great experiences you'll be having. They'll also feel assured by your safety plans. The group family meeting is also a good time to have your parents or guardians fill out forms that haven't been completed yet.



Progress

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Months

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Months

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Months

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# Know About the Dough

So, you've researched where to go, saved money, and ordered a passport. Before hopping on that plane, get your monetary ducks in a row.

Review your budget and balance it against troop funds. Is it looking good? If you're still short on cash, have the group come up with a last-minute money-earning plan. By this point, airline tickets, lodging, transportation, event fees, and whatever can be purchased in advance should have been done. All troop funds should be collected.

Deciding what kind of money to bring can be overwhelming, especially when there are so many options. Weighing the pros and cons will help you decide what will work best for you.



## Cash

**Pro:** Cash is universally accepted.

**Con:** It will need to be converted to local currency. This can be done at local banks or currency exchange bureaus. Once money is lost or stolen, you cannot replace it. Carrying a lot of cash around may not be safe.

### TIPS

- When converting US dollars to foreign currency, shop around for the best rate, as it will vary from place to place. In general, the best rates will be from major banks and the worst will be through exchange kiosks at airports or train stations.
- If you exchange some money before leaving the United States, do so at a major bank to get the best rates.



### Progress

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# Know About the Dough *(continued)*

## ATM / Debit Card

**Pro:** ATM machines abound internationally, giving you access to cash virtually any time and generally at the best exchange rate.

**Con:** International ATMs can carry fees as high as \$5 per withdrawal, so it might be a good idea to use a bank that has a large international presence.

### TIPS

- Ask your bank about withdrawal fees at overseas ATMs. Also, let them know you will be traveling abroad so they don't think your card was stolen and block access to your account when they start seeing charges from Paris!
- Make sure your ATM card is linked through one of the major networks (PLUS, Cirrus, Mastercard, Visa, etc.).

## Travelers Checks

**Pro:** If they are lost or stolen, they can be replaced within 24 hours. They can be exchanged for local currency at a bank or used directly at many stores.

**Con:** You won't get the best exchange rate for them. And most banks add a surcharge for issuing them. Also, you'll need to find places during your trip that accept travelers checks or can convert them to local currency.

### TIPS

- Travelers Checks come with serial numbers that you should record and keep in a safe place—without those numbers, there's no refund!

## Credit Card

**Pro:** Credit cards are like insurance—hopefully you won't need them, but if you run out of or lose your money, they come in handy.

**Con:** Not every card has the same replacement policy overseas. Plus, some credit card companies charge fees for international transactions.

### TIPS

- Most credit cards are widely accepted, but check your card's policy on international transactions and replacing a lost or stolen card.
- Call your credit card company to let them know you will be traveling abroad.



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# Checkpoint 6-12 Weeks

Make sure to plan ahead of time and the experience will be amazing.

— Katelin, 17

I pushed myself everyday to go outside of my comfort zone and I am really glad I did. I proved to myself that I'm capable of anything.

— MaryKate, 16

Talk to other people that you know who have already been on a destination trip.

— Yeleen, 14

- Do you have special food needs. Visit [www.cdc.gov/travel/contentSurvivalGuide.aspx](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/contentSurvivalGuide.aspx) for diet and health information for travelers.

## Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your international trip, did you:

- ☐ Balance and finalize the budget?
- ☐ Decide what kind of money you're going to bring with you?
- ☐ Finalize the trip itinerary?
- ☐ Meet all safety guidelines?
- ☐ Adhere to council international travel policies?
- ☐ Purchase transportation tickets?
- ☐ Finalize accommodations?
- ☐ Submit all required forms?
- ☐ Review all trip information with parents and guardians?

## Notes & Ideas

### Trip Tip:

Find out which travel forms you (and your parent or guardian) will need to fill out. See the Appendix for sample forms.

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# 4-6 Weeks Prior to Trip

## Pack Like a Pro

What you pack can make or break your trip. Too much stuff and you'll be lugging around a heavy suitcase. No comfy shoes? Blisters could be in your future. Follow the packing tips below and people might just think you're the pro!

- Know what you have to work with. Check airlines to find out about restrictions on luggage size, weight, and carry-on. If you're traveling between countries, investigate specific regulations for those countries.
- Go light and easy to wash. Choose an easy-care wardrobe that can be mixed and matched and adapted to unexpected occasions and unpredictable weather. Hand-washables and clothing that dries fast are good travelers. Layering is important, especially when traveling at different altitudes. Minimize bulky items, like shoes, coats, and sweaters.
- Pass on the bling. Keep expensive jewelry at home. Avoid appliances and electronics like hairdryers and laptops that can weigh down your bag and often require special power converters. Instead, use that space for an extra pair of contact lenses, sunglasses, socks, etc.
- Go label crazy. Label your luggage, clothing, and equipment inside and out with your name and address.
- Leave a little room. Where are you going to put all the funky things you bought? And don't forget SWAPs and souvenirs. Unless you're prepared to ship things home, leave some wiggle room in your bags.
- Bring special supplies with you. Get extra film and sanitary supplies because they may be expensive abroad. Travel can sometimes disrupt menstrual schedules.
- Keep the important stuff close to you. Place airline tickets, passport, cash, travelers checks, medicine, contact lenses, glasses, etc. in your handbag or money belt. Pack your carry-on luggage with one spare change of clothes just in case your checked luggage gets temporarily lost.
- Pull your own weight. Take a walk around the block with all your luggage. If you come back huffing and puffing, unpack things that might not be so vital. As a rule of thumb, you should be able to run for a train with all your things.
- Don't miss page 11 of The Girl Scout Travel Log for a packing list that you can make your own.



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# What's Up With You?

## Consider taking a journal with you and write daily entries.

Muse about the landscape, how similar or different the country you are visiting is from home, or how the trip is changing your world view. Keep ticket stubs, postcards, and SWAPS and turn your journal into a scrap-book once you get home.

If only there was a journal that could fill these needs. Well, there is—The Girl Scout Travel Log! You know, that same journal you've been referred to through the whole trip prep phase. Use your journal to record daily experiences, not just for memory's sake, but as a way to reflect and become inspired to take action on something you care about.

Why not begin your first journal entry now? Think about how you're feeling at this very moment. Nervous? Excited? A mixture? Then when you return from your trip, look at your answers to see how much you've changed.

Use these prompts to help you write:

- What three things are you most excited about?
- What three things are you most worried about?
- What three things do you predict you'll miss the most about home?
- What three things do you think you'll miss the least about home?
- My greatest single challenge on this trip will be...
- How do you think your travel experience will change you?



Record your answers in The Girl Scout Travel Log.



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## Checkpoint 4-6 Weeks

*Wear comfortable shoes and don't bring so much on the plane!*

— Morgan, 15

*Pack sensibly and light and take it seriously but not so seriously that you're not enjoying the planning of your trip.*

— Christina, 15

*Bring lots of cameras and don't forget your SWAPS.*

— Sydney, 15

- Leave copies of your travel documents and passport with your family.
- Give a photocopy of your passport to your group leader while on the trip, just in case.



## Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your international trip, did you get:

- ☐ Airline tickets?
- ☐ Passport, visa, and other required travel documents?
- ☐ Lodging reservations?
- ☐ Medical and insurance information?
- ☐ Money?
- ☐ At least one comfort item from home (your fave slippers, a photo, etc.)?
- ☐ Your emergency phone card (the one you created in the safety section)?
- ☐ Your card with foreign language words and phrases?

## Notes & Ideas

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# On Your Trip

The big day is finally here. Have you checked all the items in the to-do list under Check-points? If yes, grab your journal and you're on your way. You've done all the prep, so now enjoy! Below are some ways to make your trip as enjoyable and meaningful as it can be.

## Be a Savvy Traveler

A "tacky tourist" is an insensitive traveler who roams around clueless about the culture she's visiting. If you want to be seen as a "true traveler", keep the following tips in mind.

### Word Power

We talk fast and use a lot of slang. Being understood might simply be a matter of slowing down and pulling out the phrase book. Take time to learn a few words in another language like: please, thank you, excuse me, hello, and goodbye. Most people appreciate your effort.

### Crank Down the Volume

Everyone likes to have a good time, but if we keep our raucous laughter to the public squares and sidewalks, we're less likely to get glare stare from the mellower locals.

### Photo Op

There are plenty of shots you'll want, but there are a few places and people that would rather you didn't click your camera. Most places will display a sign asking you not to shoot, but people may be harder to read. Ask permission before you snap your shot.

### What to Wear

If you want to know a country's culture, you'll need to respect its dress codes and modesty norms. So check out its tourism Web sites. Countries where a majority of its citizens are Muslim often consider shorts underwear, and short-shorts or skirts are just not a good idea when traveling overseas.

**Street Wear:** You might feel more comfortable with a T-shirt and jeans. Black pants travel well and can be dressed up for a night out.

**House of Worship Wear:** You might find yourself viewing artwork or cool architecture at a church, synagogue, temple, or mosque; some of these places are strict about shorts, bare shoulders, and bellies. Some places even require women to wear dresses, skirts, or a scarf to cover her head. Check out the dress code before you go.

### Let Go of the Grump

When you're on the road and away from your favorite food, friends, and music, it's easy to get out of step and be just plain nasty. When that happens, remind yourself: This is your time, how do you want to spend it? Would you rather complain about the weirdness of a place, people, and things or soak them all in and take back the best memories in photos, journals, and stories?

### Can't Beat Sleep

Face it, we need it. You made some new travel buddies and you're gonna chat until daybreak. It's all right for one or two nights, especially before the long flight home—who wants to be awake for that? But keep a few hours for primetime shut-eye as there will still be plenty to see and do tomorrow.



Map It: Know where you're going and how to say it in the local lingo.



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# Stay Safe

When you're on the road, safety comes first (second and third, too!). Be one with the safety tips below to make for smooth traveling.



- Use the buddy system at all times.  
Know what to do if you are separated from the group.
- Do not wear your name monogrammed where strangers can see it. It's better to all dress alike with the same color t-shirts, bandanas, or backpacks when visiting crowded areas. This makes group identification easy.
- Always have an emergency plan.  
Be aware of your surroundings at all times to avoid losing track of the larger group.
- Learn how to use a telephone in the country you are visiting. Know how to phone home, the police, or fire department. Every country has its own system for making calls.
- Carry only as much money as you need inside a pocket or money belt. Avoid purses. Store the rest of your money in the hotel safe.
- Know what to do in case of fire;  
make a plan with escape routes for each new place you visit.
- Don't roam the hotel halls alone. Even if you are going to another girl's room, always take a buddy and check with your chaperone before leaving and when you get back. Only open your door to someone you know, never to strangers. Always keep your door locked.
- If carrying a backpack, pin the zipper down with a large safety pin.  
It may be a little inconvenient to use, but it will help prevent theft from behind.
- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. Be careful of laying down packages, backpacks, and purses—while watching entertainment, eating at a restaurant, riding public transportation, etc.
- Don't say your hotel room number out loud in front of strangers.
- Carry identification with you in an inside pocket or money belt.



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# Journal Your Heart Out

At the end of each day, find a way to get some you time in. Use it to express your feelings about the day's adventure. The laughs, interesting sights, experiences you felt moved by, and the moments you never want to forget—get it all down.

In addition to journaling, think about how you want to tell the story of your trip. Photos, video, or blog? Perhaps all three. Talk to your group. Perhaps you can all come up with a way to tell your unique story.



**→ You, The Before Picture**

Departure time is approaching. How exciting! All those months of planning and preparing have really paid off. Answer the questions below to capture the you pre-trip, recording how you're feeling at this very moment.

What three things are you most excited about?

What three things are you most worried about?

What three things do you predict you'll miss the most about home?

What three things do you think you'll miss the least about home?

My greatest single challenge on this trip will be...

- Before You Go Make Sure You Have These Items:**
- Passport
  - Ticket
  - Copies of documents
  - Emergency contact info and plan
  - Luggage
  - Copy of your itinerary
  - SWAPS if meeting with Girl
  - Uniform
  - Spending cash
  - Language dictionary



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# Global Advocate

As you travel, you may feel inspired by the things you'll see and do. You may even be spurred on to take action to change something. The questions below can help you identify and record things you want to address as Take Action projects back home. Think hard about the questions each day.

## Be an Advocate

Questions to help you identify issues to tackle.

Think about places you visited, things you did, and people you saw today.

Did you:

See something you felt "wasn't right" or needed a change?

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Come face to face with a community issue that wasn't being addressed?

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Learn about an innovative approach to a community issue?

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# Home, Sweet Home

Welcome back! Remember when you journalled about the “you” before the trip. Now’s the time—while the trip is fresh in your mind— to reflect and write to the follow-up questions.

*After you’ve answered today’s questions, compare what you wrote with your journal entries before you left.*

What three things did you enjoy most?

What three things bothered you or were the most difficult?

What three things did you miss from home?

What three things from home did you not miss?

My greatest single challenge was:

How do you think this travel experience changed you?

What, if anything, will you do differently at home?

What, if anything, would you change about the trip?

What did you figure out about teamwork that you can apply to other situations in your life?

In what other areas of your life can you use the planning and goal-setting skills you developed?

What has your trip inspired you to do?

“Hello!”

“Guten Tag!”

“Bonjour!”

“Hola!”

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# Reverse Culture

# SHOCK!

One of the most difficult parts of an international trip can be coming back. When you get home you'll probably want to tell everyone about the great experiences you've had. You may start to notice things about your family, community, and country you might not have seen before. You may miss the food, culture, and excitement of traveling. You may think no one at home understands you or the changes you have experienced. Don't worry. It's a totally normal feeling called reverse culture shock.

Reverse culture shock can be very personal and affects everyone differently. Expect things to feel different from how you left them. You may be more critical of your hometown or the United States. A simple trip to the supermarket could make you feel overwhelmed or depressed. It might be hard to pick up exactly where you left off because you have changed. You may not realize how much your perspective of the world has altered since being gone. This does not mean you have to renounce your experience and give up everything you've learned! It's best to strike a balance between the old and new, just as you did when first adjusting to your host country's culture.

Keep in mind all you gained from your experiences: You are now more independent because you learned how to adapt to a new way of doing things and a different culture. You are more aware of international issues by having discovered that people in the world have different perspectives and concerns. You are sensitive to differences in people. Having immersed yourself in another culture, you have seen alternative ways of doing, thinking, feeling, and communicating. The upside is that all you've experienced can help you in relationships with people at home as well as those whose values and customs might be different from yours.

*We're preparing a scrapbook about our trip. We have also created a slideshow of all our pictures for one of the photo-sharing sites online.*

— Neha, 17

*We're making a PowerPoint presentation and we are sharing it with a fellow Junior troop and at leader meetings. And it is going on the web.*

— Miriam, 15



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# Express Yourself

Make a scrapbook with your group or individually and record and print the most amazing things about your trip. Share with friends and family. Consider the following:

- I definitely do not want to forget...
- I laughed out loud about...
- Something that brought tears to my eyes was...
- My greatest personal insight was:
- My biggest cultural mistake was...
- My biggest cultural success was...
- I have changed in the following way...

What else can you do to let others know about your experience? How can you pass on the knowledge and insight you have gained? Here are suggestions:

- Write an article for the local paper.
- Submit an article for the Girl Scout Web site [globalgirlscouting@girlscouts.org](mailto:globalgirlscouting@girlscouts.org) or your local council site.
- Work with your council to do presentations for other girls. World Thinking Day would be a great time to present.
- Find out about other groups that might be considering trips.
- Offer to help them plan. After all, you're an expert now! In addition to memorable moments and highlights of your trip, what lessons did you learn that you would want to share with others?



Use The Girl Scout Travel Log to organize your ideas.



## Work With It!

- Know that it's normal to feel different after you return.
- Tell your parents how you are feeling. Communication is key. Spend time with friends and family and stay involved in activities.
- Get together with your Girl Scout group and talk about your trip. Think of ways to share it with your community and other girls.
- Laugh! A good sense of humor can go a long way.
- Keep in contact with friends in the host country or travelers you have met.
- Think about how the United States has changed while you were gone and how your world view is different as well.
- Find a receptive audience to tell your "when I was abroad" stories. Connect with people from the place you visited or who share your interest in travel.
- Learn. Read magazines and books and watch movies from the place you visited.

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# Make a Difference in the World

You had a great time, didn't you? Now, give someone else a "great" time by creating a Take Action project based on some aspect of your travels. You can choose to make a difference in the community you visited or take something you felt inspired by and act locally. Create and implement a project on your own or with a group. Remember, the impact you make on the world is up to you!

*Use The Girl Scout Travel Log to brainstorm, organize, and record your ideas, plans, actions, and results!*

## You Got Issues (and Solutions)!

Begin your Take Action project by identifying an issue important to you. Go over your responses to the questions under Take Action in **The Girl Scout Travel Log**. Do you see any recurring themes? Did you identify something you felt passionately about? To take on an authentic Take Action project, the issue you're identifying must meet two requirements:

1. Your issue needs to be something you feel passionately about.
2. Your issue must meet a community need.

Start by identifying three potential issues and then narrow them down to one.



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# Solution Sleuth

Next, brainstorm and research possible solutions to the issue. Use these questions to aid in your research.

Who is affected? Directly? Indirectly?  
(Age and/or ethnic group, community/neighborhood)

How are people affected? (Are rights being violated? Is quality of life impacted? Do some people benefit from the situation? Who and how?)

Why are people affected? (What is the underlying cause of the issue? What factors play a part in this issue? Is one group affected more than another? Why?)

What solutions or actions have already been tried or suggested?

What do the people affected have to say about the issue?

What solution or action might be most effective?

Who is in a position to bring about change?

Who or what stands in the way of change?

Remember to speak to your adviser and other adult champions of change. Is there a community leader, county representative, business person, clergy, parent, or Girl Scout volunteer who could offer advice or suggestions on how to implement your solution? Investigate organizations and government agencies who can steer you in the direction of research and people in the know.



## Putting the Pieces Together

Now that you have your issue and solutions, start to build your Take Action plan. Think about each statement below. Do you have information to complete each statement in detail? If not, go back to the drawing board; do more research and work with an adult adviser. The more complete and detailed your plan, the more successful you'll be! When you're ready, use the Girl Scout Travel Log to write about your plan.

- My project focuses on this community issue:
- My project involves this realistic plan of action:
- My project will take this amount of time to complete:
- My project goals are:
- The impact of this project will be:
- This project could be sustainable if:
- I'll know I'll have succeeded because:

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# Where You're Going, Where You've Been

Now that your travel experience has come full circle, take time to reflect.

First, figure out what's changed about you. Think about each statement below in relation to your travel experience, from the very first moments of brainstorming location ideas to working on your Take Action plan. Put a check next to each statement you feel is true of you. You can record this in **The Girl Scout Travel Log**, too. Because of my trip:

☐ I have a stronger sense of self

(For example: I learned it's okay to be different from other kids around me; I did things that made me feel good about myself.)

☐ I gained practical life skills

(For example: I learned how to do things I didn't think I could do; I learned how to take care of myself.)

☐ I seek challenges and new opportunities to expand my knowledge

(For example: I tried new activities even if they were hard to do.)

☐ I can think critically about and use different viewpoints to look at issues and ideas

(For example: I tried to solve problems for myself before asking for help; I was willing to change my mind about something if I learned new information.)

☐ I developed healthy relationships with other girls and adults

(For example: I learned I could disagree with someone and still be her friend; I felt like I belonged.)

☐ I know how to work together with other girls toward a common goal

(For example: I worked with a small team of girls to research where we'd stay; I read maps and figured out where we were going while traveling.)

☐ I feel connected to my community and others

(For example: Connecting with other girls helped strengthen my sense of belonging to the Girl Scouts; I interacted with people of different cultures and it helped me feel part of the global community.)

☐ I have educated and inspired others to act

(For example: I will share with others what I learned from my travels.)

☐ I made a difference in the world

(For example: I made decisions about what kind of Take Action project we would do; I felt empowered to make a difference in my community)



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# Put The “New” You Into Action

Sustain the changes within you. Keep the momentum going by applying what you learned about yourself right now and in the future.

Choose at least two statements (from the previous page) that you checked. In your journal, write how you can use these skills to help with something else you plan to do this year.



The most significant thing I learned is that no matter what our backgrounds or where we were from we were still able to help each other.

— Ayana



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