

# TRAVELLING LIGHT

by Reagen Lowrey



Summer travel is suddenly looking a little brighter in spite of the nation's economic recession. Major airlines continue to offer rock-bottom fares by way of extended sales, while hotels worldwide continue to advertise their own irresistible deals.

So, as long as you can remain somewhat flexible, your dream European vacation might be in the cards after all.

But whether you are traveling abroad or just over the Georgia state line, shaving pounds off your luggage can help lower your travel costs and make your summertime getaways more budget-friendly, not to mention more convenient. By packing less, you'll avoid the airlines' outrageous penalties for overweight items, and by carrying-on your bags, you'll forego the additional fees for

checked luggage major carriers are now charging. Plus, you can be more flexible when it comes to taking advantage of overbooked flight incentives, such as free tickets and standby options. You'll worry less about theft from baggage handlers and loss due to misrouting because your bags will be with *you*, as opposed to floating around the other side of the airport.

For all you environmentalists out there, less cargo also means less fuel consumed by the plane and, thus, less harmful emissions. If you are worried about packing it all within

your carry-on allowance—one larger bag no more than 45 linear inches (= length + width + height) and one personal item—take a breath, take it easy, and have a look at the tips outlined below. They'll surely help lighten your load.

## Go lighter, even before you start packing

By exchanging your older, heavier luggage for newer, more lightweight gear, you'll already be one step ahead of the game. Technology continues

to allow for lighter, more durable options. Fabrics such as ballistic and rip-stop nylons allow luggage to weigh as little as 8 pounds, and often lighter. Check out Colorado-based Fishpond's brightly colored Lariat 21-inch Carry-on Rolling Duffel, which weighs only 7.5 pounds and meets all airline carry-on standards.

Travel gear manufacturer Eagle Creek makes several lines of lightweight luggage as well, offering a variety of options that range in both price and organizational features. The company's 22-inch Tarmac model weighs only 8 pounds and comes with a variety of compartments to help travelers pack in a highly organized fashion. Plus, their smaller shoulder bags, which fit perfectly beneath the seat in front of you, are designed with a rear sleeve that slides

HONG KONG 港  
- 8 AUG 1999  
IMMIGRATION  
(20)

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for ninety days from date of  
entry as shown below

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DEVON & CORNWALL

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MELBOURNE AIRPORT 6708

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- 4 NOV 2005  
AIRPORT  
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IMMIGRATION SERVICES

IMMIGRATION AUSTRALIA  
18 NOV 2000  
SYDNEY AIRPORT 1100

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WAVE TO ENTER FOR SIX MONTHS:  
EMPLOYMENT AND RECOURSE TO  
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24 MAY 2003  
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WAVE TO ENTER FOR SIX MONTHS:  
EMPLOYMENT AND RECOURSE TO  
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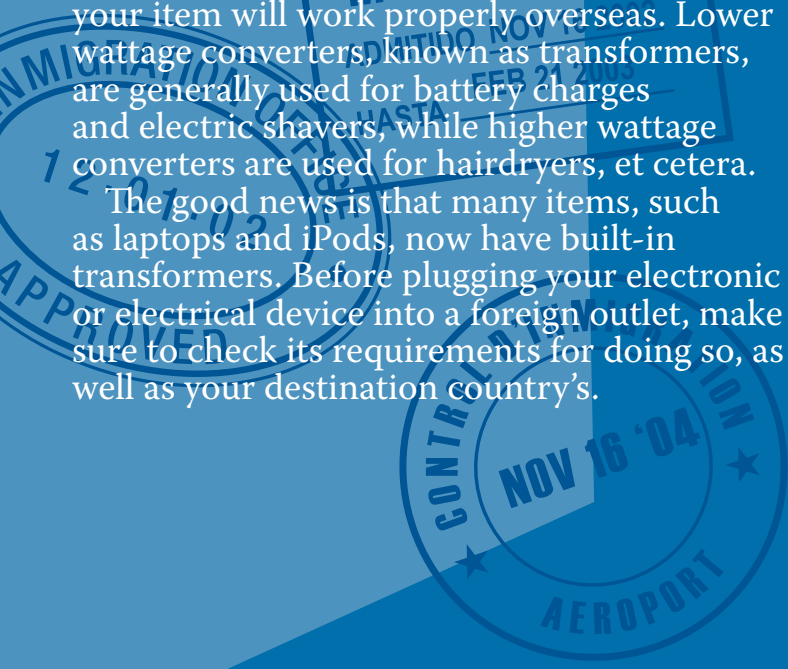
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- 2 MAR 2003  
HEATHROW (5)



## Using electronics overseas

Electronic and electrical items are not only bulky, but sometimes unnecessary, and they often require special accessories to be used in nations overseas. Apart from some Central American and Caribbean countries, most foreign states have different shaped wall sockets than the thin, rectangular slots commonly found in the U.S. Sockets in continental Europe have two round pins, while the United Kingdom has three larger, rectangular pins. Adapters are necessary for your appliance to fit into these various sockets. To top things off, most foreign countries operate on a 220-240 voltage system (the United States runs on 110-125 volts). Converters, often mistaken for adapters, step down the heightened voltage so your item will work properly overseas. Lower wattage converters, known as transformers, are generally used for battery charges and electric shavers, while higher wattage converters are used for hairdryers, et cetera.

The good news is that many items, such as laptops and iPods, now have built-in transformers. Before plugging your electronic or electrical device into a foreign outlet, make sure to check its requirements for doing so, as well as your destination country's.







*If stuffing a week's worth of shampoo into a three-ounce bottle stifles you, remember you can always purchase more... By leaving the bulk behind, you will be spared the extra weight and additional costs.*

over the wheeled bag's handle. Not only will you save time by not waiting on checked bags to arrive, but passing through the airport will be much easier.

## Make sure to choose "essentials" wisely

Gone are the days of sticking out like, well, an American tourist. Travel-friendly clothes are no longer limited to bulky cargo shorts and unflattering zip-off pants. These days, you can find travel-friendly clothing that is comfortable, practical and sheik. Brands like Ex-Officio and Royal Robbins offer a wide variety of wrinkle-resistant and versatile clothing options for both men and women. Fabrics such as nylon and eco-friendly bamboo are often lightweight and quick drying, which are crucial for the efficient traveler. Quick-dry features allow you to wash items with the expectation that they will dry overnight.

But don't worry, you won't have to seek out a laundry mat or pay for the expensive hotel service. Just bring several packs of powder detergent and use the hotel sink or tub to wash your necessities. Washing and

re-wearing items will no doubt lower the amount of clothing you will need to bring.

When packing, make sure to also choose items that can be mixed and matched. Sticking

to one color scheme, say black or brown, can further help to cut down on bulk. Plus, it will help to limit the number of shoes required, which often take up the majority of your carry-on bag's space and weight. For summer travel, try limiting yourself to three pairs: sandals, walking shoes, and a casual pair for nights.

## Consider trimming down on excesses

Traveling carry-on means complying with the TSA's "3-1-1 rule", which limits all liquids, including suntan lotion, toothpaste and some makeup, to three-ounce bottles all stored in one clear, one-quart plastic bag. If stuffing a week's worth of shampoo into a three-ounce bottle stifles you, remember you can always purchase more if you run out.

Also, try to limit your electronic and electrical items, such as hairdryers and

laptops. For foreign travel, such items often require adapters or converters because most countries operate on a different voltage system than the United States (see pg. 16). By leaving the bulk behind, you'll be spared the extra weight and additional costs. Plus, most hotels provide hairdryers and community computers for Internet access. Otherwise, check out the local

library for a free or low-cost Internet option. ~~VVV~~

*In addition to writing for V3 Magazine, Reagen Lowrey works for Southern Treks, a Rome-based international walking tour company, and Changes In Latitude Travel Store in Boulder, Colo. Check out her new travel blog at <http://redbankstravelco.blogspot.com>.*

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