

**For Immediate Release
August 10, 2009**

QUICK TIPS FOR GLOBAL TRAVEL

15 Hints from the Insiders at USTOA

When should you avoid shopping in Southern Europe or visiting the Taj Mahal? When is the best time to visit Kyoto, Japan, or the best time of day to see wildlife in Africa?

The U. S. Tour Operators Association --whose member companies send 11 million people annually on vacation – asked its members for insider tips to various parts of the world. Below are quick tips for visiting destinations around the globe, from Ireland to India.

Southern Europe:

When should you avoid shopping in southern Europe?

Stop before you shop. In some parts of Southern Europe, shops and restaurants close for siesta in the afternoon, reopening in the evening and remaining open late. Travelers should plan accordingly so they are not disappointed. (Avanti Destinations)

Italy:

How should you dress for Italy?

The climate in Italy can vary from fifteen to twenty degrees in all seasons. So it's wise to bring a sweater, clothes that can be layered, and an all-weather jacket, plus comfortable walking shoes. For cruises, informal dress is the general rule, though on formal nights a cocktail dress for women and a suit or coat and tie for men is required. In addition, some religious sites in Italy may require modest dress to enter, meaning no shorts, short skirts, or sleeveless tops. (Gate 1 Travel)

Where can you dine at a 350 year old restaurant in Rome? La Cisterna, one of Rome's oldest restaurants, is located in the city's Trastevere section. Run by the Simmi family for over 75 years, the restaurant's origins date back to 1630. (Tauck World Discovery)

Ireland and Scotland:

How can you see Ireland on your own terms?

Choose an open voucher program that provides the first night's stay at a pre-booked hotel, and remaining nights where you will. In between explore on your own. (Celtic Tours World Vacations)

Whose 250th birthday is Scotland Celebrating?

To mark the 250th anniversary of poet Robert Burns' birth, now through November 30, Scotland is hosting numerous commemorative events. Events include the first annual Homecoming which focuses on visitors with Scottish heritage. (Go Ahead Tours)

Australia:

Where does the dollar buy 20% more than last year?

With travelers looking to save money this year, in Australia one U.S. dollar buys \$1.25 Australian dollars. Not only will travelers save money while visiting due to the favorable exchange rate, but the trip itself will cost less. (Goway)

Do you need a visa for Australia?

U.S. citizens need a visa for entry into Australia. An Australian visa is inexpensive and easy to obtain. (Explorica)

Botswana and South Africa:

What are the best times of day to see wildlife in countries like Botswana?

Animals are most active in the early morning and late afternoon, avoiding the heat of the midday sun. Wildlife activities are usually scheduled with this in mind and travelers can rest or enjoy other activities during this time period. (African Travel, Inc.)

Do you need vaccinations for South Africa?

No immunizations are required for travel to South Africa, unlike other parts of the continent. And while the official languages of South Africa are Afrikaans and English, there are 11 officially recognized languages. Guides and bush trackers all speak English well. (International Expeditions)

India:

When should you NOT visit the Taj Majal?

If traveling to India, avoid visiting Agra and the Taj Mahal on Friday. The Taj Mahal is closed every Friday. (SITA World Tours)

Japan and Vietnam:

When are the best times to see Kyoto, Japan?

Best times to see Kyoto, Japan are during its festive summer season; or visit during the fall to see the area's famous colorful fall foliage. (Signet Tours)

If you visit Vietnam, where else should you go?

If you're going to Vietnam, enhance the experience by adding on a tour to Angkor Wat in Cambodia. (Brendan Vacations)

General Advice:

No matter where you travel, keep these general tips in mind:

- Carry all prescriptions and over the counter medicines in their original containers. (Abercrombie & Kent)
- Schedule transfers with your travel agent prior to your arrival in a foreign destination to avoid long lines and language issues. (Travel Bound)
- On cruises, purchase optional shore excursions before boarding the ship. Doing so will help you avoid long lines and allow you to disembark earlier than those purchasing excursions at the last minute. (Homeric Tours)

More Information

For more information on USTOA, and for a list of member companies serving destinations around the world, visit: www.USTOA.com, www.USTOA.travel, or see your travel agent. USTOA member companies adhere to strict industry standards, including participation in the Association's 'Traveler Assistance Program,' which, among other things, protects consumer travel packages for up to \$1 million. USTOA is the premier association of companies providing vacation packages, tours, and custom travel itineraries worldwide.

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