



Why Travel With Friends And Family

And Become A Group Leader

A Report Prepared by Eva's Best Travel

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Why You Should Travel With Your Friends, Family and Colleagues and Why Become a Group Leader

Why Travel With Your Friends?

Even The Planning Process Is Fun

The phone calls, group email threads and sheer anticipation are half the fun of traveling with your friends.

You Get To Know Each Other Really, Really, Really Well

Even if you were roommates in college way back when, there's nothing like sharing a hotel or cruise cabin. You'll learn everything about your bestie, from what she loves and hates, to what she'll eat and what she definitely won't, to how she truly feels about everything. It's the truest test of friendship and the unique bond you'll develop is unlike anything else.

You Leave With A Million Inside Jokes

No one else will get it when you return home, and that's totally okay.

You Do Things You Might Not Have Considered

You might be all about the museums, but your friend found this hole-in-the-wall restaurant (which, by the way, are always the best kind). So do both! You might end up discovering an unexpected gem.

Travel Delays Are More Bearable

So you missed your connecting flight. (Don't sweat it: It happens to even the most seasoned traveler.) On the bright side, you won't be sitting alone in the terminal. Everything is better when you and your BFF are together—even airports.

No Toothpaste? No Problem!

Forgot something? Chances are, your friend has it. You can even divvy up who should bring what, so that you're not bringing multiple bottles of contact lens solution.

For reasons both silly and serious, conquering a journey with your best friends is one of the healthiest, powerful and most positive things you can do!.

It'll give you stories to tell — and lean on — for years.

Travel stories are a great way to break the ice when the two of you meet new people, and they're guaranteed to generate some genuine laughs. But more importantly, these shared stories will be things that the two of you can reminisce about forever.

You'll realize just how deeply your best friends care about you.

It's hard to stand up for yourself during an argument with an airline agent. A best friend will make sure you don't get walked all over.

Travel gives you a mutual experience to savor together.

Research shows that most of the time, planning a trip brings more happiness than taking the trip itself. And happiness is that much sweeter when shared with your best friends.

You'll find you're most powerful when you're together.

You speak Spanish, and he speaks German. You know how to find the best restaurants, and she's a connoisseur of rock-climbing tours. More interests, skills and tools in your arsenal means that you can do more activities together on your trip.

What to Consider When Planning a Group Trip:

1) What does everyone want?

This is by FAR the most important thing, and important to discuss before any further planning. Just because you all want to go to Greece doesn't mean you all want the same thing out of it. Just because you want different things (and of course you will) doesn't mean you should cancel.

2) How does everyone travel?

I love luxury hotels and he loves boutique hotels. I've To each their own. Like #1, best to figure this out ahead of time.

3) Not every activity needs to be a group activity

Just because you're traveling together, doesn't mean you need to do *everything together*. The best groups often did do things separately. Not every day of course, but every few days. It made for lively conversation at dinner.

4) If you can be flexible, do

As with any relationship, there are going to have to be compromises. The problem when traveling with friends is that the mechanism for compromise. Stand ground when you need to, but being more like water and going with the flow will make everything go smoother.

5) Don't be TOO laid back

So make it known that if you're needed to make a decision, you're happy to do so.

6) Everyone will need some personal time

Everyone needs some "me" time, especially introverts traveling in a group. It's not being anti-social, it's just some quiet time (or music-infused time) to recharge the social batteries.

7) Don't focus on pennies

Money is the cause of more arguments among friends than probably anything else. If you let yourself fixate on a few dollars here and there, it's going to ruin your trip,

8) Figure out how to split meals before you go

It's probably best to establish what the money plan is ahead of time. Chances are someone makes less than everyone else and is not looking forward to splitting a \$400 meal 6 ways when all they had was pasta.

Discussing it ahead of time also gives an embarrassed party to talk about it separately from the group.

9) Don't make ANY decisions when hungry, tired or stressed

This is probably the most important rule

10) As in all things, communication is key

A group dynamic is a fickle, delicate thing. Don't let things fester. Don't let things

Planning a group trip? Whether it's a family reunion, group of friends, or another occasion, a trip with more than a few people can take more pre-planning and logistics than any solo adventure. However, the thrill of sipping limoncello at a villa in Italy or watching the sunset from an Indonesian resort with 5, 10 or 20 of your closest friends or family members can make those initial extra steps worth it.

Why Be A Group Leader?

*You will travel for free or a greatly reduced cost. We will create a group trip for you and get you a Tour Conductor (TC) credit for 5 paid cabins on a river or luxury cruise; 8 paid cabins on a ocean cruise; 10 travelers at a hotel or all-inclusive resort; land tours have varying numbers of travelers for a TC credit.

*We will save your group money in discounted pricing!

* We will get your group additional group amenities like onboard credit, spa credit, golf and resortcredit, specialty dining, private excursions, cocktail parties and more!

Steps to Planning a Great Group Trip:

1. Decide who's going, how far and when. Sure, people love to think about traveling around the world, but make sure you don't start planning until the basics are decided upon and everyone has committed. It doesn't have to be exact. For example, you might decide in January that your family -- including 14 adults and nine children -- is available to reunite somewhere in Europe for 5-6 days either the week of June 11 or July 27. This is enough to move on to step 2.

2. Designate one person or a small team of people as the ringleader or Group Leader.. Whether you have 8, 15 or 100 people joining you on your trip, you'll need one person or one team to take on the majority of the planning. Other group members can and should be included on most of the decisions -- where to go, what activities to do -- but you don't want seven people making 20 different dinner reservations. The larger the group, the more important this step is.

3. Decide on a price range. Who is going, and what are their budgets for this trip? Cruises and All Inclusive Resorts are great because they have a variety of different accommodations and different price points, so everyone can come on the group trip and select the accommodation and price that best fits their budget.

4. Choose a location. While this sounds relatively easy, this is one of the most difficult steps. Twenty people aren't necessarily going to want to go to the same place or do the same things. Listen to what everyone wants, and ask lots of probing questions. While your group might want to go to places as different as New Zealand, South Africa or the Caribbean, you'll see they're all looking for an active vacation near the ocean. We will help you decipher what the group is telling you and how to best select the destination and type of trip that appeals to everyone in your group

5. Research the area. You finally have your location, participants and budget. Where do you stay? What will you do? Ask us, Eva's Best Travel, your professional travel advisors, for ideas and recommendations.

6. Book your trip. Once we have researched and planned your itinerary, book it. You now have the dates set in stone and members of your group can book into the trip. Make sure everyone has their passports up to date and gets all of their visas and shots.

7. Gauge the activity level of your group. Check in with your group: Do folks want to hang out at the pool and talk about old times, or do they want to bungee jump or go on safari? Try to find the median level of interest and plan accordingly. Perhaps relaxing on the beach can be broken up by an eight-hour day hike around a volcano or samba lessons and a trip to the discotheque. With more than one rental car, groups can split up on occasion.

8. Book ahead -- and we really, *really* mean it!

Nabbing a cabin on the ship of your choice to a popular destination during high-season dates can be tough for a mere couple seeking out one bed, let alone for a large group needing multiple staterooms. Early bookings are a must for those who:

Plan to travel during the summer or school holidays.

Have a need for triples or quads or connecting or neighboring cabins, which are all limited in number.

Want the choicest cabins on the newest ships.

Have a very specific itinerary in mind.

Booking ahead also gives you plenty of time to organize travel arrangements, shore excursions, even group T-shirts, without needing to quit your day job.

9. We will create your itinerary and a schedule of group activities. Do not attempt to schedule every moment of every day, but focus instead on offering one or two activities per day. The group will naturally subdivide according to interests, such as shopping or museum touring, making it unnecessary for you to over-plan the trip

10. Create an itinerary for your group. We will create a detailed itinerary for your group. You can add everyone's cell phone numbers or local contact information, arrival times, and a loose schedule of daily activities, restaurant reservation times, etc.

We will handle all of the details for you, including collecting the money. This ensures that all reservations are linked together and avoids shutting out forgetful travelers from group plans.

Create a social networking site for the trip on a service such as Facebook.. This allows group members to meet, share ideas and make plans. Build excitement by frequently posting schedule updates or photos of your destination.

11. Pack and Go! All of our pre-planning will have paid off once you arrive at your villa in Tuscany, your eco-resort in Costa Rica, your cruise in Alaska or at your spa in Hungary. Your group will enjoy time together instead of figuring out where to go, when and how.

At award-winning* Eva's Best Luxury Travel, we get to know you, your interests, desires and budget and customize your trip. We save you a lot of money, time and stress. We are fun, friendly and passionate travelers and expert travel advisors.

We are affiliated with Travel Leaders Group, the largest travel consortium of travel agencies. With our volume buying power we get you the best travel deals, and the most amenities and insider access! Our hallmark is our customer service to you, before, during and after your trip. Travel with peace of mind: If any issues arise while you are away, we are one call away and we handle it for you!

Call us at: 203-221-3171 or -3173, Eva@EvasBestTravel.com, text us at: 203-554-4462, check our website at: www.EvasBestLuxuryTravel.com for travel news, tips and sign up for exclusive weekly travel specials from us.

If you wish to be on our email list, just email us at: Eva@EvasBestTravel.com. We welcome your questions and comments on our blog. Look forward to hearing from you!

*Winner, 5 years in a row, Best of Westport (CT) Award Best Travel Agency for 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015. 2016 and winner of the Westport Business Hall of Fame for 2016.

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