



# Holiday planning 101

Preparation is the key to travel at the best of times let alone when travelling with children, whatever their ages. The more planning and effort you put in before you travel the easier it will be. Before you plan your next holiday, **Amanda Lecaude** shares her 12 tips to help make your preparation and getaway a breeze.



It is now over 3 years ago since my family - husband and 2 boys, who were both in primary school at the time, embarked on an overseas holiday for nearly 2 months. Naturally we had to be super organised before we left but it meant we were able to have one of those holidays of a life time that we all still talk about today. We have so many wonderful memories and don't recall anything we could have done better in terms of our preparation prior to going away.

Of course unexpected things can happen, like my son having his appendix out 3 days before they were due to meet me in the US, but you just deal with these things as they arise, like you would on any other day. The more organised and planned you are, the easier you will be able to respond to these hiccups in the road.

When the time comes for you to think about your next holiday I hope that this article will help make the process and planning easier for you.

Here are my top 12 tips or things to consider:

### 1. Before you travel

Consider your destination and ask yourself the following types of questions:

- What visa requirements do you need and how far in advance do you need to apply for them?
- Are all your passports up to date and have enough travel time on them as well?
- Will you require any vaccinations before you travel?

- What are the basic costs of living where you are going and will that fit within your travel budget?
- Do you need foreign currency, extra cash or credit cards?
- Do you require travel or health insurance?

### 2. Bill payment

It's a good idea to pay off your bills before you leave or set up automatic payment so you don't have to worry about being charged for any late fees.

### 3. Mail

Work out what suits you best with this - either redirect it to the post office or get a neighbour to collect and hold it for you. It's a good idea to ensure junk mail is collected as well as otherwise it is a sure sign you are away!

### 4. Pets

We have a dog so it was important for us to plan her care whilst we are away and not forget her regular monthly worming either. Either arrange someone to look after the pets at your home or arrange for alternative caring arrangements.

### 5. Documents

If you are travelling overseas it is useful to make sure you have copies of any important documents ie passport, credit cards in case they are stolen or lost. You can take paper copies (but keep separate from the originals) or better still just email them to yourself which is what we did. Fortunately, we didn't have to worry but it did create peace of mind. My other tip here is to ensure you leave contact numbers for you with neighbours or family should something happen back at home and they need to get in touch.

## 6. Packing

Put together a list at least a few weeks before you leave to ensure you have time to purchase any items you don't have but need. This list doesn't have to be right down to the number of undies you'll need, but in general, think about the climate you'll be traveling to and the types of activities you'll be doing. Make sure you include things like prescriptions, chargers and emergency phone numbers. With all your chargers, cords and cables also keep these, in one spot as it is much easier to always know where they are than searching for them.

You also need to think about what bags to take and how to pack. We were on the move quite a bit and I was so glad we had decided to use packing cells for all our items. This made it much easier to pack up and move each time without having to refold and put items into our suitcases or bags. It was great time saver and made looking for things much easier too.

Another tip when it comes to packing is to put all of it together in one place and then cull some of it. You need to really ask yourself - do you really need all that? Often at this stage it is things like that extra pair of jeans, the fifth dress, the 7th t-shirt or that extra pair of shoes. As we usually do when we go on holidays we end up wearing the same favourite outfits over and over again so you really probably don't need that extra stuff which you only end up carrying around.

## 7. Traveling with younger children

Think about what you might need for the plane or other trips to care for them as well as entertain them. Do you still need to be carrying nappies & wipes, spare changes of clothes or undies, or food/snack items? Think about the age of your children and what you might need to pack to entertain them – games, new toy, colouring books & pencils, activities or download age appropriate movies.

## 8. At home

Ensure you have emptied the rubbish and arranged for the bins to be put out (neighbours are usually happy to assist with this). Other tips are to empty your fridge of perishable food items and to give it a quick clean too. It's much easier when it is nearly empty. The other tip I like is to change your sheets as there is nothing nicer than arriving home to a clean bed.

## 9. Calendar

Make sure you review your diary and reschedule any events or appointments you might miss whilst away.

## 10. Estate plans/wills

I know this is something we usually don't want to think about but is an essential part of life. Naturally we all hope

nothing happens but it's life and you need to be prepared for all possible situations.

## 11. Work

We often run ourselves into the ground before we go on holidays to ensure everything gets done or is handed over to others to action whilst we are away. Rather than focus on getting everything done on the last day why not also use some time to get things organised for your return to work. Consider how you will handle the following:

- How much time will you need to process email and other communications? Put that time in your diary now.
- Who do you need to meet with when you return to get a handle on your work or projects you are involved in? Schedule these meetings before you leave.

By spending an hour or two preparing for when you get back you can truly go and enjoy your holiday without having to start thinking about all of this in your last few days before you return.

## 12. Unpack

I know when you arrive home often the last thing you feel like is unpacking but my advice is to do it straight away then it's done and not hanging over you. The longer you leave it, the less likely you will want to do it.

By putting in the planning and organisation ahead of time, it will assist you to take care of everything, so you can go and enjoy your holiday and time away!

END 



**Amanda Lecaude is an organising expert who loves being able to help people – her clients – get organised. She sees the difference it makes in their everyday lives, particularly families, just to have a way to create some TIME, SPACE and BALANCE! She is also very passionate about equipping school students with organising skills for life to maximise greater results primarily in secondary school and limit the overwhelm and frustration for both them and their parents.**

**Get in touch 0409 967 166  
amanda@organisingyou.com.au**



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