

Budget Travel Tips & Money Guide

Traveling the world doesn't have to drain your bank account. These proven strategies from the Rags2Travel community will help you see more and spend less.

✈️ ■ Flights & Transportation

■ Set fare alerts on Google Flights, Hopper & Skyscanner

Track prices 6–8 weeks before your trip

■ Fly on Tuesdays or Wednesdays

These are typically the cheapest days to fly

■ Use incognito mode when searching flights

Prevents price increases based on search history

■ Consider nearby airports

Sometimes flying into a smaller city nearby saves \$100+

■ Book connecting flights separately

Can save money but allow 3+ hours layover

■ Use points & miles

Sign up for airline loyalty programs — always free

■ Take overnight buses/trains

Save on accommodation AND transport simultaneously

■ Accommodation

■ Book hostels with private rooms

Privacy + social atmosphere at a fraction of hotel cost

■ Try house-sitting or Trusted Housesitters

Free accommodation in exchange for pet/house care

■ Use Airbnb for weekly discounts

Weekly rates often 30–40% cheaper than nightly

■ Stay slightly outside city centers

10-min transit ride = often 50% cheaper accommodation

■ Couchsurfing for cultural immersion

Free stays + local connections worldwide

■ Book refundable rates and monitor prices

Rebook if prices drop closer to your travel date

■ Food & Drink

- **Eat where locals eat**
Street food & local markets = authentic + cheap
- **Grocery shop for breakfasts & snacks**
Save \$10–20/day by not eating out every meal
- **Avoid eating near tourist attractions**
Prices can be 3x higher in tourist zones
- **Cook in hostel kitchens**
Many hostels have fully equipped kitchens — use them
- **Drink tap water where safe**
Invest in a filtered water bottle — saves \$2–5/day
- **Lunch over dinner at nice restaurants**
Same food, same quality, often 30–50% cheaper

■ Activities & Sightseeing

- **Research free attractions first**
Most cities have free museums, parks, walking tours
- **Get city tourist cards**
Often include transport + major attractions bundled cheap
- **Travel in shoulder season**
Prices drop 20–40% just outside peak season
- **Volunteer for free experiences**
Work a few hours in exchange for free tours/activities
- **Book tours through hostels or locals**
Skip agency markups — huge savings

■ Money & Currency

- **Use a no-fee debit card (Wise, Charles Schwab)**
Avoid 3–5% foreign transaction fees
- **Always pay in local currency**
Never choose dynamic currency conversion
- **Notify your bank before traveling**
Prevent card blocks abroad

■ **Carry some emergency cash**

ATMs not always available everywhere

■ **Track daily spending with Trail Wallet or Splitwise**

Stay on budget without stress