

ised so you can go



know about a country and its people before you arrive, the quicker you get under the skin of a place. Consider learning a few words of the local language and make sure you know what's considered polite and what's not in terms of eating, greeting and dressing.

Check out the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade travellers' bulletins providing news and guidance on travelling in particular areas, and are meant to help Australians avoid difficulties overseas. Travellers should also receive a health check-up before they travel. You may need to obtain vaccinations and some require a period of time to take effect or require more than one dose.

Before you leave, make sure

your family and friends know where you are going and how they can keep in contact.

Then comes the packing and deciding what to take on your trip. The golden rule is to take as little as you can. You're the one who has to carry it all around the place, but also don't forget that there are limits on what planes and buses will let you take, so check that out when you book.

Clothes take up a lot of space in your bag, so try and cut them right back to the minimum. A word of warning though before you turf the jacket – check what the weather will be at the place you are going. Keep your toiletry bag light by taking small portions of what

you need, and don't forget to include a few basic first aid items and any medicines you might need. Don't take too many books – if you want to read novels, you can often swap them with other travelers when you get there.

Think about how you are going to do your laundry and maybe take an elastic clothes line you can tie on the porch. A pocket knife that opens cans and bottles is also worth considering, as are padlocks to secure your bag. Check out the travel shops for more ideas on light-weight, compact items that may become indispensable for you on the road. ☑

Websites you might want to check out

www.smarttraveller.gov.au (visa information and travel warnings)
www.lonelyplanet.com (guide books for everywhere in the world)
www.statravel.com.au (travel agency specialising in student travel)
www.flightcentre.com.au (travel agency with large network of offices)

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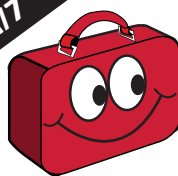
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