

Intrepid Travel Trip Notes



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Eastern Discovery

trip notes: SRED

validity: 01/01/2010 to 31/12/2010

Introduction

Welcome to Intrepid real life experiences... we hope that you enjoy exploring the world as much as we do.

This eastern travel experience encompasses the best, biggest and boldest of American destinations. From the neon lights of New York City and the cascading waters of Niagra to the brilliant minds at Cambridge and the historic monuments of Washington DC, this trip aims to impress. Experience American life in full and gain a bigger perspective among giant monuments, Harvard minds and stunning skyscrapers. Enjoyable and diverse, this eastern travel adventure of America is sure to make for a most memorable holiday.

Style

Intrepid Basix

The best value adventures on the planet! On a Basix trip, you can expect some amazing experiences, but none of the inclusions or 'extras' that you may not want. Which means simple and often multishare accommodation and a lot of local transport. These trips are ideal for first time travellers seeking fun and independence with the security of a group leader at hand and for backpackers wanting minimum hassle and maximum flexibility at the lowest possible price.

Trip Map



Itinerary

Day 1 New York

Welcome to the USA!

Please ensure you download and review the latest trip notes prior to your trip as we make improvements and changes to our itineraries. This will ensure you have the most up to date information about your trip. Check the 'visa' section of these trip notes for any information about visa requirements on this trip.

As this trip does not spend any time in New York we strongly recommend you arrive a few days early to see the sights. Why not consider our Urban Adventure - 'Sldcover New York' (see www.urbanadventures.com) to get a real taste of fabulous New York.

Tonight we stay at a centrally located hostel in New York.

Day 2 Boston

A welcome meeting will be held at 9:00am on day 2 in the hostel foyer/lobby. We will be collecting your insurance details and next of kin information at this meeting so please ensure you have all details on hand to provide to your leader.

Following the meeting we travel 4.5 hours east (440 kms) to Boston, a city founded by the Puritans in 1680. Stroll along the British colonial streets and soak in the atmosphere of this historically important city. Visiting Faneuil Hall marketplace or the nearby Italian District is a great way to spend our first evening as we get to know each other.

Tonight we stay at a hostel in Boston.

Day 3 Albany

Leaving Boston we stop at the town of Cambridge. Here we can take a look around the campus of Harvard University, the oldest and most prestigious university in the US.

In the afternoon we reach Albany, the capital of the state of New York, where we can find many historic buildings.

Afterwards we drive further West through scenic landscapes. Total distance travelled today is over 400 kms, with stops, taking us most of the day.

We spend this night in cabins.

Day 4 Niagara Falls

It is a short drive today to the breathtaking Niagara Falls, one of the most famous waterfalls in the world. There are numerous viewpoints at which we can appreciate the pure power of this amazing set of falls, but there's no better way to get a feel for their true immensity than to approach them from the water on an optional boat ride.

So after donning our raincoats (provided with the optional boat ride), we can head straight up to the falls at the Horseshoe Basin on the thrilling 'Maid of the Mist' boat ride.

Tonight we stay in cabins near the Falls.

Day 5 Gettysburg

Journeying south for about 400 kms (4.5 hours) through the state of Pennsylvania we reach Gettysburg, where one of the most important battles of the American Civil War took place in 1863.

There are many attractions in Gettysburg, mostly related to the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln's famous 'Gettysburg Address'. Gettysburg is also a quaint town surrounded by picturesque farmland, and containing beautiful examples of pre-Civil War architecture such as the Dobbin House Tavern, built in 1776.

We spend the night in cabins in Gettysburg.

Days 6-7 Washington DC

After a short two-hour drive today (140kms) we reach Washington DC, the capital of the USA.

Washington DC contains countless attractions - and your tour leader will be sure to point out the White House, Capitol Building, the Washington Monument, and Lincoln Memorial, amongst other famous landmarks on a guided city tour. Washington DC is a well-planned city which is very easy to get around, with impressive buildings at every turn. In the evening, we'll head down to Georgetown, the centre of nightlife with a distinctly collegiate atmosphere.

We stay two nights in a hostel in Washington DC.

Day 8 New York

Today we travel 330 kms to the north, as we return to Manhattan, the heart of New York City. We will stop in Philadelphia (founded in 1640), where the Liberty Bell hangs. Philadelphia's fame dates back to the American Revolution. It was here, that Thomas Jefferson proclaimed the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Day 8 is departure day and we say farewell to New York for memories that will last a lifetime. The arrival time depends on each group, but we generally aim for a 3:00 pm arrival. If you are flying out today we suggest you don't book a flight before 8:00 pm to allow enough time to transfer to the airport for check-in 2 hours before your flight.

As there is a great deal to do in New York we recommend staying a few extra days to make the most of this exciting city. Consider our full day sightseeing tour of New York (see www.urbanadventures.com).

Itinerary Disclaimer

The itinerary attached is correct at time of printing. Please note: occasionally our itineraries are updated during the year to incorporate improvements stemming from past travellers' comments and our own research. Our brochure is usually released in November each year. As such the information given in this itinerary may be slightly different to that in the brochure. It is VERY IMPORTANT that you print and review a final copy of your Trip Notes a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans. For the latest updated trip notes please visit our website: www.intrepidtravel.com

Culture Shock Rating

 [rating definitions](#)

This is the least confronting of Intrepid's product range. On most itineraries of this type you have the ease of 'Western-style' accommodation and any transport used is comfortable.

Physical Rating

 [rating definitions](#)

You may be required to carry your pack on and off trains and buses, up hotel steps, etc. Your itinerary could include easy paced walks or possibly bike rides, but these are not overly exerting.

Physical Preparation

There are no specific physical requirements for this trip however a reasonable level of fitness is required to be able to make the most of your time. Many of the National Parks that we visit have hiking opportunities where walks up to approx. 4 hours can be an option for you. There are often easier options.

Throughout the trip there are more adventurous optional activities that require some consideration regarding your physical abilities to complete the activity.

Included Activities

There are no activities included in this itinerary. For a list of optional activities and sightseeing available on this trip, please see the optional activities section below.

Optional Activities

We list the following optional activities for your information. This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide only. They are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Intrepid nor included in price of this trip. If you do any of them, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Intrepid.

The receipt of commissions or kickbacks in exchange for recommending particular shops or services is ingrained in the culture of the North American tourism industry. Rather than turn a blind eye to this unavoidable issue, in some areas Intrepid Suntek has established a centralised system whereby contributions from recommended suppliers are distributed back to our travellers as discounts off the full price, or to your leader.

While Intrepid Suntek endeavours to ensure that these suppliers and services maintain reasonable levels of quality, please note recommended suppliers are chosen based on past travellers' feedback and experiences, and Intrepid cannot explicitly guarantee the quality or safety of the product or activity.

A priority in establishing this service is that the experience of you, our traveller, is not compromised in any way. Please let us know via the feedback form completed after your trip if we are successfully meeting this objective.

Maid of the Mist boat tour, Niagara Falls, from USD 12

Got extra time before or after your Intrepid adventure? Maybe there is an URBAN ADVENTURE in one of the cities that you're visiting on your trip?

Intrepid's Urban Adventures are the city tour with a difference - there are more than 100 to choose from in over 30 cities around the world, with new trips added regularly. They are a great way to get under the skin of the city you're visiting, in just a few hours. To make a booking contact your

local travel agent, Intrepid consultant or visit www.urbanadventures.com

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, participating in optional activities and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Tipping

If you are happy with the services provided a tip - though not compulsory - is appropriate. While it may not be customary to you, it is of great significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels, inspires excellent service, and is an entrenched feature of the tourism industry across many Intrepid destinations. Please note we recommend that any tips are given directly to the intended recipient by a member of your group as our group leaders are prohibited from collecting cash for tips.

The following amounts are based on local considerations and feedback from our past travellers:

Restaurants: We suggest 10% to 20% of your bill.

Bars: Recommended USD\$1 for each drink ordered to ensure you are served again.

Local guides: Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your leader. We suggest \$USD2 per day for local guides.

Your Group Leader: You may also consider tipping your leader for outstanding service throughout your trip. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$USD2-3 per person, per day can be used. Of course you are free to tip more or less as you see fit, depending on your perception of service quality and the length of your trip. Remember, a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.

Kitty

A trip kitty of USD \$50 CASH per person will be required

On some overland trips you contribute to a kitty. The Kitty is an on-ground payment put into a central fund and overseen by travellers and the crew. On some trips it is compulsory while on others it is an optional contribution. It helps fund accommodation, camp meals and some included activities. Kitty amounts are subject to change to reflect local price increases.

Your kitty will be collected when you arrive for your trip either one the 1st day or in stages throughout your trip. Refer to your trip notes for exact details.

Important Notes

Flexible Itineraries:

We've allowed plenty of room for freedom and flexibility in our trips. In fact, flexibility is one of the ingredients that makes each of our trips so exciting. This style of travel offers us some unexpected circumstances at times, for example, bad weather and road conditions, technical defects of transportation, inconveniences caused by local operators and authorities, and other circumstances beyond our control. Changes in the program may be required to make the best of the unique situations that we encounter.

Overnight stops and driving distances each day may vary to best suit the needs of the group. Our described itineraries are to be used as a general guide only.

Sleeping Bags:

Your own sleeping bag is required for some nights on this trip. Please bring one from home, or purchase one before your trip starts. Sleeping bags can easily be bought in the US and Canada in the major cities at big stores like Walmart, Kmart, Target or at sports and camping supply stores. Please buy a sleeping bag before the trip starts as you may not have time once on the road. Renting sleeping bags is not possible on our trips.

National Holidays:

The following national holidays are observed in the USA and these can affect our itinerary as traffic can be extreme, shops restaurants and attractions can be closed...

New Year's Day
Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
Washington's Birthday
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

Legal Drinking Age:

Please note that the legal drinking age in the USA is 21 and in some parts of Canada is 19. It is your responsibility to abide by local laws of these countries and if apprehended drinking under age, it is your own responsibility.

Group Size

Maximum of 13 travellers per group

Accommodation

Multishare hostels/cabins (7 nts)

Accommodation on our Lodging trip is a combination of standard hotels, motels, rustic cabins, and hostels. All accommodation is on a multi-share basis (usually 4-6 per cabin). Generally we separate male and female travellers, however this is not possible in all locations where we will make use of multi-gender dorms/cabins. We use a wide network of local accommodation depending on the season and availability, so we can not guarantee the facilities at each location. Generally the hostels we use do not have curfews, however on occasions we may use an alternative hostel where the rules are different. Most hostels are 4-6 bed dormitories however there are occasions where hostels are 12 bed dorms (this is very rare). It is possible that other travellers will be sharing your room as rooms are not reserved for Intrepid travellers only. When we are lodging in a campground where rustic cabins are available, the showers/toilets for the cabins are located in a separate central building. In some sites, there is a small fee for using the showers. This is not an included expense. Your own sleeping bag is required for some nights on this tour.

Meals

While travelling with us you will experience the vast array of wonderful food available in the world. Your group leader will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. On our camping trips we often cook the region's specialties so you don't miss out. To give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat generally not all meals are included in the trip price. This also gives you more budgeting flexibility. As a rule our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Please check the 'meal inclusions' section of these notes for details of meals included.

Allow USD \$160 for meals not included.

Meal Inclusions

The kitty covers some breakfasts & dinners on this trip. The kitty is an optional payment of US\$50 per week of your trip and is used to pay for some group meals.

We will be able to prepare meals on cabin nights and in some hostels. Buying and cooking the food, washing up, etc. are shared chores of the trip participants. Teams of two people will carry out the cooking duties on a rotating basis. We usually cook our evening meals together on our own stove, or barbeque food over the camp fire. We keep our food costs as low as possible by sharing the expenses. Each participant has the option of contributing to a kitty. Breakfast and dinner are paid from this food kitty, while lunch is not included. We stop everyday for lunch at sandwich shops, fast food stores or restaurants (own expense). On hotel nights and whenever cooking facilities are not available we will go out for dinner and eat at restaurants at everybody's own expense. Your leader will participate in the food kitty as well.

Transport

Private van, walking

Our large fleet of vans are fully equipped with dual air conditioning system, V8 engines, most have cloth upholstered seats and carpeted interior with radio/tape or CD players.

These customised vans are fully equipped with any camping or cooking equipment needed for your trip.

The vans are regularly serviced in our own maintenance facility and continuously checked and serviced by a well established network of maintenance and service facilities throughout the continent. Please note however that unforeseen maintenance problems can occur while on the road and we appreciate the patience of our travellers as we make necessary repairs as quickly as possible.

Your baggage is transported on the van's roof racks or in a trailer which is towed behind the van.

All driving times mentioned in our itinerary are intended as a guide only and represent the minimum driving time - not including lunch stops, fuel stops, photo stops, traffic congestion and jams, adverse weather conditions or any last minute alterations to the itinerary for any unforeseen circumstances. Please note that there are some long driving days on this particular tour (starts as early as 07:00am and late arrivals at our final destination- sometimes after dark). As always, your tour leader will make stops for viewpoints, short walks and lunch/rest breaks to help break up the journey. We recommend you are fully prepared for these long travel days by reviewing our notes and indicated drive times (which are based on average drive times from past trips). Some travellers prefer to bring pillows on board for added comfort, others prefer reading material or games and puzzles. The reality is that to get from one fabulous location to another, the distances are great- and we like to think at least some of the adventure is in the journey - not just the destination. You'll be on board with up to 12 other passengers plus your group leader so patience and

cooperation goes a long way in making this journey a comfortable one.

Sometimes we experience high demand for a trip at particular times of the year. If this is the case we may consider creating an additional departure by using an extra Intrepid van and driver. The groups will be divided and will travel separately, with the possibility of using the same accommodation location along the route.

Safety is our priority and therefore our travellers are asked to sign a document on day one of the itinerary indicating their understanding of our seat belt policy.

Group Leader

Your Intrepid Suntrek Group Leader's role involves organizing the overall operation and smooth-running of the trip, managing trip logistics and camp responsibilities. Your group leader will work towards making the trip as safe and enjoyable as possible for all travelers. Intrepid Suntrek trips are built around the cooperation and participation of all the group members under the supervision of the group leader. The group leader will show the group how to set up and use the equipment, and will form work groups to take turns cooking, cleaning and shopping. Everyone is expected to participate and carry their share of the workload, making camp chores easier. If the whole group participates it will be quicker, easier, and more fun.

Your leader will provide basic information about the sights and cities you will be visiting but please note that our leaders are not 'tour guides' in the traditional sense. They are adventure travel specialists and are there to organise your trip, arrange activities and help with questions or problems you may have while on your tour. They are also responsible for driving the van and navigating across the country. Your leader will provide you with all the important information you need to embark on your own explorations.

We endeavor to provide the services of an experienced leader however, situations may arise where your leader is new to a particular region or training other group leaders.

The allowable driving times for drivers is strictly controlled in North America. This ensures our drivers are well rested and are not over-tired from too many hours on the roads.

While your group will have a minivan for all included activities on the trip, please note that the services of the van and the driver may not be available for your use during free time, or after you have arrived for the day. If you need a special trip into town you may need to arrange transport or a taxi.

It is strictly forbidden for non-qualified rangers to present any information about some National Parks in North America, therefore we adopt a system (as requested by the park rangers) where our leader will encourage travellers to visit the information centers in the National Parks for details about the site.

Joining Point

L-Hostel

1961 7th Avenue
New York
New York
United States
Phone: +1 (212) 222 3103
Fax: +1 (212) 222 3299

Our Joining Point Hotel

Located near Central Park, on the B,C,2 and 3 subway lines. Hostel has TV lounge, games room, 24 hour cafe, kitchen, computers, and free WiFi. Linen and towels are provided. There is a locker but it is best to bring your own padlock. Alternatively you can buy one at the front desk.

<http://www.l-hostels.com/>

Joining Point Instructions

From JFK Airport:

- ~ Taxi (approx US\$50)
- ~ Subway - take the Air Train to Howard Beach JFK Airport station (approx US\$5), then Subway line A to 50th Street. Transfer at 50th Street to line B or C and get off at 116th Street. (Subway approx US\$2.20)
- ~ Air Link Shuttle: www.goairlinkshuttle.com (approx US\$20)
- ~ Super Shuttle: www.supershuttle.com (approx US\$25).

From Newark Airport:

- ~ Taxi (approx US\$70)
- ~ Air Link Shuttle: www.goairlinkshuttle.com (approx US\$20)
- ~ Super Shuttle: www.supershuttle.com (approx US\$25).

From LaGuardia Airport:

- ~ Taxi (approx US\$25)
- ~ Air Link Shuttle: www.goairlinkshuttle.com (approx US\$20)

~ Super Shuttle: www.supershuttle.com (approx US\$25).

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems (and nor should you!) but if for any reason you are unable to commence your group trip as scheduled, please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your trip leader.

If you have pre-booked an airport transfer (where available) and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions in the Trip Notes. Should this occur, please apply to your travel agent for a refund of the transfer cost on your return.

No refund is available on missed transfers or portions of your trip owing to a different flight arrival or delayed flight arrival. Any additional cost incurred in order to meet up with your group is at your own expense.

Finishing Point

L-Hostel

1961 7th Avenue
New York
New York
United States
Phone: +1 (212) 222 3103
Fax: +1 (212) 222 3299

Our Finishing Point Hotel

Located near Central Park, on the B,C,2 and 3 subway lines. Hostel has TV lounge, games room, 24 hour cafe, kitchen, computers, and free WiFi. Linen and towels are provided. There is a locker but it is best to bring your own padlock. Alternatively you can buy one at the front desk.

<http://www.l-hostels.com/>

Finishing Point Instructions

To JFK Airport:

- ~ Taxi (approx US\$50)
- ~ Subway - take line B or C from 116th Street station to 50th Street. Transfer at 50th Street station and take line A to Howard Beach JFK Airport station. From there take the Air Train to your Terminal. Air Train is approx US\$5 and the subway is approx US\$2.20.
- ~ Air Link Shuttle: www.goairlinkshuttle.com (approx US\$20)
- ~ Super Shuttle: www.supershuttle.com (approx US\$25).

To Newark Airport:

- ~ Taxi (approx US\$70)
- ~ Air Link Shuttle: www.goairlinkshuttle.com (approx US\$20)
- ~ Super Shuttle: www.supershuttle.com (approx US\$25).

To LaGuardia Airport:

- ~ Taxi (approx US\$25)
- ~ Air Link Shuttle: www.goairlinkshuttle.com (approx US\$20)
- ~ Super Shuttle: www.supershuttle.com (approx US\$25).

Emergency Contact

If problems or difficulties arise that cannot be solved by your trek leader please bring them promptly to our attention. Do not let them spoil the enjoyment of your holiday. For serious matters call 1-800-SUNTREK (1-800-786-8735), toll free in the USA and Canada, or +1 707 523 1800 (office hours). For cases of genuine emergency or crisis, please contact +1 707 483 9460.

Police and Ambulance - In case of an emergency, local authorities can be contacted by calling 911 ☎ this is the toll free phone number for the police, fire department and the ambulance in the USA. In case of doubt, call the operator on 0.

Emergency Funds

Please also make sure you have access to an additional USD\$400, to be used when unforeseen incidents or circumstances outside our control (eg. a natural disaster, civil unrest or an outbreak of bird flu) necessitate a change to our planned route.

Visas

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

Entrance requirements to the USA have changed in recent years so please read the following instructions carefully, even if you have travelled to the USA before.

Many countries now operate under a visa waiver program (meaning a visa is not required) however you still need to obtain an authorisation which confirms that you have been approved to travel. This authorisation must be obtained in advance of travel.

Many citizens from Visa Waiver Program countries can travel to the USA without a visa for a 90 day stay if they meet certain requirements. Visa waiver travelers from all Visa Waiver Program countries must present a machine-readable passport (must meet USA requirements) at the USA port of entry to enter the USA without a visa, otherwise a USA visa is required. Canada does not require a visa for many foreign nationals however you should check to see if this applies to your country. You can get further information from the USA Department of State's and the Canadian government's websites:

<http://travel.state.gov/visa/tempvisitors.html>
<http://canadainternational.gc.ca>

Also please note, from January 2009, all Visa waiver travelers from all Visa Waiver Program countries must obtain an electronic travel authorization prior to their flight from the ESTA website: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>

You should apply for your visa waiver authorisation at least 1 week prior to travel to avoid any last minute possibly delays. You will require you passport details, and your address in the USA (you can use the starting point hotel/hostel address).

Laundry

Some hotels/hostels and selected campgrounds offer coin/token operated laundry facilities, where you can also purchase soap. Since doing laundry takes time, it does of course, not always fit in the schedule. Discuss the best opportunities for laundry with your group leader. You can plan on time and opportunity for doing your laundry about once a week of your trip.

What to Take

All baggage is transported in a trailer which is towed behind the vehicle. Please bring tough bags as small scratches and minor damages can occur. Avoid packing anything that can be easily broken such as glass bottles. Do not bring too much baggage only solid bags, suitcases and rucksacks/backpacks are advisable. Traveling light is recommended as you will be expected to carry, load and unload your luggage from the van/trailer.

The luggage limit for our trips is:

- ~ 1 medium sized suitcase/backpack,
- ~ 1 sleeping bag/sleeping mat and
- ~ 1 piece of hand luggage
- ~ Max. weight limit: 20kg.

Our baggage is packed away in our trailer or on the roof, and therefore inaccessible for much of the day so your hand luggage or day-pack should be a suitable size to hold all your belongings that you may need for the day.

As we offer trips year-round and will be travelling in changing climate zones, we advise you to carefully consider the weather and choose appropriate clothing and sleeping bag. Please bear in mind that nights can be very cold even in the warmer months. We can experience temperatures as low as -10 deg. Celsius and even snow.

Sleeping bags:

We recommend you purchase a sleeping bag that is rated to keep you warm up to -10 deg. Celsius (4 season) if travelling between October and May. If travelling during the Summer months (June - September) a sleeping bag rated to keep you warm at 0 deg. Celsius (3 season) should suffice. Sleeping bags should be purchased prior to your trip, however if you do not have one please speak with your tour leader and we'll be able to make a stop at a local store where you can purchase one. If you are in town before the trip starts, head to a Target, Walmart, Kmart or a sports/outdoor supply stores. If you would like more comfort we recommend that you bring your own pillow and a self-inflatable air mattress.

- ~ Sleeping bags can be purchased from \$30 USD
- ~ Pillows from \$5 USD
- ~ Sleeping bag fleece liners (for added warmth) from \$10 USD.

You may find you will not use some of the listed items. However, this list includes items that some of our past group members have recommended and we have included them 'just in case.'

Sleeping bags are not available for hire/rent. If at the end of your trip you do not need your sleeping bag, Intrepid has an arrangement with a local homeless shelter and 'Lost dogs home' where we donate clean, used sleeping bags. You can donate your sleeping bag via your leader.

Refillable water bottles:

We sell 20oz aluminium bottles for \$10 USD. They are available in 4 colors: red, blue, green and charcoal with the Intrepid Suntrek logo. All profits from the sale go the Intrepid Foundation. Your leader will be able to sell them to you. We encourage the use of refillable water bottles to reduce the waste of bottled water.

Checklist

The following checklist is to be used as a guide only and is not intended to be a complete packing list. Any other items that you wish to pack are at your own discretion however you should attempt to comply with the suggested luggage weight limit.

Travel documents:

Passport
Any Visas required for this trip
Travel insurance including insurer details, 24 hr emergency contact telephone number and policy number (even if you are travelling with credit card insurance)
Flight Tickets, e-ticket
Trip confirmation voucher
Photocopies of important documents to be kept separately (we recommend you keep a copy at home as well)
Latest trip notes (this information)

Money matters:

Money (cash/credit cards)
Travellers' cheques- keep a note of the serial numbers of your Travellers cheques and also the emergency contact numbers. Keep these details separately from the cheques.
Your trip kitty (in cash)
Money belt or pouch (to be worn under clothes)

Personal health:

First aid kit
Personal Medication/prescriptions
Prescription glasses
Contact lenses and solution
High protection sunscreen
Lip balm
Hat / wide brim hat
Sunglasses
Insect repellent
Antihistamine / insect bite cream
Antibacterial gel / wipes
Travel sickness tablets

Sleeping:

Warm sleeping bag (3 or 4 seasons)
Air mattress and pillow for extra comfort
Eye mask
Ear plugs
Alarm clock
Torch/flashlight and spare batteries
Night clothes/sleepwear
Travel pillow for on the road

Swimming:

Swimming costume
Swimming towel

Hiking:

Comfortable walking shoes with good grip
Sandals/flip flops

Sightseeing:

Binoculars
Camera
Film, memory cards
Spare batteries

Travel accessories:

Scissors / army knife
Comfortable day-pack to carry your personal needs during the day
Local language phrase book
Personal audio player
Portable games/playing cards
Reading material
Raincoat
Umbrella
Luggage lock (and keys)
Electrical adapter - US 2-pin

Clothing:

Nice clothes for nights out
Jeans / trousers
Socks / shorts / underwear
T-Shirts / cotton shirts / dresses

Warm clothes particularly if travelling outside of the summer months
Warm anorak / rain coat / sweater
Waterproof jacket
Waterproof bags for rain protection while walking
Thermal Underwear when travelling outside of Summer months
Gloves
Beanie / woolly hat
Long trousers
*For longer trips we recommend you choose clothing that is easy to wash and fast-drying

Personal items:

Toiletries
Travel hair dryer
Shaving equipment
Bath towel
Mobile phone- check you have international roaming access
Rubber flip-flops for showers

Money Exchange

Currency exchange rates often fluctuate. For the most up to date rates please refer to the following website: www.oanda.com.

It can be difficult to exchange money while on the road so it is suggested that you bring some cash in \$USD/\$CAN, or exchange/withdraw money at the airport when you arrive, or at least before you start the trip.

Your individual budget will depend on your personal plans. Think about how much you want to spend on souvenirs, shopping, entertainment, food, drinks, excursions and attractions, that are not included in the trek price (example helicopter flight, etc.). Please bear in mind that North America has endless things to do and see. Not all possible optional activities are listed in our trip notes.

The most convenient and cheapest way to acquire money is via an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) which are plentiful throughout all the cities and towns, and even at roadside stops. This allows you to draw funds from your personal account at a superior exchange rate. Bank fees for these withdrawals can be either a flat rate or a percentage of the amount withdrawn. Check with your bank for information in their international fees.

When leaving home don't forget your PIN and make sure you know the telephone number for cancelling your card if it is stolen. Keep this in a safe place. When using your debit card, check your receipts and keep them to compare against your statement when you get home.

Occasionally banks will also allow cash advances on your credit card, but it is not recommended to rely on this method only. We recommend that you carry some currency cash for when these ATMs can not be accessed.

Departure Tax

All departure taxes should be included in your international flight ticket.

Keeping in Touch - communication while on the road

If you need to be contacted while travelling we recommend email. Email cafes are generally available throughout the regions we visit, although it is possible you may be without email contact for several days on some itineraries. If someone wishes to contact you in an emergency while you are on one of our trips we recommend that they contact your local booking agent, or refer to our emergency contact details. We don't recommend that family and friends try to contact you through hotels, as they are subject to change and the reception staff may not speak English.

Issues On Your Trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader/local partner may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction - if this is the case please ask the leader if you may speak to their direct manager.

You may also choose to provide details in your online feedback which we ask you to complete within 30 days of the end of your trip but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Health

All Intrepid travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in the group travel experience. If in the opinion of our group leader or company representative any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group,

Intrepid reserves the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund. We therefore ask that you read the itinerary in these trip notes thoroughly and then realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Please consult with your doctor if you have any doubts.

No vaccinations are required however we advise that you consult your health care provider for up-to-date information on recommended vaccinations/ immunisations.

Medical prescriptions written outside of the U.S. and Canada are not accepted at pharmacies. Therefore, we recommend you bring along your personal medications in the necessary quantities for your trip.

The most likely medical incidents to occur on our trips is dehydration, over exposure to the sun, and twisted ankles from walking on uneven ground.

While hiking please ensure you drink enough water to remain hydrated as some hikes do not have refill stations for your water bottles.

The sun (especially in desert areas in the West) can be harsh, particularly in the warmer months. Ensure you apply adequate sun protection cream and wear a hat. Travelling with sunburn can be uncomfortable.

Safety

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. Please refer to our website's Safety page for links to major travel advisories and updates on safety issues affecting our trips: www.intrepidtravel.com/safety.

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of our hotels have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Your leader will accompany you on all included activities however during your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your group leader will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your Intrepid itinerary, and Intrepid makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

For more details on the type of conditions and safety standards you can expect on your trip, please refer to Intrepid's operational safety policy at www.intrepidtravel.com/safety.

We recommend that you take a moment to read through this information before travelling, and would appreciate any feedback on how well it is being implemented in the field.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips. We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number has been seen by your leader.

If you have credit card insurance your tour leader will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number and emergency contact telephone number rather than the Bank's name and credit card details. Please contact your bank for these details prior to arriving in-country.

Please go to www.intrepidtravel.com/insurance.php for links to various travel insurance providers.

Your Fellow Travellers

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part.

Please note that due to privacy reasons we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip prior to departure.

Age restrictions apply to this trip: minimum age 12

Single Travellers

With the exception of our Comfort trips, our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers share with people of the same sex for the duration of the trip, in accommodation ranging from twin to multi-share. Please note some of our itineraries have accommodation booked on a mixed gender share basis - where applicable this will be specified in our Trip Notes. On our Comfort trips you have the choice of sharing or paying a single supplement. Please note that this only applies to accommodation during the tour. Pre- and post-trip accommodation will be booked on a single room basis.

Responsible Travel

We believe strongly in low impact or rather positive impact tourism. Broadly speaking this means that we try to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects. Please refer to our website at www.intrepidtravel.com/responsibletravel for further details and suggestions on how you can be a responsible traveller.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for Intrepid travellers. Intrepid's philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make our destinations such special places. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our group leader has the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

The Intrepid Foundation

Since Intrepid Travel commenced operating in 1989 we have been committed to giving something back to the communities we visit. One way has been through our support for local humanitarian, development and conservation projects. Many of our travellers want to contribute something too. To make things easier we established The Intrepid Foundation. All donations to The Intrepid Foundation will be matched by Intrepid Travel dollar for dollar, up to AU\$5,000 per donor and a total of AU\$300,000 for all donors in each financial year. And every cent gets there as Intrepid Travel pays for all the administration costs. Donating is simple and secure. Please ask your group leader for information on the projects we support in the region, through The Intrepid Foundation; or go to our website: www.theintrepidfoundation.org

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! This is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 4 weeks of finishing your trip. Go to: www.intrepidtravel.com/feedback
Thanks!

We Want Your Photos

Do you want to see your travel photos published? To celebrate all that is travel photography, Intrepid hold an annual Intrepid Photography Competition. There are five categories - real life experiences, travelling families, local friends, landscapes, icons - each with a fabulous prizes. For more information, entry form and competition conditions, please visit www.intrepidtravel.com/photocomp. Send entries to The Editor, Intrepid Travel, PO Box 2781, Fitzroy DC 3065, Victoria, Australia.

Intrepid Express

Express is our email newsletter that is full of interesting and exciting regular features, travel tips, competitions, great giveaways, reviews, recipes, travellers' stories and money saving specials! Plus we give you the chance to WIN an Intrepid trip every week - subscribe for free at <http://www.intrepidtravel.com/express/>