

## CHAPTER 7

# *Bon Voyage—East or West*

TRAVEL is a form of continuing education. Seeing other people and their countries broadens one's cultural background and one's professional outlook. It can give you new interests and hobbies. When you return, you may read different types of books, and magazine and newspaper articles, and they will mean more. You will develop new professional interests related to your present job. Foreign food and fashions in your locality will become more interesting to you. The local art institute, art show, symphony, or operatic offerings will take on new meaning. You may make new friends. You will be a more interesting person.



The local art show will take on new meaning.

**Before-You-Go Suggestions**

Before your plans are developed, stop and answer these questions:

*How much paid vacation are you entitled to?*

If you have only a two-week vacation, a trip abroad is extravagant unless you can take advantage of special tour rates in "off-seasons" of the year. The transportation, a major expense, is the same whether you are gone two weeks or two months. It may be frustrating if it is your first trip unless you limit the area you wish to visit. (On the other hand, two weeks in one country may be quite adequate to give you old-world experience.)

*Can you take a leave of absence?*

Talk this over with your supervisor. One large company grants a leave based on the length of employment. For example, you may be permitted a two-week leave with less than five years employment, one month with five to nine years, and two months with ten to fourteen years. Some will grant a reasonable leave but you may lose the advantages of continuous service for vacations, retirement, and other benefits. Others consider the job terminated and reserve the right to employ another in the position if a qualified person can be found. On the other hand, some may consider travel a benefit to your position and will even pay a part of the travel bill. At any rate, no harm is done by inquiring about company policy concerning leaves.

*Can you afford a leave of absence?*

A leave of absence means no pay will be received while you are away. Still, your expenses for apartment rent and services usually continue and expenditures for transportation, food, and travel expenses involved in sight-seeing must be paid.

*Do you have good health?*

Sight-seeing anywhere is tiring. It requires good health, especially if your time is limited so that the schedule is cramped. Being ill away from home and in a country where you may not understand or speak the language may be a shaking experience. Furthermore, going on a trip abroad

in poor health will limit the value of the trip and make it seem an extravagance.

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION.** Assuming you have no specific source of information on the country or countries you may wish to visit, your first stop should be at the public library. Here you will find interesting books about the history, geography, culture, and climate, telling you almost more than you really care to know! Check the travel section of the Sunday paper, too. If your local paper does not carry articles and advertisements on travel outside of the United States, stop at the newsstand and buy the Sunday edition of a nearby city newspaper that does. Travel agencies and tourist bureaus will give you brochures with a good deal of information.

The public library, bookstores, and book departments of large department stores usually have a section on travel. Browse a bit until you find one book that seems to offer the information you seek if you are buying. Helpful information includes a brief historical outline of the country, current events and things to see, a list of hotels with street addresses rated according to service and price, currency, transportation, food specialities, restaurants, and sometimes, things to buy.

Most countries interested in tourist trade will have tourist bureaus established in the major cities of the United States. A postcard addressed to the Tourist Bureau of France (or Spain, or Mexico), New York City, N.Y., will bring an avalanche of travel brochures containing valuable information for you.



The consulate of each country maintains offices in New York and Washington, D.C. A letter addressed to those that interest you, requesting travel information on each of their countries, will bring you reliable material.

Airlines and steamship companies will be glad to send

. . . a postcard indicating your interest will be answered quickly.

travel information on the countries they serve. Many have travel consultants who will give you individual help. A telephone call, a postcard, or letter indicating your interest will be answered quickly.

**HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?** The brochures from transportation companies usually list basic travel costs. They may have package tours that include transportation, lodging, and sight-seeing tours. For specific costs of a trip, it's wise to seek the assistance of a travel agent or you may sharpen your own pencil and figure transportation, hotel fees, approximate cost of food, sight-seeing tours, and shopping allowances. Remember that tips for service in foreign countries take a considerable share of your travel money. Most first-timers feel more secure with cost estimates figured by travel experts who have up-to-date price lists at their finger tips.

Don't let the seemingly astronomical tab frighten you if you sincerely wish to travel. A self-planned saving program and stay-at-home or low-cost vacation for a year or two may well bring that dreamed-of travel abroad without too much sacrifice.

**THE BEST SEASON.** The best time of the year to travel depends upon you and your pocketbook. Most of the music festivals, outdoor dramas, art exhibitions, fairs, races, and some sight-seeing tours, are held during the spring and summer, April to October

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or November 1st. However, transportation and hotels may have lower rates during the so-called "off season." If every dollar counts, investigate the savings enjoyed by traveling between October and April. After all, the scenery, historical sights, art galleries, cathedrals, shops, and markets will be the same and the crowds will not be nearly as pressing.

Even though weather is unpredictable, some countries have very definite rain or snow seasons you may prefer to miss.

ONE, A FEW, OR A GROUP? Will you go alone, with one or two friends, or will you join a group? If you have traveled very little you may feel more at ease with an organized group. This will let you develop confidence in your ability to deal with immigration authorities, transportation agents, and hotel representatives, and to read maps of foreign cities. Check with the pastor of your church, the YWCA, any social club you belong to, or a travel representative in your locality. They may know of tours that are being planned or will be able to tell you whom you should contact.

Teaming up with a friend should be carefully considered before plans are definite. Does this person have some of the same interests and about the same amount of money and energy to spend that you have? What about patience, adaptability, and temperament? Traveling together is a constant association and plans once made may be difficult to dissolve on foreign territory.

Traveling alone may mean that you will meet more people than you would by traveling with others. Although it means you may have some lonesome moments, you may also have some priceless, quiet times enjoying great views, people, statues, works of art, and architecture. You'll have no misgivings about hurting another's feelings, nor will you be troubled by disagreements. Only you know yourself and your friends, so only you can decide whether you should travel with or without them.

LET'S GET STARTED. First there is the matter of a passport. A passport is needed as you enter and leave all countries except Bermuda, Nassau, West Indies, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Uruguay, Guatemala, and Mexico. If you live in or near the port cities of Washington, D. C., New York City, Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, Los Angeles, Miami, Seattle, Honolulu, or San Francisco, apply in person at the Passport Division of the Department of State. The address will be found listed in the telephone directory under United States Government, State Dept., Passport Agency. You may get an application form from a travel agent and fill it out in advance if you wish. Take with you two full-face photographs (2½ by 2½) inches with a white border, \$10.00, and proof of citizenship. A birth certificate, naturalization papers, or a baptismal certificate is proof enough. Within a week or ten days, the passport will be mailed to your home address.

If you cannot go to one of these cities, simply pick up a passport application form at your post office. Fill in the form and make a personal application to the clerk of any United States Circuit Court. Here, too, you will need photographs, \$10.00, proof of citizenship, and a person who has known you for five years. Allow six to eight weeks for the processing.

A passport is valid for three years and may be renewed once for \$5.00. Take good care of your passport. It is your most valuable possession when you are out of the country, for it is your proof of citizenship. The passport is requested when you check into hotels, when you cash traveler's checks, and when you enter and leave a foreign country. It gives you the right to re-enter the United States.

Also needed for re-entry into the United States from most other countries is a smallpox vaccination certificate less than

three years old. It is a wise traveler who has the vaccination six to eight weeks before the trip begins. This gives plenty of time for any reaction to subside. It also allows time to send the certificate which has been signed by your doctor to the city or state health department for validation. Often your doctor will advise additional shots to fend off diseases common in the countries you plan to visit. It's better to be safe than sick.

Before leaving the United States, it is wise to write to the customs office in the port cities mentioned to find out how many and what foreign purchases you can or cannot bring into this country. If you organize your purchases and your receipts for easy inspection, and if you are honest in your declarations, you will find "going through customs" abroad and when you return is neither difficult nor trying.

THE QUESTION OF CLOTHES. First, look through your current wardrobe. Pick out dresses, suits, or skirts that are wrinkle-resistant, comfortable to sit and walk in, and fairly dark in color so they won't show soil easily. Constant packing, unpacking, and wearing is hard on clothes, so you are wise to take old favorites rather than new ones. For fall, winter, and early spring, firmly knit suits and jersey dresses are excellent for wear in cool climates. For summer weather, choose fairly dark clothes that wash and drip dry without ironing. A travel iron is excess baggage in most foreign countries since the current and plug-in outlets differ from ours and vary from one hotel to another, even in the same country.

Limit the number of outer garments to two or three daytime sight-seeing outfits and one or two dresses suitable for dinner in the hotel dining rooms and better restaurants. A sweater or two will be handy to wear in place of a blouse, as a light wrap, or even to bed during chilly weather. A plastic raincoat with a hood is indispensable, and some travelers recommend plastic boots for rain or snow wear. A light or heavy coat, depending on the season you plan to travel, is a must. If the seasons change as you travel, a coat with a zip-in lining makes you master of the temperatures. Remember that a coat takes a real beating, so leave the good one at home.

You will save space, weight, and packing time if you can use the same lingerie and accessories with all of the clothes you take.

Here's a list of items you may want to consider taking with you, depending, of course, upon your own personal requirements:

adjustable clothesline  
heavy cord, 1 or 2 yards  
a few rubber bands  
facial tissue  
toilet tissue, cardboard  
removed  
cosmetics, if you insist  
on a special brand  
facial soap  
shampoo  
laxative  
headache tablets  
band-aids  
instant coffee  
instant dry milk  
camera and film  
cigarettes and lighters  
address book

spiral-backed notebooks or  
shorthand notebooks for  
travel notes, at least two  
ball-point pens and fillers  
sunglasses  
extra pair of eyeglasses, if you  
wear them  
sewing kit  
safety pins  
packets of granular detergents,  
or cold water soap  
travel alarm clock  
plastic bags for laundry, hose,  
shoes, plus extras  
large manila envelopes, to  
mail things home  
evening or clutch purse large  
enough for traveler's checks  
and passport

Tuck in enough hose for the entire trip; often the quality and fit of the hose you can buy will not be the same as you are accustomed to at home.

Even though many of these items may be purchased in the countries you visit, shopping takes valuable time. Furthermore, it may be very inconvenient, to say the least, to be hunting for a shop that sells aspirin when you are suffering from a headache and would prefer to be in bed.

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"If your feet hurt, you hurt all over." A greater truth was never spoken. Well in advance of your departure, decide on the walking shoes you will take. Whether you buy new shoes or take some you have, be sure you have walked for miles in them. Do forget the appearance of the shoes and take flat or medium heels. Rubber-soled shoes are a joy for walking on cobblestones. Take the style of shoe that gives your feet the best support. You'll be glad you did. Then take a pair of semi-walkers, the kind you could walk in for an hour or so and finally, take one pair of real dress-up shoes to wear in the evening when sight-seeing and shopping are over and you are out on the town.

**BAGS TO PUT THEM IN.** Checking on and off planes, trains, buses, or ships — and through customs — gives luggage hard wear. If you have reasonably lightweight, sturdy luggage, by all means use it. New luggage won't fend off the bumps any better than the old. But if you must buy new luggage, seasoned travelers recommend bright-colored, lightweight canvas bags that can be located easily. Luggage tags of a uniform red, green, or blue, for example, will make your baggage stand out in a crowd, too.

Those who travel by plane must be more conscious of free weight allowance than those traveling by ship. An economy flight allows only 44 pounds, while first class permits 66 pounds of luggage on overseas flights without a charge for excess baggage. One good-sized suitcase and a flight bag are convenient to handle with or without assistance at ports or stations. Folks who travel by air usually plan to go light in order to have space and weight allowance for purchases made abroad. Even though you are sure your shopping will be limited you are bound to find a darling wood carving, Parisian frock, beaded evening bag, or antique plate rack that you simply must take home.

**WHERE TO STAY.** Many of the first-rate travel books list the hotels according to the price and class in these or equivalent terms, *deluxe*, *first-class*, *medium priced*, and *inexpensive*. The hotel rate usually includes a "Continental" or light breakfast, that means rolls and coffee or tea. In some places it also includes the noon or evening meal.

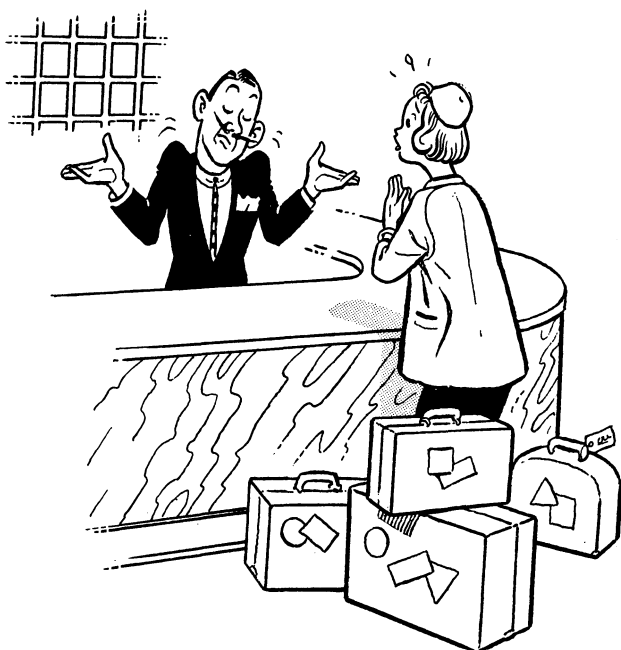
*Pensions* are especially popular with travelers who enjoy the friendly atmosphere of a small hotel or boarding house. The

rate may include full pension (all meals) or partial pension. People who are staying in a city for several days or weeks, often take advantage of the lower price as well as the comfort of the pension.

*Youth hostels* in European countries are convenient, cheap, (often rugged), and very popular with travelers under age 30. Dormitory or room arrangements are available in most of the hostels. Here is a wonderful way to meet people of similar age and interests from many countries. Check the local phone directory for an office of the American Youth Hostels in your town. If there is none, write to American Youth Hostels, Inc., 410 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, for more information. Hosteling may mean that the travel budget can be stretched to cover months rather than weeks.

Having advance reservations for lodging in the cities during the height of the tourist season is recommended, especially if you wish to stay in the popular hotels. Reservations are not so important at the pensions, especially during the off season and in the villages. No advance arrangements are necessary at the hostels, making planning very flexible.

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Those who arrive in a town without advance lodging reservations find the local tourist bureaus of infinite help. Usually located in the railroad stations, they have lists of approved hotels, pensions, and hostels grouped by price and location. Do not ask for or accept advice on hotel accommodations from any stranger. At some railway stations and terminals there may be agents who get a commission for getting people to go to a certain hotel. Maps of the city and information on current tourist attractions are available at these authorized tourist bureaus and some hotels.

A LAST WORD — MONEY. How much money you take with you is a personal decision. But you will need enough United States currency to get to the port of embarkation and on your return to get from the port of entry to your home. In between times, carry your money in the form of traveler's checks that can be changed into the currency of the country after you arrive. Traveler's checks for \$10.00 are handy to use for checking out of hotels and for shopping. They help you to limit the amount of local currency you carry. Some \$20.00 checks or larger denominations are good for long vacations and for trips where hotel and travel expenses are not prepaid.

In the major cities, many of the hotels and some shops will accept personal checks, so it is a comfort to leave some money at home in a checking account to draw on in case of an emergency. You may also want to have some one-dollar bills tucked away to use as you are checking out of the hotel so that you do not have foreign money left over as you leave one country and enter another. Unless you plan to visit many countries, it is convenient to get \$5.00 to \$10.00 worth of the money of each country from your bank before you leave the United States, or you may depend on currency exchanges in the terminals. This assures you of having money for tips, bus, or cab fare to your place of lodging before you have an opportunity to get to a bank or currency exchange in the new city. Some travelers have found it handy to keep the money of each country separately, using several envelopes. Keeping extra money, transportation tickets, and any other valuables in the hotel safe provided for the use of guests brings a real feeling of security.

*A computer or conversion table that can be obtained in large*

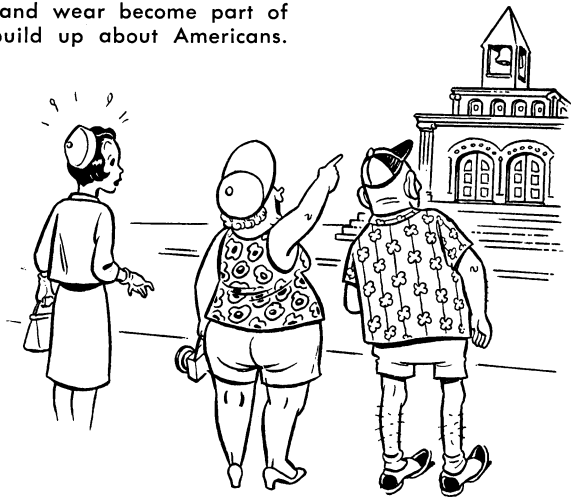
department or bookstores before you leave home, will help you know the types and values of local currency in terms of United States money. In this way, you will know what you are spending.

### **After-You-Arrive Suggestions**

When you are in a foreign country you are an ambassador of the United States. What you do, say, and wear become part of the image people of other lands build up about Americans. That is a sobering yet challenging thought. But it is true that the United States needs friends abroad and we can do our part to help make them. It may be that you will find some foreign people have an exaggerated impression of us based on lurid movies and headlined scare or strife stories. Sometimes this is accentuated, unfortunately, by the thoughtlessness or crudeness of some of our touring countrymen. Perhaps if you think of yourself as representing a typical American, you can help build an image of which you and all of us will be proud.

*Money.* One way to make friends is not to belittle the foreign money. And don't show extravagance or indifference to the money values of the local people. On the other hand, you should not be indignant if a store or a service does not want to accept United States money, especially silver coins. There may be gov-

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ernment regulations about use of foreign currency, or there may be difficulty for the recipient in exchanging our coins into their spendable coins.

*Shopping.* You may not find fabulous bargains in shopping in reputable stores for goods of similar value to those found in stores here. Look for trade-marks and signs of origin of the goods. Consider, too, the total cost of shipping purchases home. Usually the tourist association of a country will give you booklets listing reliable dealers of items that are typical of the country's crafts or customs. Keep all receipts for your purchases. For your convenience, translate the cost of these purchases into United States money for easy reference later. Know the foreign government rules and regulations about shipping goods and carrying items into and out of the country.

*Tipping.* Travel folders, tourist agencies, and travel agents in a country usually will advise you, on request, as to the range in tips expected in a country. Many foreign restaurants and hotels add a 15% (or more) service charge to a bill. This may be adequate. Of course, you are expected to tip for special services such as packages delivered to your room, errands you may request, or room service of food and other conveniences. Many tours of two or more days include in the total price the tips for luggage, meals, and guide service. This should be indicated on your ticket or on the descriptive folder for the tour. It saves annoyance and misunderstanding to know what you should and should not be expected to pay in tips.

*Travel.* On arrival or a week before your planned departure from a country, recheck on the correct departure time of the plane, train, or boat you expect to take. Travel schedules change. You should not blame American agents if you have been given incorrect information at home.



It is unfair, too, to expect to get the accommodations you want if you make last-minute changes in your plans.

When traveling in a tour group, it is courteous to try to keep to the time schedule. The straggler, the "just-one-more-picture" camera fan, or the late sleeper may upset the entire group as well as the tour director or guide.

*Dress.* Be moderate and modest in your dress. Respect local customs for street wear and for visits to churches, temples, museums, and other places open to visitors. Shorts and brief sport clothes may be accepted at resort spots but such clothes for travel and street wear make women conspicuous.

*Talk.* You'll find that many people in foreign countries understand some English. You will embarrass them if you make discourteous remarks to or about people just because you think you won't be understood. You might remember, too, that your actions may make your words understood or misunderstood. Avoid loud talk and loud laughter. Dining rooms, art galleries, and other public places are open to guests of many countries. It is unfortunate when young (or older) folk from this country attract attention and give unfavorable impressions of boldness, thoughtlessness, or crudeness.

Try to learn a few words of the native language. You may make a friend by saying "Thank you," "Good morning," or some other friendly phrase in the language of the land. Perhaps you can carry with you a phrase and pronunciation leaflet so that you can practice and try to learn a few foreign words. Most guides can speak English. However, do not expect all taxi drivers or all people in out-of-the-way places to understand your English. It doesn't help to shout or become irritated if the native people cannot understand you.



*Appreciation.* Your sincere appreciation of scenery, customs, products, history, and accomplishments of people in the countries you visit will win friends. Avoid making comparisons with people and things "back home." Of course, foreign countries and peoples are different. That is why it is fascinating to go abroad. It is a sign of immaturity and colloquialism to criticize, complain, or belittle what you see or hear on your trip.

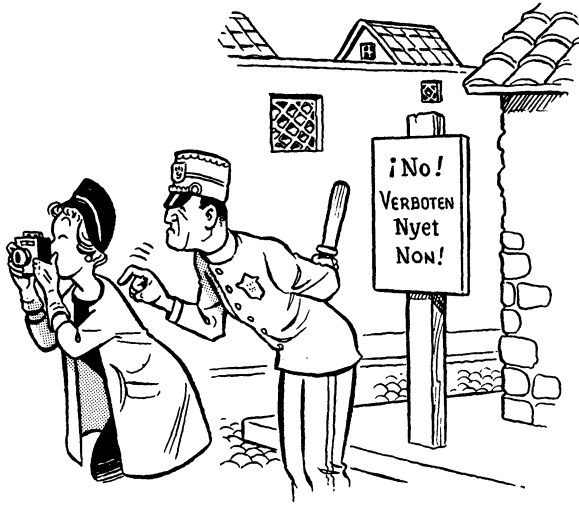
*Information.* Do try to refresh your memory about American history and be as up-to-date as you can on current events before you visit another country. You will be surprised to find how much many foreigners know about our history, our government, and our educational institutions, as well as facts about our important people, cities, and scenery. At times you may be able to correct false information about customs and practices in the United States. That is, of course, if you are sure of the facts!

Do not try to settle political, religious, or moral differences with casual acquaintances you meet. You seldom have time to convince them and you seldom have time to understand the heritage responsible for the opinions of the other persons.

Of course, you will enjoy your trip more and the people you meet will be more interesting if you have studied about the countries and their people. In most countries, you will be given descriptive folders and maps which you can study as you travel to get the historical facts and special features of the land.

*Photography.* Abide by the rules of the foreign country, city, village, building, or park concerning taking pictures. Some national regulations permit confiscation of your film if rules are violated. Regulations in some places make picture-taking a punishable offense. It may cause you needless trouble if you try to "sneak a shot." Do not take a picture of a person or persons without asking permission of the persons, a guide, or a guard. You would not like to have a foreigner snap a picture of you in your home town, especially if taken unaware in an awkward moment.

*Smile.* A smile is a universal language. Most people understand the friendship shown by a smile, a cheery "hello," a wave of the hand or perhaps a handshake. Children love to wave and smile.



Regulations in some places make picture-taking  
a punishable offense.

Your friendly attitude while traveling and living among people of other lands can make your visit so much more pleasant. It can help them understand you and other Americans. You can help establish a picture of the United States citizen as one who is friendly, and one who is eager for friendship with citizens of the world.