

Mark's Ten Tips to Make You a Smarter Traveler

1. Don't buy timeshares. Never, ever buy anything at a time share presentation. If you must, buy on the secondary market. Don't take your wallet, checkbook or credit cards to a time share presentation. Listen politely, collect your bounty, leave politely at the first opportunity. Asking questions will make you a target for more aggressive salesmanship.
2. Use your points/miles. They will never be as valuable as they are today. Witness Hilton pesos.
3. Make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after your return date when traveling overseas.
4. Allow plenty of time at airports. Many, no make that most, of the issues people have at airports are because they didn't allow enough time.
5. Join frequent stay/guest/flyer programs, it will save you time if not money. Think of it as the same as TSA Pre-Check.
6. If you fly more than 2-3 times a year, get Pre-Check. For international flyers, get Global Entry.
7. Volunteering to be bumped, or getting bumped, can be very lucrative, or a disaster. Before you volunteer, know **exactly what you are getting in return**, what it's good for and when it expires. Check for restrictions on how or where the voucher or credit can be used. **If you are involuntarily bumped, you have legal rights to compensation.**
8. Want to fly first class. Open your wallet. There's no more smiling at the gate agent and getting an upgrade, no matter what you read.
9. When your flight is cancelled, go to the app/web site and see if you have been rebooked, BEFORE standing in line or waiting on hold.
10. Be **extremely careful** using public wifi. If you travel a lot, consider monthly connections through Verizon, AT&T, etc., as they are reputed to be safer and are certainly more dependable than public wifi. As a road warrior, it's the best travel investment I make each month.

Bonus tip for Sacramento-based travelers.

11. In Sacramento, my home airport, park in the **Daily A** parking and save yourself a few dollars. It works **IF** you have plenty of time to wait for the "once-every-ten-minutes" shuttle, or are willing to make the leisurely walk into the terminal. For \$13 a day, I think it's the best bet. Cheaper than the garage and not as slow as long-term parking at SMF. My favorite place for a quick airport bite is Jack's Urban Eats in Terminal B, although this writer has admittedly not sampled them all (especially the new Terminal A choices.) Our food choices at SMF have improved significantly.

Catch The Travel Guys, Sundays at 3pm PT, KFBK 1530AM/93.1FM, KFBK.com