

LONELY PLANET'S
BEST EVER
TRAVEL
Tips

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BEST EVER

TRAVEL

BY TOM
HALL

Tips

**GET THE BEST TRAVEL
SECRETS & ADVICE FROM
THE EXPERTS**



**FIND THE BEST
VALUE DEALS**



**SCORE THAT
ELUSIVE UPGRADE**



**STAY SAFE
ON THE ROAD**

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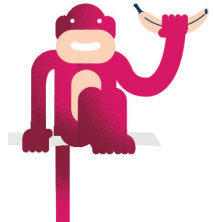
INTRODUCTION

For a travel geek, the prospect of putting together a book like this is a dream assignment: attempt to distill all the important travel knowledge in the world into 50 individual, bitesized tips. While making sure they're not too obvious – 'don't sit in the sun until you turn the colour of a lobster' is not much of a tip – there's also a need to avoid topics that are too obscure, so there are no guidelines here on how to pilot a husky or map the backwaters of Pohnpei's lagoon canals.

The aim is to pass on universal advice that you can take with you wherever in the world you go

One way to approach this challenge is to break the world of travel into various subjects, and find an expert who can talk knowledgeably about each one. We've spoken to several dozen seriously clued-up travel experts about everything from technology to adventure, and urban exploration to connecting with local people and other travellers. The aim with *Best Ever Travel Tips* is to pass on universal advice that you can take with you wherever in the world you go, and whatever budget you travel at. And if we pass on a trade secret or two then we, and we're sure you, won't mind at all.

Tom Hall



TOP

50

TRAVEL TIPS

1

GROUND WORK

THE BEST TIME TO BOOK FLIGHTS TO GET THE BEST RATES

FAQs for beating the system

When do tickets go on sale for flights?

Usually, 11 months in advance. Reasons for this are arcane and historical – in the days of printed seat plans, airlines wanted to avoid booking people on to the right plane, on the right day, in the wrong year.

So should you charge in and book almost a year ahead?

Not normally. Airlines can (and often do) update fares every hour using complex algorithms. This is the dark art of yield management – trying to get the fullest planes, with passengers paying as much as possible for every seat.

So when is the best time?

There are certain broad trends: on average the best time is five weeks before travel. If you have time it can pay to watch your route carefully and educate yourself about when cheaper seats are generally available – varying day of departure and time of day can make a big difference.

What about if you're flying at a very busy time, like over Christmas?

This may be the time to book very early: all fare classes will be available, and you should score a price that won't be beatable nearer the time. You'll also ensure you get a seat on the plane you want.

Filip Filipov, Head of B2B, Skyscanner



2

GROUND WORK

ALWAYS GET THE BEST PRICE ON AN AIRLINE SEAT

How to bag a bargain in an airline sale

When the need to fill seats meets the recent explosion in capacity on key international routes – driven by recent expansion by Middle Eastern and Asian carriers – passengers can, in theory, pick up great deals on seat sales.

1 ‘As a general rule carriers will have a January sale and a September sale,’ says Stuart Lodge from roundtheworldflights.com. ‘Airlines are trying to fill seats for the next “shoulder season” – March to May for the first sale, and October and November in the second. Sales aren’t unheard of outside this time, but they’re certainly less frequent.’

2 If you’re travelling during school holidays or other peak periods, there’s no point waiting for a sale – you just won’t get the deals.

3 By definition, seat sales target routes with sluggish sales. A high-demand, low capacity route is less likely to feature in a sale.

4 Airlines often follow each other’s lead in sales, which can cause domino effects in discounting. It’s not unusual to have half a dozen airlines on sale at once.

5 Sign up for email alerts and social media accounts from airlines to find out about sales. This is generally how airlines announce sales.



3

GROUND WORK

BAG THE ULTIMATE ROUND-THE-WORLD TICKET

Stuart Lodge from roundtheworldflights.com offers tips for getting the most from the biggest ticket you can buy

Decide to go

Travel between mid-April and June to get the best prices, or at least avoid peak travel times – July, August, December and January. By travelling east to west at this time you'll also follow the best weather around the world.

Decide where

Most people structure their trip around two or three of their must-see destinations. Be aware that adding South America generally adds complexity and cost.

Know the rules

Most people make several changes after their initial booking. Flexible tickets cost more at

purchase, but will save you money in the long term.

Know when not to use your ticket

Some countries, such as Indonesia and many places in South America, are popular without being well-served by RTW tickets. In these cases it's cheaper and easier to get to a nearby hub and hop on a low-cost flight, then rejoin your RTW later.

Land ho

Open sections of RTW tickets allow for a mammoth train ride to see the world from ground level. If you're finding the trail well-worn, deviate from the norm by drawing a 'v' rather than a straight line between a and b.