



Making Air Travel A Breeze: Enjoying The Ride

So, you've made it through security and are ready to get your vacation under way. Unfortunately, you still have a long flight to sit through. Yet, flying doesn't have to be a miserable experience – even if you are traveling with children. Here are some travel tips to help your whole family enjoy your time in the air.

As “airline food” isn't exactly a mouthwatering phrase, it is a good idea to pack some food in your carry-on bag. While it may be difficult to pack an entire meal, there are plenty of healthy snacks that can fight your hunger. Start with healthy items like dried fruit and granola. If you are looking for a little more protein, add some jerky to your bag. If you have plenty of healthy options in your bag, you can more easily resist the urge to munch on the less-healthy fare aboard the flight.

Keep in mind that the air inside of airplane cabins is always very dry. As a result, you might experience a thirst that can't be quenched by the irregular, less than generous drink service. An extra bottle of water or juice in your carry-on bag can go a long ways towards eliminating this discomfort.

If you are one of the many who experience motion sickness, consider taking a pill before boarding the plane. For international flights to the Caribbean or elsewhere, a motion sickness medication may also help you to sleep through much of the flight, allowing you to awake rested and relaxed at your destination.

You have to try your best to relax. Everyone has a different outlet for relaxation, so here is a list of activities to keep your stress at a minimum – whatever your interests may be:

- If you have a laptop computer, you can easily listen to music, watch DVDs or even get

some work done. Just make sure you charge your batteries before flying.

- While MP3 players are nice, you don't need the newest gadget to zone out airplane noise. You can plug noise-canceling headphones into any type of portable music player.
- Books and magazines are great ways to pass the time. If you find the noise irritating, you could even put on noise-canceling headphones without music and eliminate most distractions.
- Simple games like crosswords and sudokus can alleviate stress and exercise your mind.

One of the best tips for air travel with children is to secure seats in the front row of the cabin. In the front row of seats, your family will be granted some extra space and privacy – luxuries that are especially helpful when flying with infants or toddlers. If you have toddlers, you should also find it easier to let your children play, stretch or wander a little at the front of the aircraft.

When flying with children internationally, most travel professionals recommend non-stop flights. Non-stop flights can be helpful as they allow your children to sleep uninterrupted and prevent potentially stressful hours of flight changes. Additionally, your kids will certainly be happy to arrive at your vacation destination as soon as possible. However, there are some benefits to taking breaks between flights. For instance, if you are flying to the Caribbean from the northern U.S., your children might become impatient on such a long flight. With a brief layover in a southern city, you can relieve some of your family's stress from being cooped up for a whole day. A break between flights will also allow you to pick up snacks and drinks, while your children can stretch and walk around freely for a little while.

You should also make sure that you pack all the things your children might need in a carry-on bag. This includes everything from food and medications to extra clothing and a blanket. Older children will probably be entertained by many of the items on the adult list above, but also consider packing items like stuffed animals and art materials. You should try to avoid toys with small parts – such as board games, building blocks and model kits – and your child's noisier playthings.

If all else fails, just remind your family that you are all en route to a wonderful Caribbean vacation.

About the Author:

Justin Burch writes articles about Curacao(<http://www.paradisebymarriott.com/destinations/curacao.htm>)for the Marriott Resorts.

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