

Book with an Ontario registered travel agency.

Whether in person, by telephone or over the Internet, always make sure you purchase your travel services from a TICO registered travel agency. You can always check to see if your travel agency is registered with TICO by going to www.tico.ca and use the Travel Agency Search feature. Booking your travel services from a TICO registered travel agency ensures you are protected by the consumer protection provisions under the Ontario *Travel Industry Act, 2002* which includes an industry financed Travel Compensation Fund.

Do some research and ask questions.

Part of the fun of a vacation lies in making plans, so get involved. If you are not familiar with a particular destination, the Internet can be a great resource for information. You could also check to see if the TICO registered travel agency has some information online about your destination to help you make the right decision. Alternatively, you may wish to check the website of the tourist board for that particular destination or check your local library for information. Always remember that different standards of living and practices may exist outside of Canada. Ask your friends and your travel agent about possible vacation spots they could recommend and whether they were satisfied with the trip. First-hand references are hard to beat but only you know what you really want out of your holiday time.

Purchase travel insurance.

Travel insurance is always recommended. Ontario travel agencies are also required to offer trip cancellation insurance and out-of-province health insurance at the time of the booking. Your receipt from the travel agency must specify whether or not this insurance has been purchased or declined, if the travel agency sells insurance. For more information and tips see the Travel Health Insurance Association's (THiA) Canadian Traveller Insurance Guide - [click here](#)

Know the terms and conditions of your booking.

Before you confirm your travel services online, or confirm your travel services with your travel agent, make sure you read and/or understand the Terms and Conditions of the travel services being purchased. Your travel agent is required to disclose the terms and conditions with you at the time of booking. Make sure that you review the terms and conditions, particularly those that relate to cancellation, changes to

bookings and refundability.

Get a Receipt.

Your Ontario travel agency is required to provide you with a receipt / invoice for all payment transactions, especially when paying in cash. When you are purchasing travel services online, it is recommended that you keep a paper copy of all transactions, correspondence, confirmations and anything else related to your online booking such as the description of your hotel and the services and amenities to be included. This is proof of your online booking. The receipt/invoice must outline details of the travel services that you have purchased. Always retain all original documents including receipts, invoices, returned cheques, credit card slips, credit card statements, in case you need to refer back to them.

Passports and Visas

Your Ontario travel agency is required to disclose to you at the time of booking what travel documentation is required for each person travelling. Make sure you talk to your travel agent about the travel documentation that will be required for your trip. Many countries require visitors to have passports, visas or other documents such as health certificates and vaccinations. Make sure to check your passports and any other travel documentation to ensure they have not expired. To avoid disappointment, don't wait until the last minute to apply for your travel documentation.

Make Copies.

In case of loss or theft, make copies of your passport details, visa, insurance policy, airline tickets and credit card numbers. Carry one copy in a different place than the originals while travelling and leave a copy with someone at home.

Dates, Times and Flight Numbers.

Your travel agent is required to check all tickets and travel documents for accuracy before giving them to you but it's a good idea to go over them yourself. The day before your flight leaves, check the airline's website departure information page to confirm the departure times for your flight(s) and find out how early you should plan to arrive at the airport. For security reasons, check-in times for some flights may be as much as two or three hours before departure. Check

the applicable airline or the airport's website departure information page before you leave to make sure your flight is departing on time. This should also be done for your return travel arrangements. For more Travel Tips for travelling by air - review the Canadian Transportation Agency's [Fly Smart](#) tips.

Luggage.

Clearly label all baggage with your name and home address and contact information. Also place identification tag inside your baggage in the event the tag on the outside is torn off. Be sure bags are locked. Put a colourful ribbon or other identifying mark on your bags so they are easily recognized. Carry jewelry, money, medications, important documents, and all other valuables in your hand luggage. It is recommended that laptops, tablets and other electronic devices be included in your carry-on bag. Keep in mind, each air carrier has a different policy with respect to the number of bags and the weight allowed. To avoid disappointment or any additional fees, be sure to contact your travel agent or visit the air carrier's website to review the luggage policy.

Tips on Packing.

Ask your travel agent or your airline what, if any, security requirements there are on carry-on and checked baggage. For example, there may be prohibited items such as gels and liquids. Also, consider that there may be baggage restrictions that limit the number of bags that you are permitted. Weight restrictions also may apply. These limitations vary from airline to airline. Find out what the weather is usually like during the time of your visit. Don't assume because you are going south that it will be hot. Most places have seasonal temperature changes and rainy months. It is also a good idea to learn about the country's lifestyle and dress code. Shorts and bathing suits are not considered appropriate attire in some places.

Most often forgotten item: toothbrush

Most needed item: jeans

Most enjoyed item: bathing suit

Most comfortable item: cotton T-shirt

Most missed item: bathroom tissue

Most longed for item: soap

Most comforting: raincoat

Personal Security.

When traveling, always consider the following:

- don't display expensive jewelry
- keep your valuables well concealed
- hitch-hiking is extremely risky
- be aware of safety issues when choosing your accommodation.
Avoid rooms with easy access from the outside.