

TRAVEL
SLEUTH BY JANE STOKES

50 WAYS
TO KEEP MONEY
IN YOUR POCKET



CANADIANS ARE A POPULATION OF 33 MILLION AND WE TAKE, ON AVERAGE, 50 MILLION TRIPS ABROAD EVERY YEAR.

We are indeed inquisitive beyond and within our borders, and while our national economy seems to be rebounding more steadily than most, it is true that so much of the world's hospitality, including Canada's, is still in a gigantic discount sale.

This is the time to bargain with luxury hotels in major cities, to bask in the Florida, Caribbean or Mexican sunshine—and certainly to research, comparison shop and clip out articles like this one with tips on plugging the holes in your wallet every step of the way.

RESORTS

1. Buy an all-inclusive package from a licensed Canadian tour operator to take control of destination spending.
2. Sun destinations are cheaper immediately after New Year, April, May, early June, September through mid-December.
3. Buy a last-minute package if you aren't too particular. Get opinions online from sites like TripAdvisor.com.
4. Pay attention to special promotions, like Wild Wednesday, in which various package deals at sunwing.ca are posted online at deeply discounted prices, for just one day, every week.
5. Family travel competes for your business so shop around for "kids stay and eat free" offers.
6. Ask to be on a travel agent's tip list for discounted opportunities. Stay loyal to get the best.
7. When abroad, check and compare local travel deals. For example, a week in Spain or Greece can be really inexpensive from Manchester. Same with a cruise to the Caribbean from Miami.

TRANSPORTATION

8. For U.S. destinations, compare the cost of flying out of a border city.
9. For Canadian destinations, wait for airline seat sales and act fast.
10. For international destinations, travel during the shoulder and low season for savings up to 50 per cent.
11. Ask a travel agent about deeply discounted consolidator air tickets, especially for overseas. Service charges apply but time and service can be valuable.
12. Domestic airfares are usually cheaper if you depart mid-week and stay a Saturday night.
13. Use an air miles/loyalty program for freebies. Be flexible to get the best deals.



14. Pack light and avoid “extra luggage” and “overweight” air travel surcharges.
15. Missing a flight can be costly. Give yourself plenty of time at the airport.
16. Book air reservations early. Prices typically go up 21, 14 and three days before flying. For overseas flights, book ahead three to six months.
17. Buy last-minute air deals if you can stand the suspense. Sign up for airline emails announcing deals.
18. Bargain for car rental rates.
19. Gas-saving hybrid cars can be rented. Ask for one.
20. Domestic train travel offers seasonal deals for companions, kids and seniors.
21. Bring your bicycles.
22. If you're over 55 or under 25, always ask, at every price point, about senior, youth and student discounts.



ACCOMMODATION

23. Deals abound online if you recognize and trust the seller.
24. Learn about the travel perks of your credit card.
25. Big city hotels often offer weekend deals to tourists. Always ask if a quoted rate includes service surcharges.
26. Phone hotels directly to bargain for a better rate. Say “that’s beyond my budget?” and/or “is that the best you can do?”

opposite, top: Golf in the beautiful islands of Hawaii. Kapalua Resort, Maui
opposite, bottom: The strength of our Canadian dollar makes travel to Britain more affordable than ever. Visit Britain Images

above: Many cruise line companies are offering great deals this winter. CLIA/Crystal Cruises

When life calls for an intermission ... answer with a change of scenery.

Have you yet experienced the thrill of a live steel orchestral performance? Or danced on the beach to the songs of your favourite musician? Perhaps you dream of dining on exotic Caribbean cuisine with a unique international twist while taking in a panoramic ocean view. In Antigua and Barbuda, a night out can mean anything from open-air concerts and culinary festivals to the spellbinding passion of Carnival. We invite you to venture beyond the ordinary and encounter a culture so rich and authentic that you'll think twice about ever going home.

**ANTIGUA
AND
BARBUDA**

The beach is just the beginning...

Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Office

60 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 601, Toronto,
 Ontario M4T 1N5 Tel: **416-961-3085**
info@antigua-barbuda-ca.com www.antigua-barbuda.ca





above: Snorkel off the coast of Cozumel in Mexico. Mexico Tourism Board
opposite: Plan a family getaway to Florida this winter. Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

27. Rent a cottage, condo or self-catering accommodation to save meal costs.
28. Book a private room on a college campus during the summer.
29. Stay in a hostel if all you want is a bed and if you like people.
30. Camp. Facilities are available worldwide.
31. Let the travel seller come to you on the Internet. Post your requirements/budget and ask for responses within a time limit. Start with services like respond.com. Strict guidelines protect you, but remember to calculate in Canadian dollars.
32. Hotels usually offer discounts to members of clubs, organizations and corporations, like auto clubs, snowbirds, veterans, etc.
33. Suburban hotels are cheaper than downtown, as long as you keep the cost of transit in mind.

MONEY MATTERS

34. Carry minimal cash. Use local ATM machines and credit cards. Avoid the surcharges of local money services.
35. Drop by the local visitor centres to find out about tourist discounts, often in the form of coupons.
36. Avoid pricey hotel phone charges by using public phones with a local phone card.
37. Get the roaming charges waived on your cell phone before leaving home.
38. Don't buy more travel insurance than you need. Check with your insurance company about auto, health and personal property coverage.

Magnificent sailing for isles

CARIBBEAN

Photo Credit: www.insandoutsofsvg.com

Sail the unspoiled habitat of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Enjoy pristine scenery in the Caribbean with tropical *ST. VINCENT, YOUNG ISLAND, BEQUIA, MUSTIQUE, CANOUAN, MAYREAU*, Visit www.discoversvg.com, call 416-630-9292

39. If you're leaving your province, buy supplementary health insurance if you don't have it, even for vacations in Canada.

MEALS

40. Don't tip twice in restaurants. The menu should tell you if service charges are included.
41. Reduce meal expenses by eating your main daily meal at lunchtime instead of higher priced dinnertime.
42. Breakfasts are typically cheaper at coffee shops than city hotels. Or, book accommodation that includes a complimentary breakfast.

DESTINATIONS

43. The U.S. is still recession-weary so accommodation may be reduced from 10 to 50 per cent. Too many hotels with too many empty rooms spell bargain power for visitors.
44. Visit Florida. Clinch an airline seat sale, book your accommodation directly, research the attraction discounts for the least expensive Florida vacation you've had in years.
45. Travel to Hawaii and other dream destinations. Deals like those at the Outrigger properties on Waikiki Beach start at US\$79 per night. While our dollar is strong go to New Zealand, Australia or India. Or to Iceland, where most hotels are half price.



46. Travel to Mexico. With fewer American tourists, they are eager to deal.
47. Cruise, especially from U.S. ports. Too many ships with too many empty cabins translate into savings for you.
48. Travel to the Caribbean islands. This is the year to comparison shop. Half-filled hotels in the Caribbean may give you a better deal than tour operator packages.
49. Travel to Britain where our dollar is currently buying the Pound Sterling for 23 per cent less, making everything more affordable than it's been for decades.
50. Travel to Eastern Europe while the deals last, including culturally rich Poland, Czech Republic, Croatia and Latvia. ■

and isles and isles...

The 32 islands and cays of St. Vincent and the Grenadines



ST. VINCENT
& THE GRENADINES

The Caribbean you're looking for

2005 Best Caribbean Sailing
& Yachting Island of the Year
by Caribbean Travel World Awards

landscapes, a spectacular volcano and great hotels. Return home, determined to come back again and again...
TOBAGO CAYS, UNION ISLAND, PALM ISLAND AND PETIT ST. VINCENT
or email svgta@discoversvg.com