

Preparing for your trip

Below are a number of things that are a good idea to do or give some thought to while preparing for your trip.

- When making airline reservations with layovers at major US cities be sure to allow 2.5 hours or more between flights. Going through security and customs can easily take 1.5 to 2 hours and you could miss your connecting flight especially if your arrival flight was delayed. Sometimes even with Global Entry it could take a while just to get into the correct line for speedier access.
- Have emergency contact information for yourself and anyone traveling with you and if traveling with a group, make sure the group leader has the info.
- You are encouraged to sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. This is a free service provided by the U.S. State Department. You can register online at <http://step.state.gov> or through a link at www.travel.state.gov . It only takes a few moments and can be of immense help during a crisis.
- The Global Entry program is another excellent way to save time and expedite clearance upon arrival in the United States through the use of special lines and automatic kiosks at selected airports and you get TSA Pre check with it. It is for pre-approved, low-risk travelers and the program is run by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). It costs \$100.00 for 5 years and you can find out all about it at this link- <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry>
- Have extra numbers written down as well as saved in your cellphone with key contact numbers.
- If needed, be sure your cellphone is set up to make international calls and check it on arrival to the country to make sure it actually will work.
- Inside each suitcase (including carry on), put a large paper with your name, address and telephone number of the place where you will be staying, flight number, dates of travel along with contact info for yourself.
- It is important that you have copies of your passports and leave a copy with a family member or trusted friend back home.
- Take pictures of any certification cards or important documents you might need with your cellphone so they are easily accessible.
- Along with leaving copies of passports behind, The State Department recommends that each traveler leave a copy of their itinerary, airline tickets, driver's license, serial number of any traveler checks and the credit cards they plan to take. Leave a copy of each with a family member or trusted friend and take another copy packed separately from the originals on the trip.
- Make sure to have or set up a pin number for a credit card you wish to use for your travels. Your ATM card may not be useable with certain ATM machines and some ATM machines will only accept credit cards using a PIN number. Call your bank to set this up and to notify them of your travel plans before your trip so they will not stop your card from being used when you need it.
- If you have any medications that are vital to your health, it is highly recommended to take more than is required for the duration of the trip. In the case of a crisis that delays your return home, you probably will not have access to a pharmacy.
- You are encouraged to sign up for dive accident insurance with either DAN or DiveAssure if you have not yet done so. Most medical insurance companies do not cover dive accidents and the expenses that will go with one. You can check out the Channel Islands Dive Adventures website for more information on either DAN or DiveAssure. The same goes for travel insurance.