

# How to Plan Your Next Genealogy Trip

Barry J. Ewell  
[Bj57barry@msn.com](mailto:Bj57barry@msn.com)

Last Edit: August 6, 2007

<b>INDEX</b>	<b>Page</b>
<a href="#">Introduction</a>	3
<a href="#">Begin the Planning Process</a>	4
1. Setting realistic goals for your genealogy research trip.	4
2. Use the genealogical message boards to learn from fellow researchers.	5
3. Travel websites, books and maps to research.	6
4. Should I use a “Travel agent” or “do-it-yourself” in planning a genealogy trip?	7
5. How to choose a good travel agent.	8
<a href="#">Organizing Plans and Scheduling Reservations</a>	10
1. 50/50 Rule for planning genealogy trips.	10
2. What do people do on genealogy trips?	10
3. Plan to have a “base of operations.	11
4. Start scheduling reservations for your trip 3-4 months in advance.	11
5. Consider hiring a researcher who speaks the language.	11
6. Plan for your family when you are in the library.	12
7. Plan local transportation.	12
8. Phone cards are a must as a backup to a cell phone.	13
9. Traveler Checks versus ATM.	13
<a href="#">Organizing your Research Priorities</a>	14
1. What research can you do from home?	14
2. Review your records before you go on your trip.	14
3. What kind of records can’t be found at home?	14
4. Questions to ask that can yield treasures.	14
5. Determine what resources are available in that area.	15
6. Determine what type of information you seek.	15
7. Make advance contact—establish a rapport.	16
8. Whenever possible, let people know you are coming and when.	17
9. Know the times of operation.	17
10. Be patient when requesting records.	17
11. Planning to visit the library/archive.	17
12. Where is the best place to get information?	18
13. Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.	18
<a href="#">Conducting Research During Your Genealogy Trip</a>	20
1. Keep a travel journal during your trip.	20

2. Learn about local history.	20
3. Searching for Your Ancestors Original Places of Residence.	21
4. Searching libraries and archives in countries.	21
5. Searching graveyards during your trip.	22
6. Photographing at the cemetery/graveyard.	22
7. Consider using your camera in your library, archive, and museum research.	24
8. Photographing in libraries.	25
9. Photographing museums and archives.	25
10. Photographing Microfilm.	25
<b>Priorities After Your Genealogy Trip</b>	<b>27</b>
1. Take time to organize, catalog, and share your findings after your trip.	27
<b>Genealogy Checklist</b>	<b>29</b>
1. Travel Checklist for your Genealogy Trip.	29
2. Digital Camera with Built-in Flash.	29
3. Laptop with DVD/CD Burner.	29
4. Cell Phone with Key Call Numbers Stored into Database/Memory.	30
5. Scanner/Camera Support Software.	30
6. Audio Micro Cassette Recorder to Record Thoughts or Interview Persons.	30
7. Research Folder.	30
8. Scanner.	31
9. Necessary Clothes.	31
10. Emergency Food for When You Can't Leave the Research Work.	31
11. Larger Padded Carrying Case.	31
12. Hard-shelled Suitcase.	31
13. Mapping Program.	31
14. Research Resources.	32
15. Library Research Helps.	32
16. Cemetery Research Helps	33
17. Miscellaneous.	34
18. Extra Notes.	34
<b>Personal Checklist</b>	<b>35</b>
1. What to Pack.	35
2. Optional Bring-Alongs.	38
3. Packing List for Women.	41

# How to Plan Your Next Genealogy Trip

Barry J. Ewell  
[bj57barry@msn.com](mailto:bj57barry@msn.com)

Last Edit: August 6, 2007

**Course Description:** Whether you are planning a ½ day or multiple week research trip, careful planning will enrich and increase your success. Learn essential planning techniques, set realistic goals, and identify tools and resources to assist in research acquisition and reducing your out-of-pocket expense.

## Introduction

No matter where I have traveled to visit the lands of ancestors, I always come away with a clearer picture of who they are and who I am. I learn simple answers to what seemed unanswerable questions. Why did our progenitor get baptized in a neighboring parish, rather than the one she lived in? Well she was born in winter and the other church was closer. Talking to the locals has always been valuable, if only learning how to pronounce names correctly.

Whether you are planning a half-day, day, week or month long genealogy research trip, care and preparation in your planning will enrich and enhance your opportunities to successfully prioritize and accomplish your goals. The focus of the article will be those topics that are unique or important to the genealogist in planning a trip.

I have done my best to provide you information based on my own experiences and those experiences other genealogists have shared with me. And I have provided starting points to help you research and plan trips. The disclaimer is that it's my opinion. My intent is to share with you a few ideas and insights that will help make some portion of your genealogy trip a little more productive, cost effective, and enjoyable.

## **Begin the Planning Process**

### **1. Setting realistic goals for your genealogy research trip.**

If you are going to spend a half-day traveling across town to interview a family member, a full day traveling to a cemetery 200 miles to take pictures of family headstones or spending several weeks abroad searching your family roots, having clearly defined goals will determine your ability to focus on desired outcomes for your research. Being able to state your goals will require research, preparation and prioritization. For example, I recently spoke with a couple who desired a little assistance preparing for a genealogy trip abroad. When I asked what their goals were for the trip, they replied with one goal:

We want to visit the village where our family lived in Wales.

For the next couple of hours, we spend time taking inventory of what they knew, what you wanted to know, and what else they might want to do while in Wales. We discussed questions like:

1. Where did the family live in Wales and when?
2. What do you know about:
  - a. Wales?
  - b. The region where your family lived?
  - c. The village where your family lived?
3. When did the family come to America?
4. Who in the family came to America?
5. When and where were they born?
6. Where and when did family die?
7. Did they leave any family in Wales?
8. What did the father do for a living?
9. What was the religion of the family?
10. What brought the family to America?
11. Where were the parents married?
12. What ship did they come on and from what port?
13. What do you wish to know about your family?

The couple pulled out family histories, family group sheets, and other documents that would help answer the questions. We did an internet search on Wales and related topics. When we were done we had a few more ideas of what they might like to do on their trip. For example:

1. We want to
  - a. Visit the city of Swansea in Wales.
  - b. Visit the church where our family attended church.
  - c. Find where members of our family are buried.
  - d. Learn about the history of Swansea.
  - e. Find out if the family had other children/family that stayed in Wales.
  - f. Find out who the parents and family of the wife were.

- g. Learn about coal mining in Swansea and the area.
- h. Learn about the culture in Swansea in 1840s.
- i. Learn what would have caused family to leave Wales.
- j. Learn about common foods of Wales and Swansea.
- k. Take a tour of Glamorganshire.

Of course, like any good genealogy researcher, one answer often leads to several more questions that needed answers before they could finalize their plans for a genealogy trip to Wales. Their pre trip preparation would range from conducting further genealogy in the United States to identifying research resources in the country. They would be learning more about Wales and its history, identifying places to see and visit, evaluating options to participate in organized tours and discovering Wales on their own.

## **2. Use the genealogical message boards to learn from fellow researchers.**

In planning for one of my desired trips, I posted a short message on one of the genealogical message boards seeking help in planning a forthcoming trip abroad. Within hours and for the next week, I received very insightful hints and direction from persons who lived in the area or who had gone before on trips such as I was planning. Some persons replied directly to the message boards, others sent an email directly to me. Thoughts ranged from where to conduct my research, where to stay and eat, where I would most likely find graves of my family and insights on personal genealogy.

The following is an example of the message I posted under the country board Scotland and county message boards for Angus/Forfar, Fife, and Lanarkshire:

Subject Line:

Planning a Genealogical Research Vacation to Angus/Forfar, Fife, Lanarkshire, Scotland

Message:

I am planning a 2-3 week family history trip to Scotland with a focus on visiting

1. Dundee, Angus/Forfar, Scotland  
Surnames: Boyter, Spence, Thomas
2. Balmerino, Fife, Scotland  
Surnames: Boyter, Surnames
3. Saint Vigean, Angus, Scotland  
Surnames: Neill, Dinsmore Kennedy, Surnames
4. Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Scotland  
Surnames: Yule, Ewell, Surnames

During my trip, I am looking to accomplish the following:

- Visit the lands and cities of my ancestors.
- Find clues that will help me better focus my overall family research.

- Seek to identify records that may exist which I can't find on line or order from the Family History Center in Salt Lake City.
- Better understand the culture and people in which my ancestors lived.
- Perhaps identify family that may live there.
- Spend time visiting some of the "tourist sites."

This will most likely be a once-in-a-life-time trip. I am looking for answers to any or all of the following questions:

1. What are real expectations I should have about organizing a family history trip?
2. What do you consider to be important considerations in planning for such a trip?
3. What are the pros/cons of such a trip?
4. From a genealogy perspective, "What can I really hope to accomplish?"
5. What parts of the trip did you organize yourself? What parts did you have a travel agent do?
6. Is there a website/book that helped you plan?
7. Are there country research sources you found that were not available otherwise? Suggestions?
8. What are the little details that can make or break the trip?

### **3. Travel websites, books and maps to research**

Travel topics are too many to cover in the scope of this writing. The following are a few websites that you might consider as the beginning point of your search:

1. [www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/tips\\_menu.htm](http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/tips_menu.htm)
2. [www.freetraveltips.com](http://www.freetraveltips.com)
3. [www.tsa.gov/public/interapp/editorial/editorial\\_1254.xml](http://www.tsa.gov/public/interapp/editorial/editorial_1254.xml)
4. [www.worldtraveltips.net](http://www.worldtraveltips.net)
5. [www.bbc.co.uk/holiday/tips/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/holiday/tips/)
6. [www.traveltip.org/](http://www.traveltip.org/)
7. [www.state.gov/travelandbusiness/](http://www.state.gov/travelandbusiness/)
8. [www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/)
9. [www.familytravelguides.com/](http://www.familytravelguides.com/)
10. [www.msnbc.msn.com/id/7394115/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/7394115/)
11. [www.ehow.com/list\\_1080.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_1080.html)

In addition to online resources, don't forget to search resources such as your local bookstore and Amazon.com for travel books and maps of your destination. I tend to like Amazon.com because I can review what others have to say about the resources. Some of the book series that are used most often include:

- Dummies Travel
- Fodor's
- Frommers

- Rick Steve's Series

Members of AAA can take advantage of the free travel books and great maps. There are also extra services associated with the membership.

#### **4. Should I use a “Travel agent” or “do-it-yourself” in planning a genealogy trip?**

If your question is should I use a travel agent or should I do it myself? The answer is both. Planning a genealogy trip is a very custom program designed just for you and unless you've been to the location you are traveling at least once, you are more than likely going to need the help and services of a travel agent.

A good place to start your search is online. Almost every country, state, county/province, and city has a web page providing insights to services, places to see, and how to start your research. You will also come across sites dedicated to promoting travel that are very helpful. You will find special events, festivals, hours and days of operation, and so forth that will help define your schedule.

One of the more helpful web searches I have found have been looking at package trips run by tour operators to countries and regions where I have an interest. I see the hotels, sites, etc. that they include in their trips. It helps me see what the “highlights” are.

Genealogy travel is a growing business in the travel industry. It's worth your time in checking to see if there are websites dedicated to organizing genealogy related travel to your area of focus. These sites usually have persons who are experienced genealogists who support and lead trips.

Once I gain a sense of what to expect, I then make an enquiry of several travel agents who specialize in travel and/or genealogy in that country/region of the world. I tell them what I am seeking to do and the areas I would like to visit. I start with email and then by phone for follow-up discussions. These exchanges help me to organize how I want to approach my itinerary from establishing a “base of operations” to which tourist sites I want to see. I have found the travel agent to be very helpful in working with me to sort out how best to use their services and what to do on my own.

It pays to use a travel agent only if you know a good one. A good travel agent will know when a small change in your schedule can save you a lot of money. If you buy direct from the airline, you may not find out such information, since they will only quote you the rates for the times you ask. So if you're going to use a travel agent, make sure that you find one who is willing (and able) to search through the morass of fares and restrictions to find a good deal for you. A travel agent who just punches your data into the computer and tells you the prices is no better than the airline's 800 number. A good travel agent can probably save you about 10-15%.

If you want a travel agent to work hard and well for you, you need to explain to them that you are indeed seriously committed to dealing with them and their agency, and that their

time and effort spent researching travel products for you will indeed be rewarded by your subsequent purchase of travel through them.

These days travel agents can spot a 'shopper' a mile away - a person that picks their brains for free advice, but who does not reward the free advice with their business.

Expect to pay a good travel agent for their time, advice, and assistance.

I usually end up using the travel agent to book important cornerstones of my trip such as flights, hotel rooms, auto/travel passes for rail. The little extra cost I may pay for working with the travel agent is well worth their expertise and service helping me to organize and manage my trip. If you run into problems with any aspect of your travel before, during, and after your trip (...and it will happen), you have one number to call and person/team who are there to help you. What problems you may ask, for starters, flights are delayed, hotel is under renovation, you choose to extend your stay in a specific city, are a number of situations. The travel agent has all my key information which includes credit card numbers, phone numbers, preferences in hotels, seat selection on airlines, and general itinerary should someone need to get in touch with me.

### **5. How to choose a good travel agent**

Approach the selection of a travel agent with the same care you'd exercise when you choose your doctor, lawyer, or any other long-term professional adviser. After all, the right travel agent should know both your financial wherewithal and your physical abilities and also share your tastes and sensibilities. The expert travel agent should even have an in-depth knowledge of your favorite destinations. Consider the following:

1. Make a list of your own travel preferences and the services you expect from a travel agent. Do you want an adviser who'll give you personal recommendations? Or would you prefer a clerk who follows your instruction and then processes your tickets and reservations?
2. Interview any travel agent you're considering. (See suggestions below) If possible, visit the offices, and talk with the agent you'd use. Ask specific questions to help formulate your opinion about an agent's judgment and expertise. For example, solicit comments on a hotel or a destination you know well.
3. Check out the agency: does it have a reservations computer to search out the lowest airfares? Does it have preferred relationships with particular suppliers and tour operators, and do you like doing business with those suppliers? Does the agency work with hotel or airline consolidators? Does it have an after-hours help line?
4. Before deciding, ask the agency to price and package a vacation for you. Then do some comparison shopping. How do its recommendations and prices stack up against the competitions? And how fast did the agency work? The agent who offers the best combination of quality, price, and service is probably the one you should use.

The best way to find a good travel agent is by word of mouth recommendation. Solicit references from friends and family who know your desires and from travelers whose tastes and judgment are similar to yours. Ask how they use their travel agent and in what capacity. Ask the secretaries where you work for recommendations. Note that most people will recommend a particular agent-don't assume that every agent who works at that agent's travel agency is as good. Don't be afraid to ask for the recommended agent by name. Most people tend to use the travel agent that is closest to where they work or live. If you don't like the service you're getting, try a different agent.

If you are interested in reviewing travel agents that specialize in genealogy trips, start your Google search with the words "Genealogy Travel."

Even if you need an agent only to write a ticket you've booked yourself, it helps to have one with whom you can communicate.

Be aware that travel agents specialize on either a type of customer or type of travel. The major areas of specialization are business and leisure travel. While every accredited agency has the authority to book any kind of travel, leisure agencies specialize in cruises, charters, low airfares, or up-scale resorts. The advertising in local media reveals much about an agency's area of expertise.

A good travel agent will become familiar with your travel preferences, and keep track of your frequent flyer numbers and any special requirements, such as special meals, seat selection (window/aisle), etc. They'll let you know if changing your itinerary slightly will result in a lower fare. They'll also advise you of any changes made by the airline on your tickets, by calling you, or if they can't reach you, by mail.

## **Organizing Plans and Scheduling Reservations**

### **1. 50/50 Rule for planning genealogy trips**

The best counsel anyone gave me about planning a genealogy trip was:

“Plan 50% of your trip before you go.

“Plan the other 50% when you get there.”

It's important to know where you will be each day of your trip, but don't plan it so tightly that you can't take advantage of opportunities to do things that interest you. If you are going to be doing research in libraries and archives while on your trip, a rule of thumb that many genealogists have stated was to allow 1 day of research for every 3 days of your trip.

Don't forget to stop and smell the flowers, even if they're in a churchyard! See, hear, breathe and smell the place. Maybe you won't get to take in the concert at the local cathedral, but maybe you can worship in your ancestral church (and walk the cemetery after the services), walk the docks, hike the mountains, eat with locals, and watch the sun rise and set. Try to see the country through the eyes of your ancestors.

It's not uncommon for many to have ancestors who come from several countries. If this is your first genealogy trip, you will have a tendency to want to visit every country and place related to your ancestors. Simply said, DON'T. Narrow your focus. Based on my own experience I would recommend the following:

If your vacation is

1 or 2 weeks

Focus on 1 country.

3 or more weeks

Focus on 2 countries (Max).

If this is your once in a life time trip, I would still recommend spending more time in fewer places versus pushing your schedule to the brink of exhaustion. You will significantly increase your chances of achieving your genealogy goals and having a GREAT experience.

### **2. What do people do on genealogy trips?**

The genealogy trip is about you, your family, and learning about your roots. It's about being free to explore and discover.

Most genealogy trips include activities such as

- Visiting and taking pictures of the places where ancestors lived.
- Looking up the addresses or farms.
- Visiting churches and graveyards.
- Exploring the history and culture of the people.
- Search libraries and archives for family records/information.
- Finding and meeting family.

Trips also include:

- Visiting the tourist spots.
- Joining tour groups for a day or longer excursions.
- Exploring the countryside.
- Finding an out of the way café and ordering cuisine unique to the area.
- Ordering an ice cream and taking a stroll in the local gardens.
- Getting an invitation to join a new acquaintance for lunch.

Let each day be a new adventure. Have just enough planning to accomplish the goals you have set. Have enough freedom to take advantage of the unexpected.

### **3. Plan to have a “base of operations”**

If you have done any level of travel you have learned that not every town has the same level or type of services to accommodate your desired expectations. I usually try to identify a base of operations if I am going to be in a specific area for two or more days. It simplifies the need of packing and unpacking, checking-in and checking-out. I don't waste my time trying to find a place to eat and become familiar with where the basics such as gas stations, transportation hubs, ATM's, copy centers, and etc. are located. During my first trip I spent most evenings trying to find a hotel that I could afford or had vacancies. At the end of a long day of research, you just want a place to sleep.

### **4. Start scheduling reservations for your trip 3-4 months in advance**

Preparing for a genealogy trip requires several months of preparation and planning. Book your first and last night B&B (Bed and Breakfast), hotel room, guest house, etc, from your home country before you leave for your trip. The last thing you want to do when you land is to scramble for a place to stay.

Whether working with a travel agent or contacting persons directly, make reservations at least 2-3 months before departure to book a room and give a deposit, if necessary. Don't leave anything to chance when it comes to accommodations. It's helpful to book a B&B/hotel room near the airport on your last night's stay. That way, you don't have to travel for miles and miles to reach the airport to be on time for your flight home.

If you like B&B's, booking ahead of time is especially important if you are traveling in the summer, as B&Bs, especially in cities, may be booked months in advance because tourism in the summer increases.

Summer is the peak travel time in most countries. Also book car and flight months ahead of time as well. In addition, find a B&B with en-suite accommodations. That is, the bathroom and shower are in the bedroom. I don't like to walk down someone's hallway looking for the WC in the middle of the night.

### **5. Consider to hire a researcher who speaks the language**

If you are going to be in a country where you are not familiar with the language, consider hiring a researcher that can work with you. Not only can they help with your research but they can also act as a tour guide for the area you are researching.

One acquaintance recently went to Wales and hired a Welsh speaking researcher. The researcher did the driving. She explained what they were seeing and answered questions. Several months before arriving in Wales, the in country researcher worked with this individual to nail-down important logistics. Now if you are thinking, why hire a Welch speaker in an English speaking country, the reason is Welch was commonly spoken till the late 1800's and many of the gravestones, records, and etc. are written in Welch.

#### **6. Plan for your family when you are in the library**

If you're taking your family with you on the genealogy trip, be prepared to have activities that your family can go to while you are in the library. Your web search will provide many options to choose from.

#### **7. Planning local transportation**

Become familiar with your transportation options before you travel. Should you rent a car, take local transportation, perhaps a combination of the two? These are questions only you can answer, but it pays to understand your options.

There is a great train system throughout Europe, where you can get a single ticket for multiple days. When I have purchased these tickets, I made sure it was all inclusive to include bus, rail, ship, and subway. If you are going to be in the large cities, public transportation is well coordinated and rather easy to get around. A good website to start your research is:

Rail: [http://www.ricksteves.com/rail/rail\\_menu.htm](http://www.ricksteves.com/rail/rail_menu.htm)

Auto: [http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/carrental\\_2005.htm](http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/carrental_2005.htm)

Campers: <http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/campervanning.htm>

Renting a vehicle may be less expensive than a train pass. You gain the freedom of coming and going as you please. The cost of fuel is 2 to 3 times the expense of U.S. prices. There are a few differences to be aware of. For example, if you rent a standard shift anywhere in the United Kingdom, you will save about \$100 dollars over the automatic transmission. But with standard shift, keep in mind that you have to shift with your left hand, as the driver's seat is in the right hand side of the car.

If you rent a car, set up the rental in the U.S., not in the country of destination. Have the car waiting for you on a certain date at your arrival destination. But, you don't actually need a car to get around in Dublin or Belfast, as public transportation is ubiquitous in those cities. For instance, if you plan to stay in Dublin for three days, set it up so that the car is waiting for you on the day you leave.

The travel agent can be a great source for sorting out the pros and cons. I also rely heavily on the counsel provided by persons in the genealogy message boards about what options to make in selecting public transportation or renting a car.

Before I make any final decisions, I have a fairly good idea of where I am going to be and when. I have a fairly good idea of where I want my base of operations and the towns in which I want to conduct other research. For example, in planning a trip I outlined the following scenario:

Base of operations:	Dundee, Scotland	
Aberdeen	2 hours	Travel by auto
Inverness	3-4 hours	Travel by auto
Perth	30 minutes	Travel by auto
St Andrews	30 minutes	Travel by auto
Edinburgh/ Glasgow	1 hour 30mins	Travel by auto, park and take public transportation

Look through the options and determine what combination works best for your comfort levels in driving in a strange location. If you spend 8 hours getting lost and finding your way, the extra expense of the train might be quite worth it.

Before leaving on your trip, purchase a Michelin Road Map of the country. These maps are usually more detailed than the maps the car rental company gives you. The draw-back to these maps are they are so large you need to stop the car to look at them. But, don't throw away the maps the car rental companies give you. These tend to be a little smaller and less unwieldy in the car. These smaller maps are great for locating the major dual-carriageways (divided highways, but not for off the path villages.)

### **8. Phone cards are a must as a backup to a cell phone**

A cell phone is important to have and it's a good idea to have a phone card as a back-up for emergencies. There are times when cell phones run out of battery and you need to make a call to confirm an appointment or other needs. The phone card is a very nice backup. In most countries, you can easily purchase a phone card in several monetary denominations. Phones are equipped to handle these cards.

### **9. Traveler Checks versus ATM**

I don't purchase travelers' checks anymore. I bring an ATM card and a back-up credit card. Speaking of credit cards, check with your rental car/hotel/etc. to get the most up-to-day information such as only accepting a specific credit card. For example, some rental car companies will only waive third party insurance with Master Card or Diner's Club, or Visa. Your car rental company will give you up-to-date information about which credit cards can be used to waive the insurance.

If you use an ATM card, check with your bank to see what the maximum allowable daily withdrawal amount is. My bank allows me to withdraw about 60 Euros a day. This is a safety feature in case someone hacks your card and tries to empty your bank account. Also, ATM machines are all over and easily assessable.

## **Organizing your Research Priorities**

### **1. What research can you do from home?**

Before you travel hundreds if not thousands of miles to find the library or archive in the home of your ancestors, make sure the records you seek aren't as close as your computer or down the street at your local library. I've heard researchers discuss their disappointment of traveling to a distant land only to find out that the records they sought could be viewed by the internet, ordered on microfilm from the local LDS Family History Center, or acquired by interlibrary loan. Send mail requests to churches, historical societies, city halls, and so forth.

Searching for family records in your ancestor's origins should only be undertaken after you are sure you cannot acquire the records through readily accessible means. You won't want to spend hours and hours in an old church or archive and find out later that the records you needed were just minutes away. Try to identify which records, books, and histories have not been microfilmed or are not open for interlibrary loan.

Ok, you have done your homework and you have confirmed that you want/need to conduct research in the lands of your ancestors.

### **2. Review your records before you go on your trip.**

It's important to go over your records very carefully. Review every printout, photocopy, note and Internet record. Know what you have and what you don't have and make a to-do list of what to find. The basic genealogical advice to work from what you know to what you don't know applies. Please do not take your entire notebook, rather, take key notes that will aide in your search during the trip. If you are bringing your laptop, you may already have all the details electronically.

Remember there are records available in the U.S. (such as parish records at the Family History Center in Salt Lake City). Concentrate on what's not available here.

### **3. What kind of records can't be found at home?**

It's been mentioned several times to focus on those records you can't find in your homeland. The following is a good example of what to look for. A fellow genealogist had been hunting for a particular ancestor for 28 years. All he knew about the person is that he might have worked aboard ships as a young man. Prior to his trip he became aware of a Mariner Library in that ancestor's country. While at the library he found a letter written in the hand of the ancestor in what was known as the Marine Board correspondence. He also found meal lists from the 1850's and a myriad of other documents that related to his family. This is the type of information you won't find in microfilm or on-line. It takes visiting the ancestral lands to accomplish such research.

### **4. Questions to ask that can yield treasures**

Remember you're conducting this research because you're not able to acquire these records from home. Make sure you ask your libraries, archivists, and clerks questions such as:

- a. What indexes or collections are unique to your facility?
- b. Do you have card files, newspapers, original records, computer databases, networks, or compact discs that can only be searched at your repository?
- c. Have your records been microfilmed, if yes, where else are they located?
- d. Are any of your collections accessible on-line?
- e. Does it have records such as church records that have not been microfilmed?
- f. Do you have records from (you name the time period)? If not where can I find them? Note that many countries are consolidating rare records to common depository.

### **5. Determine what resources are available in that area.**

Before you start your trip, do research to determine the places that have information or materials you can use. Resources can include libraries, archives, genealogical societies, historical societies, courthouses, vital records offices, churches, funeral homes, chambers of commerce, cemeteries, schools, and fraternal organizations.

And don't just concentrate on libraries, courthouses, and cemeteries. Frequently, genealogists ignore regional archives or regional libraries that may contain useful records.

### **6. Determine what type of information you seek.**

Know what you are looking for, what you need and do your homework before leaving so you know where you want to go and what to look at when you get there.

I like to begin by writing down questions to the answers I am looking for. This gives me a start to my research plan. For example:

- a. Who are the great grandparents?
- b. What was the name of my Dad's brother who died as an infant?
- c. Where is the house my Mom grew up in?

One researcher knew he was going to South Carolina for a business trip; he checked his records and decided he could use a portion of the trip to look for information about his maternal great-grandmother and her parents and siblings. They supposedly came from the Charlottesville, Virginia, area. Prior to his trip, he

- a. Researched and located the available resources in the city and county.
- b. Made notes about the family.
- c. Printed off all the information he had about the family from his genealogy database program.
- d. Asked himself questions about what he wanted to find out about his family.
- e. Made a list of
  - i. The types of information he wanted locate.
  - ii. The possible types of records that might satisfy the needs.
  - iii. And where he might find the records.
- f. He listed by location the people and record types he wanted to find. For example, if he was going to the courthouse, he would have a list of each individual and each of the types of records he would hope to find there for

each person (e.g., birth, marriage, death records, property tax records, wills etc.).

- g. He contacted each resource and discussed his needs and confirmed the
  - i. Types of records that were available.
  - ii. Hours of operation.
  - iii. Key persons to contact on the given day he was in town.
  - iv. Any special requirements for viewing/acquiring records.
  - v. Availability of copy machines and associated costs.
  - vi. Fees to enter the facility if any.
  - vii. Types of personal documents needed to prove lineage (if needed).
  - viii. Availability of persons to help.
  - ix. Guidelines for using cameras.
  - x. Types of facilities to do research in.
  - xi. Opportunity to do the research on-line vs. in person.
  - xii. Need to make a special appointment to meet with key persons.

When he contacted the local Methodist church he wanted to know if they had membership records from the 1880s and whether one can study them.

When he contacted the local genealogical society he inquired about the records they had and who in the organization might know the most about his family's history, how to reach the person, and when he might be able to meet with him or her.

- h. Where appropriate he sent key contacts a detailed summary of information he had and clearly outlined the information he was seeking. This gave persons a few days or weeks to begin preparing for his arrival.

Conducting prior research will help you become more focused on goals and help you better utilize your limited time. If you aren't well prepared you could end up chasing about unnecessarily looking for things in the wrong place. One researcher during a trip to Scotland went looking for birth, marriage and death certificates in Dundee and found out the records he was seeking were in Edinburgh a 2 hour drive away.

### **7. Make advance contact—establish a rapport.**

Once you have identified the available resources, make the effort to contact each source directly by mail, telephone, and/or email. You will save yourself many, many hours by making advance contacts.

When you make these personal contacts in advance, make sure you introduce yourself and that you are conducting genealogy research. Let them know what you are seeking, and try to establish a rapport. You are making new friends, and they can open doors for you while you are on-site and smooth your way. Once a person I'd contacted in advance helped find the curator to a local museum that was only open a few hours a week from

whom I made special arrangements to have a private opening. This was done on a moment's notice, a task that would have taken me hours in an unfamiliar town.

### **8. Whenever possible, let people know you are coming and when**

Of all the hints I can provide you about traveling and doing on-site research, this may be the most important. Let people know you're coming and when. Make sure the people you need to see will be there. Based on my needs, I have been willing to rearrange my schedule to be at a library when the prime resource would be there. Don't leave this to chance. Remember you have come a long way. Don't arrive at the church only to find that Wednesday was the day off of the archivist or that there was a local holiday for which all public facilities were closed.

And don't forget to confirm your appointment or just give a courtesy call to let them know you are excited to come. I have had the local contact with whom I was going to meet have many of the records, books, etc. pulled already for me to review. At the request of my key contact, unbeknownst to me, I have had persons travel many miles to visit with me because they were the expert on my family line.

And if your schedule changes and you can't make the agreed upon time, be courteous, call and let them know so they can reschedule with you.

Make sure they have your contact information, email, cell phone, etc. so they can get hold of you should their circumstances change or they need to clarify your research needs.

### **9. Know the times of operation.**

Remember to contact county courthouses, libraries, and other record repositories you plan to visit to determine their office hours. There's nothing more frustrating than getting to a destination and finding it closed for whatever reason.

### **10. Be patient when requesting records.**

If you are planning to receive specific records before you leave for your trip, give yourself a least a 4 month window. Why? Many libraries/archives have more requests than staff to manage. Sometimes it will take several weeks for the staff to even begin research, let alone send you requested information.

### **11. Planning to visit the library/archive**

Check to see if the library has an internet site. Most library internet sites provide the basic information associated with hours of operation.

Larger libraries, like the Library of Virginia, and state/country archives have an online catalog. Search the catalog before you go. I have usually been able to locate specific books, microfilm, papers, photographs, etc. that will be available for my specific research. Make sure you print out the details from your catalog search.

Check out the Library of Congress Card Catalog to determine what books have been published on the county or area you're planning to visit, so that you can look them up in the local library you'll be visiting.

Write/email the libraries that don't have online information to find out about their genealogical collection, location such as floor/level, building, and hours of operation. Some collections in libraries can only be seen at specific times and/or may have special restrictions.

I have also found it helpful to call the library to talk with a librarian to see if there are staff researchers that can help if I have questions. Learn about the expertise of the staff. In some cases I have planned to visit a library when the librarian with the expertise I needed was going to be working.

I have also found there are local researchers who are available as volunteers and for hire who know the library and are willing to work with you to quickly get information you seek.

Make sure you make time to concentrate on using indexes, manuscript collections, unpublished records, rare books, photographs, and sources unique to the library or archives where you are researching before you get to the more distributed information that other facilities will have.

If the library doesn't seem to have what you are looking for, make sure you ask the library for recommendations of where to go.

Also be aware of local traditions. One researcher tells of an experience when they visited archives located in Glasgow, Scotland. Upon arriving at the archives at the prearranged time, the primary researcher, left for her daily 2 hour tea/lunch break. The supporting staff was unable to assist the researcher. Upon the archivist return, she was able to locate in a matter of minutes records of local cemeteries that he had been told by the staff did not exist.

## **12. Where is the best place to get information?**

As you start uncovering where to find the records you seek, you may come across the knowledge that the same records are available in different locations. Make sure you ask the cost of acquiring such records. In a recent trip, I found that a marriage record from the early 1800's would have cost me \$10.00 at a university library. The same information was available at the state archive for the cost of a photocopy.

## **13. Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah**

Anyone who has done research in Salt Lake City at the Family History Library will find foreign record offices quite a bit different. You won't be looking at original documents, but you can go and take as many films as you want out of the cases, copy anything you like yourself and return the films. You can cover a lot of territory in a short span of days, especially since it is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays and 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday – Saturday and closed some holidays. Groups of people come to Salt Lake from around the world to do research because so many records have been gathered in one place. It is so much more efficient than running around to different archives in their native countries. If you decide that you desire to go to Salt Lake City, make sure you check out the online catalog to help you find exactly what you are looking for before you come. The following is the contact information for the library:

**Family History Library**

35 North West Temple Street

Salt Lake City, Utah, 84150-3400

Public phone number: 801-240-2584 or 866-406-1830

FAX: 801-240-3718

E-mail: [fhl@ldsfs.net](mailto:fhl@ldsfs.net)

Website: [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

## **Conducting Research During Your Genealogy Trip**

### **1. Keep a travel journal during your trip**

Each day of your trip is full of research, excursions, meeting new people, taking pictures, reflecting upon your family and the unexpected. Take time at the end or beginning of each day to write in your travel journal. Upon your return home, you will find that your journal will be one of the most important assets you have in furthering research and documenting the value of your trip. After just one week on the road, one day blends into the next.

I tend to write events in my travel journal in a chronological format (what happened first, second, third). For example, after I have entered a library, I will write details about:

- Who I spoke with and their role in the library, address, email, phone number, etc.
- All discussions no matter with whom and information exchanged.
- The records I looked at and why.
- What I found and decisions I made during my search.
- All new information carefully documenting all associated information.
- Thoughts and questions that cross my mind during the research.

I will make comment about the places I visited and why they were of interest to me. I discuss what I learned, pick-up brochures, and any other information that will help me tell the story.

I find myself reviewing what I wrote several times during the trip as I ponder options and make decisions about what direction to take the research and planning my free time. The parts of my journal that are most interesting are how often I just happen to meet the right person who is able to open doors to help me find the place I am searching. The person who knows about my family name and history and will take me to the gravesite of an ancestor. The person who knows the person who now lives in the ancestor's home, or is the person who knows where to find the record I seek.

### **2. Learn about local history**

One of the most enjoyable aspects of taking a genealogy trip is learning about the history of the local area. Don't become so focused on trying to find that long-lost record that you forget that your ancestors were people with dreams, opportunities, successes, frustrations disappointments, bills, sickness and death. They may have moved more than once or cleared the land to make a new home.

Learn about the history of the area where your ancestors are from. What did they eat, where would they have gone to church, where is the mill they took their crops to. What sort of natural features did they encounter when farming the land? What is the city most famous for? The more you know, the more you can appreciate just what your ancestors' lives were like when you are there. If you learn lamb and potatoes were the primary staple or that blueberries were grown in area since the 1600's, perhaps you will take the time to order the "local" dishes when you are in town. Who knows, you might even ask for the recipe.

### **3. Searching for Your Ancestors Original Places of Residence**

Like many of our ancestors, they came from tiny villages that few people have ever heard of. When they immigrated they may have simply said they were from the largest near by town or city. If you are looking for the experience to stand exactly where Great, Great, Great Grandpa lived or have your picture taken in front of his home, make sure you know exactly what town they came from.

Records such as birth records and land records can help locate where your family lived by giving you a street address or the land where they lived. With such information in hand, I have been able to ask directions from locals and gain very good directions to find what I was looking for. Don't be surprised if the information on the records gives you a different village.

You might have the right village and go to the church. However, the church may no longer have the records. It is quite possible they have been moved to the Genealogical Society in London. In most countries, older records are being consolidated in central repositories. Always ascertain in advance where the actual records are kept.

### **4. Searching libraries and archives in the country**

As I have conducted research in countries, expect to find the unexpected. Some of my experiences are as follows:

- a. Record offices will have government hours (perhaps closing for lunch).
- b. You may need advance reservations.
- c. You may need to look up your resources in a catalog and write them on a request for which you submit to the reference librarian.
- d. Your request may take more than a half-hour to arrive.
- e. You may only be allowed to view one request at a time.
- f. You may be allowed to take photographs of the documents.
- g. If you are not allowed to take photographs, then you may need to fill out a request form and submit it. It may take from just a few minutes to a few hours before your request is ready.
- h. Sometimes you are limited to the number of copies you can make in a day.
- i. Remember the person behind the desk is in charge.
- j. The staff may bring the requested artifacts to you and pick them up from you while you are seated.
- k. You may be required to stow your backpack in a locker.
- l. Security may ask to see the contents of your pockets/purse.
- m. Some record facilities are very strict about each researcher having a table or seat.
- n. Advance reservations may be required.
- o. Research under these conditions gives you the thrill of handling papers that may be 200-plus years old.

## **5. Searching graveyards during your trip**

Searching graveyards can be a mixed experience of disappointment and jubilation all in the same day.

First, see if you can find a map of graveyards you intend to visit and the background about each. I have had good luck with checking with local historical societies and asking them if there is a record of the local cemeteries. If there is not documentation available, I try to see if I can locate the Sexton (caretaker of the graveyard) to see if there is a plot organizational chart that defines who is buried where.

Check to see if there is an old map and new map of the graveyard. Compare them to see what differences there are between them. In some countries there is what is known as an ordinance survey (OS) reference number which identifies the cemetery. Other countries have other reference systems. The key here is to realize there may be more to graveyards and cemeteries to help find what you seek.

When I enter a graveyard, I go with a reference and anticipation. I am hoping the headstone is legible and easy to read. If the headstone is over 100 years old, I am pleasantly surprised and grateful if the headstone is legible, and not damaged by vandalism or weathered by the years. Whatever I find, it is always fun.

Take a small pocket notebook with you at all times. You'll need it to draw diagrams of graveyards and write down inscriptions.

If you have some flexibility in your trip as to the days you will be searching the graveyard, keep a close watch on the weather report. It is always better to view a graveyard on a sunny day versus overcast and rainy.

Are you planning on taking photographs of headstones or making headstone rubbings on your trip? If you are, and you've never taken a photograph of a tombstone or made a headstone rubbing, practice on some local stones before you leave. The time to learn isn't at a cemetery 2,000 miles from home on the last day of your trip.

## **6. Photographing at the cemetery/graveyard**

Over the centuries, several different types of stones have been used to create gravestones. Some of the stones are quite porous and fragile, while others are resistant to damage. Be careful when attempting to improve the readability of the inscription. Types of stone:

- Prior to the nineteenth century: sandstone or slate.
- Nineteenth century: marble and gray granite.
- Late nineteenth century to the present: polished granite or marble.

1. Take photos of the cemetery entrance, sign, book of records, and church.
  - a. Before you start taking photos of headstones, make sure you capture the details of the cemetery that include the name, street signs, proximity, and church adjacent to the cemetery.

- b. All these details will help you and others that follow know where you have been.
2. North, south, east, west: Best time of day for photographing headstones.
  - a. Sunlight emphasizes imperfections in the stone and can make the carving look flat.
  - b. Headstones facing west are best photographed at midday.
  - c. Headstones facing north should be photographed in the late afternoon.
  - d. Headstones facing south are well-lit all day.
3. Large headstones require close-ups of inscriptions.
  - a. Taking photos of large headstones alone sometimes makes the inscription too small to read.
  - b. Take a photo of the large headstone and then move in close to take a photo of the inscription.
4. Family grave plots require group and individual photos of each headstone.
  - a. A family plot constitutes two or more graves.
  - b. Take a group photograph of the graves that shows number and proximity.
  - c. Take each headstone separately.
  - d. If you are photographing a cemetery, photograph all family plots the same, for example: group plot, headstones left to right, top to bottom.
5. Consider taking photos of all headstones in a small community cemetery.
  - a. If your family came from a small town and your roots go back many generations or many decades, chances are you are related to most, if not all persons buried in the cemetery.
  - b. If you have traveled a great distance to capture family graves on film, take an extra hour or two and capture the other headstones on film, you can sort out details later.
  - c. You will often find direct family members buried amongst other families.
6. Look at the base, top, sides, and back of headstones.
  - a. In addition to the inscription, look around the headstone for other important information that can be inscribed about the individual, family, maker of the headstone, and writings of the deceased.
7. Take eye-level photos of headstone inscriptions.
  - a. When taking photos of headstone inscriptions, try to take the photo of the inscription at eye-level. You will find information much easier to read in the photo.
8. Talk to the sexton.
  - a. Can't find family, see if you can talk to the sexton and ask to see the cemetery plot map.
  - b. Sexton may have records you can simply photograph.
  - c. Some cemeteries bury several layers deep to conserve space. In these situations, the headstone on top may only be for 1 of the several persons buried in the plot.
  - d. Sometimes headstones are not available because the family is too poor for a headstone, but the sexton will have details of who is buried where.
9. Take time to clear grass and other foliage away from inscription.

- a. Take time to clear cut dried grass away from and on top of the headstone before taking a photograph.
  - b. If a branch is grown over the headstone, pull it back and take a photo.
  - c. Clear overgrown grass to the edge of the marker/headstone. Important information/epitaphs may be separated from the main inscription (e.g., bronze marker denoting group or religious affiliation, service in branch of military or fought in specific war).
10. Use a little chalk for the hard to read old headstones.
- a. Letters on the old stones are often hardly legible.
  - b. Take a little piece of white (or black or any other dark color) chalk and fill letters.
  - c. Or rub the white chalk on the flat surface next to the letters.
11. Tilt your camera to the angle of the headstone.
- a. Older stones tend to lean or slant.
  - b. Tilt the camera to the angle of the stone and your image will straighten up nicely.
12. Black and gray polished marble shoot at angle.
- a. Gray or black polished are sometimes hard to read or reflect flash making the image illegible.
  - b. Shoot headstone at an angle and then view on LCD for clarity. Re-shoot at different angle if needed.
13. Try using flash on headstones covered with shade or on cloudy days.
- a. If inscription you just took a picture of is hard to read, try using your flash. The light should provide you just enough extra light to fill in the dark shadows so you can read the lettering.
  - b. Try using flash from angles if needed.
14. Try a soft brush or natural sponge and water to remove surface soil.
- a. Gentle brushing should remove surface dirt and bird droppings.
15. Try sponge and water on light colored stone. The stone will darken from the water and darken the inscription on the stone.
16. Never use hard objects or stiff brushes to clean the stone.
17. Removing lichens with sharp objects most often destroys surface.
18. Keep a written record.
- a. Some of the items to consider as part of the written record include:
    1. Location.
    2. Map of the cemetery with the stones numbered.
    3. When photographed (time, date, and frame number).
    4. Transcription of the epitaph.
19. Post your photos of headstones on family websites or sites such as Virtual Cemetery.  
[http://www.genealogy.com/vcem\\_welcome.html](http://www.genealogy.com/vcem_welcome.html)

## **7. Consider using your camera in your library, archive, or museum research**

Consider using your digital camera as a tool for documenting and capturing information you find in your research. If you have never used your camera in your library research,

practice in your local library under all types of conditions, include very low light. The time to learn isn't at a cemetery 2,000 miles from home.

### **8. Photographing in the libraries**

1. Know their policy about digital photography before you go.
  - a. 80% of libraries have allowed me to use a digital camera with some criteria.
2. Do not use flash.
  - a. Usually prohibited due to photo sensitivity of artifacts.
3. Set up photo stand or tripod.
4. You may need to sign an intended uses statement.
5. May need to have one of their staff handle rare objects.
6. Only take photos of intended artifacts.
7. No photos allowed of interior of building or people.
  - a. (Especially in government buildings).
8. Set up camera in a corner away from others so as not to disturb.
9. Set up near a window to gain most from natural light.

### **9. Photographing museums and archives**

1. Check first to see if photography is allowed.
  - a. Most museums and archives will allow photography without a flash.
2. Objects covered with glass or plastic are best shot at an angle.
  - a. Glass/plastic will reflect a flash or act like a mirror and reflect your image under natural light. Consider photographing the object at an angle.
3. Snap a separate picture of a caption or a label of the exhibit.
4. Use the tripod along with your camera's self-timer night/lowlight setting.
  - a. Lack of good lighting is usually the norm in museums.
  - b. Use the tripod to steady your image.
  - c. When you encounter very low light situations, try putting your camera on night setting and enabling your self-timer.
  - d. With the steadiness of the tripod and camera settings you should be able to get some good quality photos.
5. No Tripod? Then brace yourself.
  - a. If it is too dark and there is no tripod, leaning against a wall or a pillar or supporting your camera against a bench, a chair, or a staircase rail will be a good remedy in that situation.
  - b. If a subject is important enough, by all means take an extra shot.

### **10. Photographing Microfilm**

**Note:** These are the backlit or rear projection readers that shine a light through the film and use a series of mirrors and/or lenses to display an image of the film on a vertical or flat surface. The image displayed on either style can be easily photographed.

1. Depending upon your circumstances you may or may not need to mount your camera on a tripod. I have been able raise my camera up near the projection lens and click the shutter button and gain a clear photo with no distortion. If you choose to use a tripod, place your camera on a tripod located in front of the reader screen.

2. Place a white paper on the reader surface as the target area for shooting.  
**Note:** Try other blank sheets of color paper (e.g., pink, blue, yellow) to see if these colors help you with readability of the image.
3. Adjust the camera/tripod position so the information you want to copy fills the LCD frame, not the viewfinder.
4. Set the macro mode if necessary. This will depend on your camera model and how far away it is from the microfilm reader.
5. Make sure the flash is turned off.
6. Set the camera's self-timer if needed.
7. Gently press the shutter button halfway to lock the exposure and focus.
8. Press the button completely down. If using the self-time, move away from the camera and wait for the self-timer to trip the shutter.
9. Take several shots. Consider using the "best shot selector" and/or auto bracketing your shots if your camera has these features or manual bracketing if it doesn't.

## Priorities After Your Genealogy Trip

### 1. Take time to organize, catalog, and share your findings after your trip

Within hours of returning home you will be unpacked, clothes will be in the wash, you have opened the mail, and have spoken to family and friends about your trip.

Overall you are very satisfied with the goals you were able to accomplish and move forward. I would recommend that within 24 hours of returning you start the process of documenting and organizing all aspects of your trip from photographs to brochures from photocopies to journal entries. Don't let it become another pile of genealogy "to-do's." Items easily become misplaced or forgotten of why it was important.

Follow our usual steps in processing, organizing, and cataloging your information. The following sequence is intended to be a recommendation not a sequence to follow. Don't change your usual sequence if it varies from the order listed here.

1. Analyze what goals were accomplished and how.
  - a. What goals were moved forward and how?
  - b. What goals were left undone?
  - c. Did you find new data that requires changes or updates to genealogy records?
  - d. Look at your family tree and see what your next steps will be.
  - e. Do you continue working on the same line or do you start a new direction?
  - f. What are the next steps?
  - g. Start the next research to-do log.
  - h. Add tasks to your existing list.
  - i. Note any questions your research raised.
2. Who did you promise correspondence?
  - a. Why?
  - b. And by when?
  - c. Who do you want to send a thank you to?
3. Review your journal writings.
  - a. Enter into computer.
  - b. Who are the persons, places, etc. that you want to enter into your resource file?
4. If found new data that revises old data,
  - a. Update your family information (group sheets, pedigree charts).
  - b. In your notes, document your change (sources) carefully so that other family members won't think you have made a mistake and change it back.
  - c. Record the date you made the change.
  - d. Make a backup of your data (clearly label) before you begin data entry of new information.
  - e. Make a backup of your data (clearly label) right after you enter data.
5. If you recorded any interviews or thoughts on tape:
  - a. Transcribe any interviews, noting the date, place, interviewee and interviewer.
  - b. If there is a tape, videotape, photographs, or notes, be sure to indicate that on the transcription.

- c. If you use exact quotes, put them in quotes, otherwise indicate that you are paraphrasing, so it is perfectly clear.
  - d. If you have the ability to digitize your interviews, do so for backup.
6. Carefully and safely organize documents, copies and your notes.
- a. Scan documents/copies to be included in your electronic files.
  - b. File the acquired data (hard copies) in your files.
  - c. Make new files as needed.
  - d. If you have a database log, make notes as needed.
  - e. Flag files with notes to yourself if needed.
  - f. Where needed, clearly document data acquired, source, and value to your research.
  - g. Make copies for your master file as needed.
7. Organize photos, postcards, brochures, pictures.
- a. Scan hardcopy/paper information to be included in your electronic files.
  - b. If desired, insert information into your family tree program if the software allows.
  - c. If you took film or digital photos, write dates, place, and reason of importance.
  - d. Edit photos as needed (e.g. cropping, color correction, etc.)
  - e. Develop a photo log to organize materials.
  - f. Develop a backup file of photos.
  - g. Integrate key photos with family history.
  - h. If you came home with rare original photos, carefully store them (e.g., acid free envelopes, low light, etc).
8. Share information, information doesn't do any good sitting in your files.
- a. Let others know what you have discovered. Let them share in your excitement.
  - b. Write a letter to family.
  - c. Include in family newsletter.
  - d. Post a note on message boards of research data found with documentation.
  - e. Ask questions, if information you found was ambiguous or contradictory, others may be able to help you.
9. Share your resources with genealogy societies, newsgroups and message boards.
- a. In addition to what you learned about family, share what you learned about libraries and archives in the locations you visited.
  - b. Discuss the scope of collections and services available.

## **Genealogy Checklist**

### **1. Travel checklist for your genealogy trip**

It would be nice to simply walk into a library and find what you want and you are done. Experience has taught me that I am to expect the unexpected. The list may seem exhaustive but it is designed to help review your own needs and choose those items you desire to take to make the research trip as effective as possible.

Trust me, there is nothing more frustrating then having traveled a long distance and not have what you need to complete the research. I remember once having a camera battery go dead and there was no store in town that carried the battery I needed. Due to travel schedules, it would be two years later before I could complete that particular research project.

The following list is based on the experience of many researchers. Not all items will apply to you, but I hope you find it useful as you plan your next research trip.

### **2. Digital Camera with Built-in Flash**

1. Digital Camera
  - a. I recommend at least a 4 mega pixel camera. Note: In libraries, archives, and town halls, ask permission to take photos. My experience is that you will receive permission 80% of the time.
2. Two extra sets of rechargeable batteries.
3. At least 512 M of removable storage.
  - a. I carry a total of 3 gig of storage with me. About 3,000 photos JPG format.
  - b. I have had disks that were full which I forgot clean off or have failed.
4. Electric charger for rechargeable batteries.
5. Transfer cord that links from camera to computer.
6. Car plug extension for chargers (try to get one with 1 or more plug outlets).
  - a. I plug into a 12 Volt outlet (in older vehicles cigarette lighter).
7. Camera stand.
8. Carrying case.
9. Camera manual.
10. Tripod.
11. Copy stand (cookie sheet with markings) and an extra strip of magnets to perform indoor shooting will provide consistent results.

### **3. Laptop with DVD/CD Burner**

1. Laptop
  - a. Not a necessity, but a good idea for those who own or can borrow one.
  - b. Be sure to take external power adapter, spare batteries, and extension cord.
  - c. Remember that foreign countries (Mexico, Canada) may have different voltages than in the U.S. If you go to Europe, you will need to buy a special adapter or you will not be able to use the computer.
2. Considering taking an external hard-drive to transfer large amounts of data.

3. Take time to build electronic folders on your computer for transfer of your data before you leave on the trip. (Electronic folders refer to the place I will transfer data to during the trip from your camera, scanner, etc.)
  - a. I have developed a number of folders depending upon what I am doing. I have named folders by surname, date of being out on the road, city I am doing research in, and so forth.
4. Make sure the software loaded includes:
  - a. Choice of family history software and needed family files.
  - b. Word processing software.
  - c. Digital camera utility software needed to transfer images from.
5. Carrying case.
6. Backup disks of favorite software in case you need to reinstall software while on road.

#### **4. Cell Phone with Key Call Numbers Stored into Database/Memory**

1. Rechargeable cord.
2. Ear phone cord.
3. Extra phone cord.
4. Extension cord from phone to computer if you use your phone to connect to internet in emergency cases.

#### **5. Scanner/Camera Support Software**

1. Scanner support software.
2. Photo/image editing software.
3. Internet software to connect to email, etc.
4. DVD/CD burning software.
5. Carrying case.

Note: Do not take a scanner when traveling via airplane. The scanner will get banged up in transit. If you need a scanner on a trip when you are taking a plane, consider buying a low-end model once you get there for under \$100.00 and leaving it behind as a gift when you come home.

#### **6. Audio Micro Cassette Recorder to Record Thoughts or Interview Persons**

1. 5 to 10 hours of blank tapes.
2. You can record entries too long to type or that cannot be copied.

#### **7. Research Folder**

Develop a folder that has all the necessary information you need at your finger-tips pertaining to your trip. For example:

1. Goals and objectives for trip.
  - a. Acquisition goals.
  - b. Travel plan and approximate times for each phase of research.
2. Appointment calendar.
3. City, county, state maps.
4. Key contacts, address, phone numbers.

5. "Map quest" maps of destination.
6. Internet printouts that include address, phone numbers of library, historical societies, city offices, etc. that you will be visiting.
7. Printouts from catalogs of key documents you seek to view/film.
8. Internet printout of things to see.
9. Packing list so you can recheck what you brought and not leave anything behind.

### **8. Scanner**

1. Electrical cord.
2. Cord for transferring images from scanner to computer.
3. Note: When researching in courthouses and libraries we usually keep the computer and scanning equipment stowed safely in the car in a large insulated lock box and only bring them in if needed.

### **9. Necessary Clothes**

1. Extra pair of old shoes for muddy, cow occupied fields.
2. Long pants to protect legs from tall grass, briars, climbing fences.
3. Extra clothing for when you get wet or soiled.
4. Hat to protect from the sun.
5. Sun glasses when you are outdoors.
6. Bug repellent.

### **10. Emergency Food for When You Can't Leave the Research Work**

1. Energy Bar.
2. Water.
3. \$5 -\$10 for meals.
  - a. Money for lunch! Time stands still for the engrossed researcher, but the brain still needs food to sustain the substantial amounts of energy required by intensive research.

### **11. Larger Padded Carrying Case**

1. To secure equipment that doesn't require protection.

### **12. Hard-shelled Suitcase**

1. To protect camera and other digital equipment in their own bags.

### **13. Mapping Program**

Example: Hardware in combination with its Street Atlas USA mapping software to take advantage of the Global Positioning System (GPS). Especially when you're going to multiple places over several days that may be hard to find. Rent or have GPS system installed in the vehicle such as Neverlost.

This is extremely helpful when finding cemeteries as well as other locations of genealogical interest.

### **14. Research Resources**

1. Pedigree charts for the families you are researching.
  - a. COPIES (originals stay at home).
  - b. Blank charts for new information.
2. Family Group Sheets for the families you are researching
  - a. COPIES (originals stay at home).
  - b. Blank charts for new information.
3. Census forms, blank preprinted (available for 1790-1930).
4. ID, photo ID.
5. Library and archives, etc. information.
  - a. Location.
  - b. Hours and days open.
  - c. Special staff or departments to see.
  - d. Charts of Dewey Decimal/Library of Congress subject classifications so you can readily locate your subject.
6. Maps.
  - a. Town, county, state, or regional as needed.
7. Research log.
8. Soundex codes for surnames you are checking in the census.
9. Surname list.
  - a. Alphabetical list of all names you are searching in the area.

## **15. Library Research Helps**

1. Envelopes of varying sizes in which to put materials as you receive them throughout the day/trip so you don't misplace/mislabel key information. For example:
  - b. #10 (Business size) letter envelopes for
    - i. Removable camera storage
    - ii. Cassettes
    - iii. Letters/notes you may need to write when persons are not home
  - c. Catalog envelopes 9.5" X 12" for
    - i. Documents
    - ii. Photos
    - iii. Artifacts
2. File folders, empty, for information found on each surname.
  - c. I prefer expanding file folders; they are enclosed on all three sides making a little more difficult for papers to fall out.
3. Note pads (8.5" X 11") with lined paper.
  - a. I like the note pads to be predrilled 3-hole punched. It makes it a little easier to put them in a 3-ring binder for safe keeping during the trip and at home.
  - b. If you don't like the pre-drilled paper, consider carrying a small paper punch of desired size. Punches come in 1-hole, 2-hole, or 3 hole punches.
4. Post-It-Notes.
5. 5 Pencils with erasers or 2 mechanical pencils with extra lead.
  - a. Consider a couple of colored pencils for highlighting for different types of notes.
  - b. Consider also taking a small hand-held pencil sharpener.
6. 3 pens.

- a. Consider a couple of colored pens for writing down different types of notes.
  - b. Note some archives/libraries will not allow you to use pens. Make sure you have pencils available.
- 7. Erasers, Art gum.
- 8. Money for parking meters and copy machines.
  - a. Assorted change (dimes and quarters).
  - b. One-dollar bills.
  - c. If extensive copying is anticipated, get rolls of dimes or quarters from the bank before you go to the library or archives. Consider using a digital camera capturing the images of books and documents.
  - d. Also consider carrying a money pouch. Divide the cash you are carrying and put into different places so if luggage is lost or stolen, you are not left with nothing.
- 8. Several sheets of colored paper (yellow, pink).
  - a. Helps when reading faint writing on microfilm reader screens.
- 9. Ruler.
  - a. 6" or 12," depending on your preference.
  - b. Clear or colored plastic.
  - c. Some people may prefer a miniature tape measure.
- 10. Flashlight in case the records are under the stairs or in the attic.
- 11. Calculator.
  - a. Total up costs, distances, ages, etc.
- 12. Magnifying glass.
- 13. Special gloves to handle fragile documents.

## **16. Cemetery Research Helps**

Many of the items above will also be useful in cemeteries, with the following additions:

- 1. Clothing, proper
  - a. Hat to shade from sun
  - b. Sturdy shoes (flip-flops and sandals are not a good choice)
  - c. Socks and long pants, with long-sleeved shirt (protection against sun and ticks)
- 4. First aid kit
  - a. Include an allergy kit, if you are allergic to bee stings, etc.
  - b. Depending on the area, you may want to include a snakebite kit.
- 5. Gloves, gardening, in case you have to clear a gravestone by pulling grass.
- 6. Insect repellent.
- 7. Mirror (to shine light at headstones, to make inscriptions more legible).
- 8. Plastic garbage bags, to kneel on if you have to pull grass from around a headstone.
- 9. Rice papers and crayons, to make rubbings of inscriptions. Be sure to get permission from the person or organization responsible for the cemetery prior to undertaking rubbings.
- 10. Shovel, small, portable auto shovel, in case your car gets stuck.
- 11. Sunscreen.
- 12. Sunglasses.
- 13. Trowel for clearing away grass around cemetery markers.
- 14. Umbrella in case of rain or to shade from sun.
- 15. Sponge and small container for water.

- a. Inscriptions can be easier to see when dampened with sponge.
- 16. Chalk can be handy to outline some of the lettering.
  - a. Chalk easily washes away without damaging the headstone.

### **17. Miscellaneous**

1. Canvas bag to carry research tools listed.
2. Notebook, loose- leaf.
  - a. I like the D-ring binders. Papers lay flatter and are less likely to unnecessarily bend when I close the binder.
3. Postage stamps.
  - a. To mail any letters/notes that might need to be written on the spot.
4. Electrical bar strip with at least 4 outlets.
5. Camera cleaning kit.
6. Extra DVDs (large storage media) for data storage when external hard drive is not available.
7. Quart and Gallon size ziplock bags (keep equipment dry).
8. See through mesh cases to hold cords and misc.
9. 3X5 cards or flip pad for writing/notes in the field.
10. Handy backpack, or fanny pack with multiple pockets to store and keep your hands free.
11. Stapler and staple-pulling device (tiger jaws).
  - a. Miniature staplers are available.
12. Scissors (Small).
  - a. Handy for trimming photocopies.
13. Protractor.
  - a. Useful in plotting property descriptions from old deeds.
14. Glue stick.
15. Kleenex, small hand-size pack.
16. Handy-wipes, small pouch.
17. Medications.
  - a. If you are on medication, be sure to take some along. There is nothing worse than getting sick in a strange place.
18. Band-aids.
  - a. For small paper cuts.

### **18. Extra Notes**

1. Note: Check all equipment upon arrival if you are staying long term.
2. Charge all equipment before you leave.
3. Clean removable storage disks.

## Personal Checklist

### 1. What to Pack

The following is a suggested packing list. It's foundation is from Rick Steves, a well known travel host for PBS. I have found Rick Steves' council and ideas to be on target and well thought out.

**Checkout:** [www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/tips\\_menu.htm](http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/tips_menu.htm).

The list will vary somewhat if you are going to U.S. destinations versus other countries, usually Europe. Pack light and only what you need. You will be grateful each and every day of your trip with lighter luggage.

**Rule:** If you're not going to wear it more than three times, don't pack it!

### Barry's Personal Packing List for trips exceeding 10-plus days.

#### 1. Shirts:

- a. Five short-sleeved or long-sleeved shirts in a cotton/polyester blend.
- b. 1 white dress for attending church.
- c. Arrange mix according to season.

#### 2. Sweater:

- a. Warm and dark is best — for layering and dressing up.

#### 3. Pants:

- a. Two pairs: One lightweight cotton and another super-lightweight for hot and muggy big cities and churches with modest dress codes. Also covers for church attendance.
- b. Jeans can be too hot for summer travel. Linen is great.
- c. Many like lightweight pants/shorts with zip-off legs.
- d. Button-down wallet pockets are safest.

#### 4. Shorts:

- a. Take a pair with pockets — doubles as a swimsuit for men.

#### 5. Swimsuit:

- a. Especially for women.

#### 6. Underwear and socks.

- a. Bring five sets (lighter dries quicker).

#### 7. Shoes:

- a. Take a well-used, light, and cool pair, with Vibram-type soles and good traction.
- b. Sandals in case the shoes get wet.
- c. 1 pair of dress shoes if I am planning to attend church.
- d. For winter travel, bring heavy shoes (for warmth and to stay dry).

#### 8. Jacket:

- a. Bring a light and water-resistant windbreaker with a hood.
- b. Gore-Tex is good if you expect rain. Always pack for rain in Britain.

**9. Tie or scarf:**

- a. 1 tie for church attendance.
- b. Scarf/bandana

**10. Money belt:**

Lightweight and low-profile beige.

**11. Money:**

- a. Preferred mix of a credit card, debit card, an emergency stash of hard cash, and a couple of personal checks.

**12. Documents and photocopies:**

- a. Passport
- b. Airline ticket
- c. Rail pass or car-rental voucher
- d. Driver's license
- e. Student ID
- f. Hostel card
- g. and so on.
- h. Note: Photocopies and a couple of passport-type photos can help you get replacements more quickly if the originals are lost or stolen. Carry photocopies separately in your luggage and keep the originals in your money belt. In your luggage, you'll also want to pack a careful record of all reservations (bring the hotels' written confirmations), along with a trip calendar page to keep things up-to-date as your trip evolves.

**13. Small daypack:**

- a. Great for carrying your sweater, camera, literature, and picnic goodies while you leave your large bag at the hotel or train station.
- b. Fanny packs (small bags with thief-friendly zippers on a belt) are a popular alternative, but are magnets for pickpockets and should never be used as money belts.

**14. Camera:**

- a. A digital camera and one high-capacity memory card means no more bulky bags of film. A mini-tripod allows you to take crisp shots in low light with no flash.

**15. Sealable plastic baggies:**

- a. Variety of sizes.
- b. Note: They're ideal for packing leftover picnic food, containing wetness, and bagging potential leaks before they happen. The two-gallon jumbo size is handy for packing clothing.

**16. Water bottle:**

- a. The plastic half-liter mineral water bottles sold throughout Europe are reusable and work great.

**17. Wristwatch:**

- a. With a built-in alarm is handy.
- b. Note: Otherwise, pack a small \*travel alarm clock. Cheap-hotel wake-up calls are particularly unreliable.

**18. Earplugs:**

- a. If night noises bother you, you'll love a good set of expandable foam plugs.

**19. First-aid kit.**

**20. Medicine and vitamins:**

- a. Keep medicine in original containers, if possible, with legible prescriptions.

**21. Extra eyeglasses, contact lenses, and prescriptions:**

- a. Contact solutions are widely available in Europe. Because of dust and smog, many travelers find their contacts aren't as comfortable in Europe. Bring your glasses just in case.

**22. Sunscreen and sunglasses:**

- a. Depending on the season and your destination.

**23. Toiletries kit:**

- a. Sinks in cheap hotels come with meager countertop space and anonymous hairs.
- b. If you have a nylon toiletry kit that can hang on a hook or a towel bar, this is no problem. Put all squeeze bottles in sealable plastic baggies, since pressure changes in flight can cause even good bottles to leak.
- c. Consider a vacation from cosmetics.
- d. Bring a little toilet paper or tissue packets (sold at all newsstands in Europe).
- e. Fingernail clippers and tweezers (for retrieving lost bank cards) are also handy.
- f. My Sonicare electric toothbrush holds a charge from home for 30 one-minute brushes.

**24. Soap:**

- a. Not all hotels provide soap.
- b. A plastic squeeze bottle of concentrated, multipurpose, biodegradable liquid soap is handy for laundry and more.
- c. In the interest of traveling friendlier to our environment, I never use the hotel bathroom "itsy-bitsies," preferring my own bar of soap or bottle of shampoo.

**25. Clothesline:**

- a. Hang it up in your hotel room to dry your clothes.
- b. The handy twisted-rubber type needs no clothespins.

**26. Small towel:**

- a. You'll find bath towels at all fancy and moderately priced hotels, and most cheap ones. Although \$50-a-day travelers will often need to bring their own towel, \$100-a-day folks won't.
- b. I bring a thin hand towel for the occasional need.
- c. Washcloths are rare in Europe. **\*quick-drying synthetic towels.**

**27. Sewing kit:**

- a. Clothes age rapidly while traveling.
- b. Take along a few safety pins and buttons.

**28. Travel information:**

- a. Rip out appropriate chapters from guidebooks, staple them together, and store in a sealable plastic baggie.
- b. When you're done, give them away.

**29. Map:**

- a. Get a map best suited to your trip's overall needs and pick up maps for specific local areas as you go.

**30. Address list:**

- a. A list of e-mail and mailing addresses will help you keep in touch.
- b. You can send mass e-mails as you go (bring a shrunk-down print-out of your e-mail address book in case you can't access it online).
- c. Or if you prefer to send postcards, consider printing your mail list onto a sheet of adhesive address labels before you leave.
- d. You'll know exactly who you've written to, and the labels will be perfectly legible.

**31. Postcards from home and photos of your family:**

- a. A sealable plastic baggie of show-and-tell pictures is always a great conversation piece with Europeans you meet.

**32. Small notepad and pen:**

- a. A tiny notepad in your back pocket is a great organizer, reminder, and communication aid (for sale in European stationery stores).

**33. Journal:**

- a. An empty book to be filled with the experiences of your trip will be your most treasured souvenir. Attach a photocopied calendar page of your itinerary. Use a hardbound type designed to last a lifetime, rather than a spiral notebook. One example is: Moleskine notebooks. ([www.moleskine.it](http://www.moleskine.it)).

## **2. Optional Bring-Alongs**

### **1. Picnic supplies:**

- a. Bring or buy a small tablecloth to give your meal some extra class (and to wipe the knife on), salt and pepper, a cup, a spoon, a washcloth (to dampen and store in a baggie for cleaning up).
- b. A plastic plate is handy for picnic dinners in your hotel room.

### **2. Packing cubes:**

- a. These see-through, zip-up mesh containers keep your clothes tightly packed and well organized.

### **3. Clothes compressor:**

- a. This handy invention — I like the one by Pack-Mate — allows you to pack bulky clothes (like sweaters and jackets) without taking up too much space or creating wrinkles.
- b. Simply put the item in the bag, roll it up to force the air out through the one-way nozzles, and pack it away.

**4. Nightshirt:**

- a. Especially for women.

**5. Light warm-up suit:**

- a. Use for pajamas, evening lounge outfit, instant modest street wear, smuggling things, and "going" down the hall.

**6. Spot remover:**

- a. Bring Shout wipes or a dab of Goop grease remover in a film canister.

**7. Sandals or flip-flops**

**8. Slippers:**

- a. I bring comfy slippers with leather bottoms on winter trips — great for the flight and for getting cozy in my hotel room.

**9. Inflatable pillow:**

- a. For snoozing on the plane (or "neck nest").

**10. Pillowcase.**

- a. It's cleaner and possibly more comfortable to stuff your own.

**11. Hair drier:**

- a. People with long or thick hair appreciate a travel hair drier in the off-season, when hair takes a long time to dry and it's cold outside.
- b. These are generally provided in \$100-plus hotel rooms.

**12. Hostel sheet:**

- a. Hostels require one.
- b. Bring your own (sewn up like a sleeping bag), buy one, or rent a sheet at hostels (about \$4 per stay).
- c. It doubles as a beach or picnic blanket, comes in handy on overnight train rides, shields you from dirty blankets in mountain huts, and will save you money in other dorm-type accommodations, which often charge extra for linen or don't provide it at all.

**13. Tiny lock:**

- a. Use it to lock your backpack zippers shut.
- b. Note that if you check your bag on a flight, the lock may be broken to allow the bag to be inspected.
- c. You can improve the odds of your lock's survival by buying one approved by the TSA (Transportation Security Administration, the agency responsible for airport security).
- d. While you'll unlock the TSA-approved lock with a combination, security agents will be able to open the lock without damaging it by using a special master key.

**14. Small flashlight:**

- a. Handy for reading under the sheets after "lights out" in the hostel, late-night trips down the hall, exploring castle dungeons, and hypnotizing street thieves.
- b. Tiny-but-powerful LED flashlights — about the size of your thumb — are extremely bright, compact, and lightweight.

**15. Radio, Walkman, MP3 player, or recorder:**

- a. Partners can bring a Y-jack for two sets of earphones.
- b. Some travelers use micro-cassette or digital recorders to capture pipe organs, tours, or journal entries.
- c. Some recorders have radios, adding a new dimension to your experience.

**16. Adapters:**

- a. Electrical plugs.

**17. Stronger light bulbs:**

- a. You can buy these in Europe to give your cheap hotel room more brightness than the 40-watt norm.

**18. Office supplies:**

- a. Bring paper, envelopes, and some sticky notes (such as Post-Its) to keep your place in your guidebook.

**19. Small roll of duct tape:**

**20. Mailing tube:**

- a. This protects the posters and prints you buy along your trip.
- b. You can trim it to fit inside your backpack (though this obviously limits the dimensions of the posters you can carry).

**21. A good paperback:**

- a. There's plenty of empty time on a trip to either be bored or enjoy some good reading.
- b. If you're desperate, popular American paperbacks are available in European airports and major train stations (usually for more than double their American price).

**22. Insect repellent:**

- a. Especially for France and Italy.

**23. Collapsible umbrella:**

- a. I like one that's small and compact,
- b. Sturdy and well-constructed enough to withstand strong winds.

**24. Poncho:**

- a. Hard-core vagabonds use a poncho — more versatile than a tarp — as protection in a rainstorm, a ground cloth for sleeping, or a beach or picnic blanket.

**25. Gifts:**

- a. Local kids love T-shirts.
- b. Gardeners appreciate flower seeds.

### 3. Packing List for Women

These are just a few items suggested by travel lists and other genealogists. For more detail, see: <http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/womenpacking.htm>

#### 1. Clothing

- a. 1 pair of walking/comfortable shoes
- b. 1 pair of sandals (weather permitting)
- c. 1 rainproof jacket
- d. 2-4 pairs of shorts/capris/skorts
- e. 2 pairs of pants (one dressy, one casual), 1 belt
- f. 1 swimsuit (packed in a plastic bag)
- g. 5 pairs of socks (cotton blend)
- h. 5 pairs of underwear (silk, lace, or micro-fiber dries quickest)
- i. 1 extra bra
- j. 4-6 shirts (long/short-sleeved, various colors)
- k. 1-2 light cardigans for layering
- l. 1-2 skirts (wrinkle-resistant)
- m. 2 dresses (optional)
- n. 1 hat
- o. scarves (to wear with clothing or hat)
- p. 2 vests (optional)
- q. 1 pair of pajamas (or long shirt to get you to the bathroom down the hall if necessary)

#### 2. Toiletries/Medicine

- a. Body soap/puff (washcloth); most European hotels do not supply washcloths
- b. Toothbrush/toothpaste/floss
- c. Shampoo/conditioner
- d. Brush/comb
- e. Lotion
- f. Vaseline (for feet)
- g. Razor (non-electric)/shaving cream or soap
- h. Sunscreen, insect repellent
- i. Prescription drugs (in original container with your name and your doctor's name, write down generic name)
- j. First aid kit/moleskin/blister kit
- k. Feminine hygiene products
- l. Deodorant
- m. Nail clippers/file/tweezers
- n. Spare glasses and/or prescription, mini-eyeglass repair kit, or contact lenses and supplies
- o. Hand sanitizer

- p. Vitamins
- q. OTC remedies (whatever works for you): Pepto, decongestants, etc.
- r. Clothesline, sink stopper, soap
- s. Baby powder (dry shampoo for hair)

### **3. Money and Security**

- a. Money belt: Passport, plane ticket, debit card, credit cards, traveler's checks, rail pass, driver's license (if you're renting a car)
- b. Security: Bury copies of your passport, plane ticket, and prescriptions in the bottom of your luggage

### **4. Necessities for Hostelling**

- a. Pack towel
- b. Sleep sheet

### **5. Packing Essentials**

- a. Pack light, wash frequently, and buy it if you need it.
- b. Your pack should weigh about 20% of your body weight, preferably no more than 20 pounds.
- c. Limit yourself to one carry-on size bag: 9" x 21" x 13."
- d. A week before your trip, pack your bag with everything you think you want to take, and carry it around for a day. Is it comfortable? Too heavy? Better to know now than later!