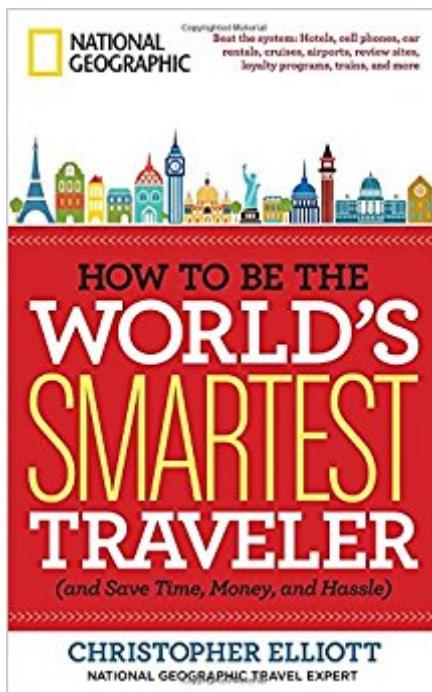


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How To Be The World's Smartest Traveler (and Save Time, Money, And Hassle)



Synopsis

Leading travel expert and USA TodayÂ columnist Christopher Elliott shares the smartest ways to travel in this tip-filled guide from National Geographic. Drawing on more than 20 years of experience as a consumer travel advocate, Elliott gives you the inside scoop on how to navigate the often perplexing world of travel, with detailed advice on:Â Â Â â ¢Â AirlinesÂ Â Â â ¢Â car rentalsÂ Â Â â ¢Â cruisesÂ Â Â â ¢Â hotels and alternative lodgingÂ Â Â â ¢Â the TSA and securityÂ Â Â â ¢Â staying connectedÂ Â Â â ¢Â review websitesÂ Â Â â ¢Â resolving complaintsÂ Â Â â ¢Â vacation rentalsÂ Â Â â ¢Â passports and visasÂ Â Â â ¢Â and much more. Full of recommendations, real-life case histories, and the answers to the most common "and confounding" questions, this book is a must-read for anyone traveling anywhere.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The USA Today columnist draws on his 20 years as a travel advocate to give the inside scoop on how to navigate the world of travel, with detailed advice." --Publishers Weekly "An indispensable road map....even seasoned travelers can learn something from this wide-ranging guide that hits on everything from finding the ideal suitcase to snagging a great airfare." --USA Today "For less than \$20 you canÂ saveÂ yourself a thousand travel tears." --Detroit Free Press "Whether you're planning a once-in-a-lifetime vacation or you travel regularly for business, this is a book you can use." --Library Journal "Even the most seasoned travelers can use a helping hand, especially as traveling has become increasingly complicated....Elliott offers tips and advice â " and plenty of them." --Chicago Tribune "Christopher Elliott, the trusted consumer travel advocate...has compiled

his tips and strategies into a book, whose spot-on subtitle promises to "Save Time, Money and Hassles" • for travelers." --The Sacramento Bee

CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT is a nationally acclaimed consumer advocate who is A National Geographic Traveler's Editor-at-Large and resident ombudsman. He writes their "Problem Solved" column, a nationally syndicated weekly travel column, a regular USA Today column, and a daily blog focused on solving consumer travel problems. Elliott writes a weekly column for The Washington Post and is a personal finance blogger at Mint.com. He's hosted a cable TV show and a nationally syndicated radio show, and was an independent producer for NPR and a commentator for both NPR and Marketplace. As a pioneer in digital journalism, he founded the Internet's first business travel website in 1994 and began blogging in 1996, before it was called blogging. He became ABCNews.com's first travel columnist in 1997, and his work has since appeared in a variety of major news outlets, including CBS Interactive, CNN.com, MSNBC.com and USAToday.com. As an early adopter, he was one of the first journalists with a presence on Facebook, Google+, and Twitter. Currently, his family is on an open-ended journey around the world, covering the adventure for nationalgeographic.com and the Huffington Post.

While the book is easy to read, it is also very repetitive in the advice it gives. To me, almost all of it is common sense and can be summarized in a few sentences, no matter what topic the author talks about (e.g. booking flight, hotels, rental cars, cruises):1. Always compare prices for everything (flights, hotels, rental cars, ...) from different sources before you book.2. Always read the fine print of any contract you sign - it's important to need to know the details.3. There is no solution that works for everyone (e.g. not one way to book hotels). I don't travel a lot, so I was hoping to get some good advice, but I feel like I already knew ~90%. Also, there was little concrete advice. Most chapters give an somewhat broad overview over different options and end with "you have to figure out what works for you". I liked the chapter about Loyalty Programs (bottom line: they are probably not worth it), but that's not worth buying the book for.

I've followed the author's blog and LinkedIn articles, and when this book came out, I put it on my wish list for future purchase for the next time I travel. I'm familiar with the author's beliefs and why he believes in what he does (so unless you are one of the few Americans who actually travels hundreds of thousands of miles year after year, loyalty programs really aren't for you--he doesn't get to deep into why, but that's because he's a well known blogger and consumer advocate and most

people are familiar with his beliefs and reasoning behind them). I didn't think I would travel anytime soon, but I did and I am. I remembered this book (while reviewing my wishlist) and thought, what the hell, let me buy it and read it. I am so glad I bought it!!! I knew absolutely NOTHING about travel and planning a vacation. lol. I honestly didn't know there was a such thing as timeshares or a difference between hotels and rentals. So this book explained that to me and I feel well prepared to handle those situations should they arise. I am prepared for my car rental and any problems that might arise from that. I downloaded the rental pic app to document everything in case there is a problem. And after reading this book, I know how to handle any travel problems (with the airline, hotel, or car rental), should I have a problem (okay, more like I'll reference this guide in case I do--good thing I always bring my Kindle with me). I always read the fine print, but I'm so glad a book puts it all out there for you in laymen's terms. And that you don't have to read the book from cover the cover, but simply use it as a reference guide as you need it. A must purchase for the experienced and for the newbies :)

This book had me sold on its cover title. Who wouldn't want to be one of the World's Smartest Travelers? I had even more confidence on the quality of the book after reading the credentials of the author. But unfortunately the contents did not live up to the impression the title gave. For a book that wants its readers to be the world's smartest, it was too US-focused. The format of the contents was easy-to-digest, but again I was hoping it tackles topics beyond basics. I was hoping for more insider-tips, beyond basic knowledge we can find in many sources. I would have appreciated it also if the author presented the writing in a more personal way, not just "be careful to do this, because it will lead to this", "I advice you to do this because", or facts that we can find elsewhere, ex. about credit card companies, car rentals etc. Like if the author shared his very own travel experiences, it would allow me as the reader to learn from the experience of the author. And maybe, just maybe, it would leave me an even smarter traveler. As a basic guide, I believe the more appropriate title for the book would be "Traveling 101", or "How to be a smarter traveler"

Years ago, "getting there is half the fun" was the advertising slogan for Cunard Lines, but both Cunard and the slogan have fallen on hard times -- hence, this book. Much of this book is common sense for semi-experienced travelers, but I found plenty of useful, concise, accurate information (based on my experience). The author has helped people navigate the Travel Environment in his work as contributor and consumer advocate for National Geographic's travel magazine, and he runs a useful website. Realistically, some coverage isn't nearly as complete as you may want -- it's a

small book -- but it can help set your mind in motion. Topics range from health and safety (and the TSA) to making efficient complaints to managing cash flow and keeping records to surviving a sales talk. The book seems useful both for beginners and fairly experienced travelers, and designed for reasonably well-off but budget-conscious voyagers rather than someone planning to hitch-hike across Asia in twelve weeks. The bibliography is a bit sparse, and organization lacks some finesse, with little tid-bits of information scattered all over the place -- I'd read each chapter even if you've found what you need. Some hints, while obvious, are useful reminders (like saying you won't be at your most coherent while angrily calling the airline about a sudden delay after being sleep-deprived). The author also does a good job advising what you'll just need to put up with, who will be most likely to help when you need it (and why your courtesy helps), and why it's largely up to you to manage your enjoyment even if you have grounds to complain. I'd suggest airport bookstores sell this book (BTW I recently found the LAX airport bookstore outstanding, which made even a 17 hour delay worthwhile). I'll bet the book would appeal to frustrated travelers who wish they'd seen it before leaving home. Travel websites could also put a "hint of the day" as part of their headliner and if they do, this book could provide just the ticket. I would suggest putting this one on your electronic reader so you can keep it on your person without the bulk and weight of the printed version.

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