



HOW TO GET THE MOST BANG FOR YOUR TRAVEL BUCK

IF THE GFC IS STILL MESSING WITH YOUR HOLIDAY BUDGET, CONSIDER THESE OPTIONS, WHICH WON'T SEE YOU HAVING TO BUNK IN A COMMUNAL DORM, OR SLEEP IN THE CARGO-HOLD!

USA: According to Flight Centre spokesman Haydn Long, the main factor driving more travellers to holiday abroad is discounted airfares, particularly on routes to the US and UK.

Lonely Planet's *Best in Travel 2010* listed the US in the Top 10 hottest destinations, saying that travellers are becoming more interested in traditional American historical sites, especially Washington DC's freebie zone of museums and monuments. If that's the case, then we Aussies are a lucky bunch! A great exchange rate and cheaper airfares makes the US a no-brainer when it comes to choosing an international destination.

Things to do, naturally, include the Big Apple, which is not going to get any more affordable for us than right now! Spend a steamy summer

strolling through central park, catch some shows on Broadway, or shop til you drop for designer rags at Century 21. There's a massive amount of cool things to do, and it's time to cross them off your wish list. Or, if nostalgia is your thing, take a road trip on historic Route 66 from Los Angeles to Chicago, or Route 101, which hugs the west coast between Southern California and Washington State.

Dollar parity may only come once or twice in a lifetime, so saddle up your wagons and get going while the going is this good.

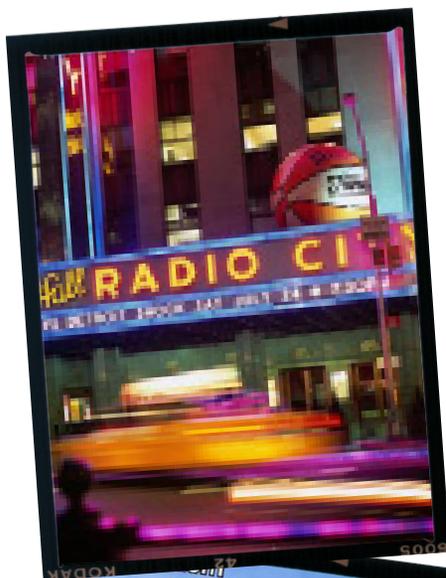
For more information check out:

www.qantas.com.au

www.vaustralia.com.au

www.travel.com.au

www.nytimes.com/Broadway/



Package Holiday Deals

Thomas Cook was a pioneer in the package holiday field. He first started organising group trips in the UK back in the 19th century, expanding to Europe soon after.

Of course, things have come a long way since then, and package holidays have morphed in to a popular and cost-effective way to take a break from busy schedules.

The most costly aspects of a holiday, such as transport and accommodation, are usually the mainstay of a packaged deal, and extras such as transfers, meals, rental car or tours may also be offered.

Thailand and Bali are bargain destinations in their own right but with low cost airlines and high quality hotel accommodation far surpassing the equivalent hotel costs back home, deals have never been so good. Plus, once you are there, activities, shopping and eating tend to be very inexpensive and exciting!

You've got to love South Pacific destinations for families. Fiji is bursting with family friendly resorts that offer lots of freebies for kids such as accommodation and meals. The friendly locals, sun, sand and surf will keep the whole family entertained. Check out other favourites, Samoa and Vanuatu.

For more information check out:

- www.escapetravel.com.au
- www.flightcentre.com.au
- www.travel.com.au

Cruising

The great thing about cruising is that you only have to unpack once! This is the ultimate in package holidays as almost everything is all-inclusive. Cruising has become extremely popular and sophisticated, and there are so many options to match all manner of ages, destinations and wallets.

Once aboard, if you are happy to eat at dining options that do not require a supplement to be paid, you'll find more than enough food to keep you satiated – and probably in need of a few gym visits! Luckily, access to the gym is free!

There is a long and varied list of entertainment available to keep you occupied if you don't want to laze your holiday away. Movies, shows, dance lessons, trivia, and a tonne of things



WITH THE AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH, IT'S THE PERFECT TIME TO TRAVEL OVERSEAS BUT IT'S NOT JUST THE EXCHANGE RATE THAT'S GIVING AUSSIE'S MORE FOR THEIR BUCK.

you never thought about learning are on offer.

The best thing is cruises leave from your own backyard as P&O and Princess Cruises have six ships based in various ports in Australia year round. Additionally, Holland America and Royal Caribbean spend the summer months sailing from the land Down Under. If you are happy to snag a flight home, sail a sector of a world cruise then jump ship in places like New Zealand, Singapore, Fremantle or ports further afield.

There is one catch! Drinks are not typically included, so if you plan on propping up the bar or indulging in cocktails for the daily sundowners, keep check of your tab or you might jump ship with an eye-opening credit card bill when you get back on dry land!

For more information check out:

- www.cruiseabout.com.au
- www.pocruises.com.au
- www.ozcruising.com.au

Cheap Domestic Flights

If you prefer to stay local and see a bit more of your home turf, then keep your eyes peeled for airfare specials as airlines and websites are always in constant sale mode.

And then...?

Check out any of the numerous hotel websites such as www.wotif.com or www.agoda.com to snap up a bargain for the night. There's always a hot deal option and varying rates to match your budget and tastes.

If you are going to major cities, sign up to discount websites such as ourdeal.com.au or scoopon.com.au for that particular city and wait for some bigger than Ben Hur dining deals, so you'll be dining like kings on a pauper's wage! These websites also have huge discounts on activities; maybe enjoy a spa treatment while you are in town – you are on holidays afterall!

For more information check out:

- www.jetstar.com.au
- www.virginblue.com.au
- www.tigerairways.com.au