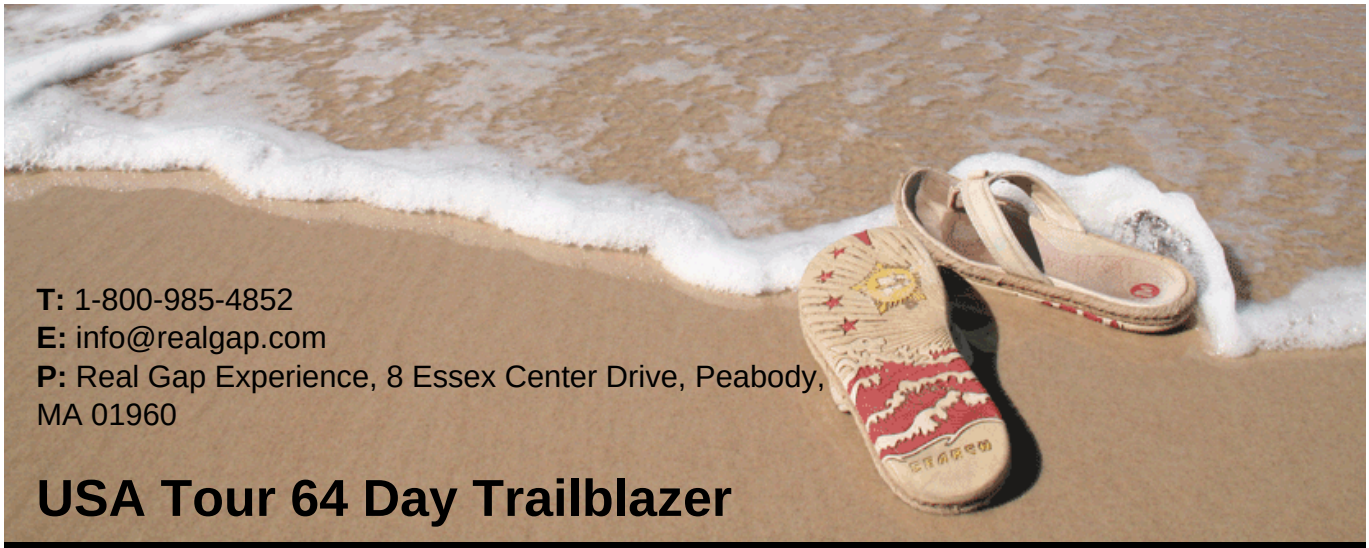

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USA Tour 64 Day Trailblazer

Adventure Relaxation Culture

Trip Name: USA Tour 64 Day Trailblazer **Trip Code:** USTB **Duration:** From 64 days

Trip Highlights

- Niagara Falls Maid of the Mist cruise
- Evening illumination visit to Washington DC Monuments
- New Orleans' Bourbon Street
- Walk the Golden Gate Bridge
- City tours of Las Vegas, Hollywood and San Francisco
- National parks and Monuments - Carlsbad Caverns, Rocky Mountains, Mesa Verde, Arches, Monument Valley, Grand Canyon, Bryce, Zion, Badlands, Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse, Yellowstone, Glacier, Banff/Lake Louise, Redwood and Yosemite

Overview

So how about two months dedicated to one of our USA tours and all things stateside? Get your adrenaline pumping as you explore the roar of Niagara Falls. Then sink your teeth in some Chicago pizza before crossing the Great Plains to Yellowstone. Challenge yourself on the cliffs of Yosemite National Park before hitting the streets of San Francisco. Try your luck in the clubs and casinos in Las Vegas before a spectacular sunrise over the Grand Canyon.

Bust your gut with a massive steak dinner in Texas and experience the down-home charm of the Deep South as you sway the night away to blues on Bourbon Street. Then soak up the sun on the Florida beaches before heading back north to finish your once-in-a-lifetime journey in the ‘city that never sleeps’.

Destination Info

There isn’t a person out there that hasn’t dreamed of taking off on the ultimate north American road trip with a bunch of mates! Cruising down the open road, tunes cranked, wind in your hair, not a care in the world; getting off the beaten track with a whole continent to discover.

USA Tour 64 Day Trailblazer

The United States is a country of incredible diversity. The nation is home to dynamic cities and small towns that vary dramatically from region to region, and the awe-inspiring National Parks are unparalleled for their beauty and diversity. Eastern energy, slow-paced deep southern charm and a laid back west coast lifestyle, combine to create an incredible culture of virtually everything.

Itinerary

This tour also operates from Los Angeles to Los Angeles. For this route, read the itinerary from Day 35 with your first stop in San Diego.

Day: 1-2 New York Area & Washington D.C

Washington D.C. is the perfect introduction to the social, cultural and political history of the United States. Explore D.C.'s parks by day and monuments by night. From the impressive Smithsonian Museum to the White House, to Georgetown's trendy bars, the capital has something for everyone.

Day: 3-4 Carolinas & Charleston

Bond with new buddies as mountain views morph into swamps, plantations and palmetto palms in the Carolinas, then enjoy a cozy campfire. Historic Charleston is next. This place oozes old world charm, especially the gaudy mid-1700 houses of Rainbow Row.

Day: 5 St Augustine

Soak up the Spanish Vibe, it’s as simple as that!

Day: 6 Miami

SoBe (aka South Beach) has it all! Stroll the art deco seafront or pose with the beautiful people on sugary sand and in ultra-cool nightspots. Magnificent Miami beckons with miles of white beaches and palm trees swaying in the breeze...

Day: 7-8 Florida Keys

Over conch fritters and Key lime pie, admire a crimson sunset and swap tales from teeming reefs, before celebrating with a sunset party!

Day: 9-10 Orlando

It's not far from strip malls and souvenir shops to the Magic Kingdom. Escape from it all with an optional day at Disneyworld. Forget your age, it makes a big kid of one and all. With two nights here, fitting in extra thrills and spills is a piece of cake. Maybe slip-slide around Wet 'n' Wild, be drenched by killer whales at SeaWorld or cross the final frontier at Kennedy Space Center. Who wants to grow up anyhow?

Day: 11-12 Panama Beach

Dream of lazy beach days or windsurf and jet ski the afternoon away. The heat of the beach simmers beyond sundown in this undisputed good-time town. Pack dancing shoes with your flip-flops as the party spirit simmers far into the small hours at the hippest, hottest haunts of the Gulf Coast.

Day: 13-14 New Orleans

Now we're talking all that jazz! We head into the enchanting French Quarter of New Orleans! Hear the real deal at Preservation Hall, echoing with chirpy trumpet and smooth sax or sample a Hurricane at Pat O'Brien's! New Orleans has more than just food, drink and music to offer. Do the Huckleberry Finn thing as you chug along the Mississippi River.

Day: 15-18 Texas

Look for gators on our optional Louisiana swamp tour through the mysterious bayous of Cajun country (a must do!). Then don your Stetson and toast marshmallows as the Lone Star bids you a big-hearted welcome for four nights in the mighty Texas. The second biggest of the states has plenty of oil, cowboys and southern hospitality. Feel that tumbleweed vibe at the Alamo in San Antonio and don't forget to checkout the Buckhorn Saloon and Museum, crammed with cowboy curiosities.

Day: 19 Carlsbad Caverns National Park

Do you know your stalactite from your stalagmite? Carlsbad Caverns is one of the largest cave systems in the world and boasts over 100 limestone caves sporting bizarre rock formations. Pack the amphitheatre at dusk as thousands of resident bats swarm out.

Day: 20-21 Sante Fe & Mesa Verde

Soak up the artsy vibe of Santa Fe, the oldest US capital city, high in the desert foothills, and check out the International UFO Museum and Research Centre (and gift shop!) in Roswell! They say Aliens crashed to Earth and they have proof! Mesa Verde National Park is next. Explore the ancient dwellings of Ancestral Pueblans cut into the cliff face on an optional ranger led hike; viewings are highly recommended!

Day: 22-24 Colorado Rocky Mountains & Arches National Park

Distant peaks sport snowy caps and pines huddle together as you pit yourself against amazing hiking and biking trails in the Rockies before heading to Arches National Park. The park's name says it all. Some 2,000 orange sandstone arches strike their poses. The scenery here is breathtaking and a sunset stroll to Delicate Arch tops most 'to do' lists. Take on the famous "Slick Rock" mountain bike trail, float down the Colorado on a scenic rafting trip or tackle the terrain high above on a guided jeep tour.

Day: 25 Monument Valley

Navajo legends rise from crimson flats at Monument Valley. The only things to pre-date the origins of Native American culture are the massive towering rock formations which dominate the awe-inspiring landscape. Take the opportunity to experience it close-up with an optional Navajo guided jeep ride before setting up camp on the edge of Monument Valley. What a place to swap campfire stories and songs.

Day: 26-27 Grand Canyon National Park

Next we come face to face with the most awe-inspiring national park of them all, the Grand Canyon. Nothing you have ever seen before will prepare you for this spectacular site! Hike from the forest above to the desert below, or take a helicopter flight above it all and marvel at the brilliant colours. One thing's for sure though, this place looks incredible from any angle, especially walking along the rim at sunset or sunrise.

Day: 28-29 Lake Powell, Bryce Canyon National Park

It's time for some stunning R&R, basking in the clear blue waters of Lake Powell ringed by deep red rock. Swim, ride a waverunner, horse-ride in the desert or just sit back on the shore and soak up the powerful rays of this beautiful and surreal man-made desert oasis. Bryce is next with it's knobbly hoodoos striking their crazy poses as your camera clicks away at a perfect sunset. What's a hoodoo when it's at home? Actually, Hoodoos are weird and wonderful rock spires arranged in rows as far as the eye can see. They will leave you searching for your own way to describe this 'indescribable' place.

Day: 30 Zion National Park

Another batch of top notch trails provides one final hiking fix at Zion National Park. Swim and explore the hidden canyons or maybe hike to the top at Angels Landing. Okay, so getting up there can be devilish at times, but the famous trail puts on a 360-degree display of this magnificent national park.

Day: 31-32 Las Vegas

Next, Las Vegas - the greatest show on earth! The Strip, the shows, the casinos, the clubs; Sin City's glitziest and brashest spots are sure to impress as you cruise the Las Vegas Boulevard on an included limo ride! Hop onto one of the world's highest thrill rides at Vegas' Stratosphere and it won't just be your head that's spinning. And if that's not enough, take a helicopter flight down The Strip or just gamble the night away in one of the world class casinos.

Day: 33-34 San Diego

It's all about the beach: bronzed bodies, big shades and baggy shorts. Wow fellow beachgoers on your surfboard or let the world-famous San Diego Zoo or SeaWorld steal the limelight

Day: 35 Los Angeles

Journey across the desert and catch some California sun as you roll into the larger than life LA scene and our turn around point before heading back east. Why not hang out at and people watch at Venice Beach tonight?

Day: 36-37 Los Angeles & Pacific Coast

With LA in the rearview mirror, head up the rugged California coast on the Pacific Coast Highway and take in the sights as the surf spirit takes hold of you! Fasten your seatbelt for blockbusting scenery.

Day: 38-39 Yosemite National Park

Heading east through California's gold country we following the scenic drive into the Yosemite National Park region and a chance to hike or bike, through the extraordinary landscape of glacier-carved granite monoliths and spectacular waterfalls. Either way, this park rocks! Once deep inside Yosemite, keep your eyes peeled for black bears. Coyote roam freely as well and when the sun goes down, their howling often echoes amidst pines and

sequoias. Admit it, this is what clicks the spirit of the great outdoors up a notch or two.

Day: 40-41 San Francisco

Next, "Everybody's Favourite City", San Francisco. This town will blow you away. Sunlight on the bay, wispy fog around Golden Gate Bridge, cable cars climbing steep streets: it's a 24-carat stunner. Maybe view the Bay and Alcatraz on an optional sunset sailboat cruise, then the party people can flock to trendy bars and clubs in North Beach or Haight-Ashbury and that friendly vibe gets even better.

Day: 42-44 Redwood National Park & Oregon

You will amazed to walk amongst the towering forest giants of Redwood National Park - home to the tallest trees in the world and some of the most spectacular coastal scenery on the Pacific Coast. Leave footprints on what is virtually your private Pacific beach or traipse between gigantic Redwoods, feeling like ants in their mighty shadow. Next, the Oregon coast is rugged and perfect for some dune-buggy fun!

Day: 45 Seattle

Beam yourself up! Well, take the glass-fronted elevator up the iconic Space Needle (optional) and gaze over the Emerald City with a hot cup of coffee from the the very first Starbucks! Then tonight blare out guitar-loaded classics in the city that gave the world Hendrix and Nirvana.

Day: 46 Vancouver

Straight into Canada and the awesome city of Vancouver. With its stunning combination of mountains and coastline, the city boasts outstanding views. Take to Stanley Park on two wheels, then regain your inner city slicker around A-grade museums and galleries or bustling Granville Market. Why not check out the city nightlife in Gas Town or the eclectic "Robsonstrasse" tonight.

Day: 47-48 British Columbia & Lake Louise

Heading through BC, appreciate the mirrored lakes, grizzled peaks and spectacular scenery as dark conifers and

shadowy summits drift by. A nickname like the "gem of the Rockies" is a lot to live up to, but it's no sweat for Lake Louise. The imposing chateau looks on as mountains cluster round the turquoise surface. As for you, well, you could always hike out to the Plain-of-Six-Glaciers or inspect the scene by paddle power on an optional canoe trip.

Day: 49-50 Banff National Park

Blaze show-stopping trails in the footfalls or horse tracks of pioneers of old. Perhaps bounce across the bumpy terrain by mountain bike or hover above it all by helicopter. One dunk in the hot springs and a drink or two later, you'll sleep like a log.

Day: 51-53 Glacier National Park & Montana

With two days in Glacier, you'll have plenty of time to explore the alpine meadows, snow-streaked cliffs and shimmering lakes. Montana is often referred to as 'Big Sky Country' because of its numerous stars, but it is also a trekkers' paradise. This area sure adds a healthy dose of the wow factor.

Day: 54-55 Yellowstone National Park

Pitch up in the world's first National Park, Yellowstone. This is a superb wilderness of spouting geysers, waterfalls and simmering mud pools. A-grade American stars grace the trails - keep your eyes peeled for the abundant wildlife. Large herds of bison and elk roam the park and if you're lucky, you may even see bear or wolf.

Day: 56-57 Cody, Wyoming & Black Hills

We're into Wild Wyoming, the heart of cowboy country, This is what Cody is all about. Named after William Cody (aka Buffalo Bill), the old west is alive and literally kicking here. After all, "Cody is rodeo", with nightly summer shows. You'll agree with the Lakota people, from afar the pine-coated hills do appear black. Mount Rushmore's next and the uniquely sculptured faces of our four greatest Presidents. Close by, another rock-carved epic is shaping up: the Crazy Horse monument, a nod to the famed Lakota Indian war leader, very impressive!

Day: 58-59 Badlands & South Dakota

Never mind the "bad lands", touching down here feels like a moon landing. Low-slung buttes, chiselled spires and

saw-tooth ridges have a bizarre lunar quality. Spend the afternoon exploring the park's surreal landscape and don't forget your camera for sunset! From the North Star State, cross native American Sioux terrain and America's original western frontier. Resident coyotes may utter the occasional howl as you settle back for some shut-eye under canvas.

Day: 60-62 Chicago & Ohio

Chicago is next on the menu for two nights, famous for music, museums and Lake Shore Drive. Soar up Willis Tower for dizzying views over the Windy City, trawl the upmarket malls of Magnificent Mile and grab a slice of Chicago's deep-dish pizza before peddling on the optional "Bobby's Bike Hike" tour. Then hit the blues groove, drop into a corner bar or seek out heaving dance and hip-hop beats in the hangouts of Wicker Park and Bucktown. Leaving the shores of Lake Michigan we cross Indiania bound for another of the great five: Lake Erie.

Day: 63 Niagara Falls

On the edge of Lake Ontario, the sensation of crashing water is stupendous, the noise immense, at America's greatest national attraction, Niagara Falls. Wait 'til you're down on the water aboard 'Maid of the Mist', where the cascades pound, churn and foam right before your eyes. That's what you call a front row seat!

Day: 64 New York Area

Today we travel through New York's Finger Lakes region and the Pocono Mountains en-route to the New York Area. This tour is not scheduled to spend any time in New York City so make sure you book extra hotel nights and explore the sights and sounds of the Big Apple on your own. Splurge along Fifth Ave, hit the top of the Empire State Building, or soak up the trendy, laidback vibe of Greenwich Village before heading home.

Accommodation

51 nights Camping (including fees and equipment)

12 hotel/hostel nights (approx. $30-$50 per night paid locally)

Meals

On our camping tours, our groups share in the preparation and cooking of the food. Supplies, excluding soft drinks and alcohol, are purchased from the food kitty, and each member of the group pays US$10 per day en route. This covers three meals on most days while we are camping; eating fresh foods that we purchase as we travel to satisfy the international flavour of the group - a healthy way to travel at an unbeatable price. Naturally this does not cover hotel stops or when Trek groups sometimes sample regional cuisine at local restaurants.

What's Included

- Services of a tour leader
- 51 nights camping fees and equipment
- All transportation by private vehicle
- Niagara Falls Maid of the Mist cruise
- Night time illumination tour of Washington DC monuments
- New Orleans Bourbon Street
- San Antonio's Riverwalk
- Alien spotting in Roswell
- Walk the Golden Gate Bridge
- Scenic walks and hikes
- City tour of Las Vegas, Hollywood and San Francisco
- National Parks and Monuments

What's Not Included

- International Flights
- Travel insurance
- 12 nights hotel/ hostel - approx. $30-$50 per night paid locally
- Food (kitty will be collected USD$10 a day)
- Optional activities

Minimum Age

Minimum age is 18 years. Maximum age is 38 years.

Flights

Your flight to the USA should arrive at Newark Airport, New Jersey no later than the day before your programme start date. Your return flight should be arranged for no earlier than the day after your programme end date. Alternatively, if you are starting the tour in Los Angeles, you should arrange your arrival and departure flights to Los Angeles.

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

Programme Changes

Please note that all tours are subject to change up to 8 weeks before the date of travel. It is advisable that you do not book flights or extra nights at hotels until 8 weeks before travel. If you do choose to book flights or hotels you will be liable for any changes that need to be made if the tour dates or hotels change.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

FAQs

1. **What are the average group sizes?**
   Group sizes for the USA Tours are 11.

2. **How much money do I need to bring on the tour?**
   For TrekAmerica camping tours you will need to budget for the food kitty. This is usually US$10 a day however see individual tour pages for specific details. This will cover all of your meals while camping but does not cover meals during hotel stops or when the group chooses to sample regional cuisine. Depending on the tour you choose, there may be en-route hotel nights paid locally and the cost will be shown on the itinerary. You should budget for each of these night stops. We recommend you take at least US$40/CAN$40 dollars per day to budget for your optional activities and snacks along the way on all our North American Treks. This does not include money for food kitty and en route hotel expenses. We suggest you bring US $150 with you in cash. ATM's and cash machines are readily available throughout North America and major credit cards are widely accepted throughout the country. Traveller's checks are accepted and can be a safe way to take your funds but aren't always the most practical. In some off the beaten track destinations ATM's and cash machines may be limited. Credit card payment can't be accepted for food kitty and enroute hotel payments.

3. **Do I need to arrive earlier than my tour?**
   We always recommend that you arrive the day or two before your tour so you have a chance to get past any jet lag. Staying at the departure hotel is always a good idea as there is only one pickup point.

4. **Do I need any vaccinations?**
   We recommend that you contact a physician or travel medicine clinic at least two months before travel in order to allow enough time for any immunisations that may be required to be completed. This is especially true for those planning travel to tropical areas or developing countries. A health professional will be able to assess your individual need for immunisations or preventative medication depending on your health situation, previous immunisation history and your travel itinerary. Information prior to your consultation with a doctor can be obtained from the 'Fit for Travel' website www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/

5. **When can I book my flights?**
   We do not recommend you book flights until 8 weeks before the start of the tour to ensure the tour is going ahead and confirmed.

6. **Do I need to tip?**
   Although it may not be customary in your country, it is normal and expected in North America to tip waiters, bar staff, any type of guide and taxi drivers. Service workers are paid a low wage and depend upon their tips for their livelihood. A minimum of 15% is standard in restaurants. Your trek leader works long and hard for you. He or she may well become your close friend during the trek, but they also need to pay their bills. If the leader's performance meets or exceeds your expectations we recommend a tip of US $5 per person, per day.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The currency in the US is the US Dollar (USD, symbol; $), which is divided into 100 Cents. Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 Cents (¢) and the 1 Dollar coin. Notes come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 Dollars, though the $2 note is rarely used.

No other currency is accepted but most major credit cards are universally accepted, especially Visa or MasterCard, and may even be required for larger purchases. ATMs are available almost everywhere and will charge a small fee for withdrawing cash using a credit card or international card, unless your card belongs to a worldwide network such as Cirrus or Exchange.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 11.16 $

Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 3.21 $
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 1.48 $
Water (0.33 litre bottle) 1.27 $

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

For stays of up to 90 days citizens of Australia, New Zealand and most European countries will need to apply for an ESTA visa before they go. The ESTA visa can be applied for online for a small fee and must be used within two years of issue.

For working holidays applicants will usually need to hold an ESTA visa and a working visa, the type of visa required will depend on the nature of your work, your nationality and the length of your stay; you will also usually need some form of sponsorship from an employer in the USA.

For the most up to date information on passports, visa requirements and working in the USA, please visit http://www.visabureau.com/america/default.aspx

Cultural Considerations

A global culture and tradition is virtually non-existent in the USA because of the vast mixture of backgrounds that its original immigrant education came from. This is particularly reflected in the number of China Towns, Irish Districts, Jewish districts and so on that are in virtually every city across North America, as well as the fact that several states have Spanish and French as official state languages alongside English.

The American people are similar to Europeans in terms of what does and doesn't offend them. Although sometimes seen as loud and crass when outside their native country, you may find that Americans in America are less overpowering than you might expect. Here are a few ways to avoid offending your hosts:

- It is best to avoid talking about religion – faith is seen as being entirely personal to many Americans, although you are likely to come across people belonging to religions that have the intention of trying to convert you. Whichever of these you come across, they will not be used to having their beliefs challenged and may become offended easily.
- Smoking in public is becoming restricted more and more – keep an eye out for signs.
- Americans tend to have a relaxed social attitude and you may find that people (even shop assistants and waiters) are really interested in talking to you, especially about your country of origin. This is seen to be polite so engage them in casual conversation.
- In such conversation you may find that the person you are talking to has little knowledge of life outside the US (this is by no means the majority of people) and may refer to stereotypes – if you feel that you need to correct their views, do it politely and they will be gracious.
- US residents feel a strong connection to their 'land of origin' even if their family has lived in America for 200 odd years and once had an Irish relative!
- Terrorism is still very much a topic that must be approached with utmost respect. Talking about war should also be approached with caution - the American public are very patriotic about their troops.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in the USA. The legal age of alcohol consumption in the US is 21. However, please respect other participants. Drinking is only permissible in moderation and must not impact on your volunteer work during the week. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated.

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into the USA. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, the USA has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including "soft" drugs like marijuana, are ILLEGAL. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

Tipping

In a restaurant or taxi you should tip 15- 20% of the bill total, as no service charge will be added on. Tipping is widely practiced due to the low wages that the workers in such professions receive.

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

As in most countries there are people who try to take advantage of tourists. The following advice is intended to help you stay safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your bag without your permission.
- Don't carry excess amounts of cash
- Wherever possible, walk around in groups, especially after dark, and avoid taking short cuts
- Do not pick up hitch hikers if you are driving and do not hitch hike yourself
- When you are out do not leave your drinks unattended, as there have been reports of drinks being spiked

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: www.fco.gov.uk
USA: www.travel.state.gov
Australia: www.smartraveller.gov.au

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if you card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

Language Guide

Here are some choice American phrases to get you started!

Pants - *Trousers*

Restroom/washroom - *Toilets*
Sidewalk - *Pavement*
Subway - *Underground*
Laundromat - *Laundrette*
Band-aid - *Plaster*
Soccer - *Football*
Football - *American Football*
Fanny Pack - *Bum bag*
Philly Cheese Steak - *A long sandwich made with thin slices of steak and melted cheese*
Twinkie - *A little golden sponge cake with a cream filling*
Candy - *Chocolate/sweets*

Americans tend to call certain things by their brand names, for example tissues are 'Kleenex' and so on.

Food & Drink

Currently the USA is famed for its love of the quick and easy fast food- burgers, pizza, fries and so on. However, there is so much choice out there, budget and otherwise- get out and sample it! You will be able to get any ethnicity food you could possibly imagine but if you want something properly American try out some steak, ribs, seafood in the coastal areas (especially Florida and California). Try some Cajun food (spot the European influence!) or something Mexican both options are delicious.

It is really important that you let us know before you depart if you are a vegetarian or have any other dietary requirements.

Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country.

To view a list of the public holidays for the USA, please see the link below:
www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/

Weather

The climate in the USA is relatively temperate though specific weather conditions can vary greatly depending on where you are; this country is pretty huge! As a general rule the further south you go, the hotter it gets, while the north and areas far from the coast experience the most extreme weather. California and the east coast are warm and balmy for most of the year while northern areas such as New York experience 4 definable seasons.

Hurricanes and tornadoes are more common in south-eastern areas and occur during excessive warm weather on a sporadic basis. The USA is the only country in the world to cover all of the six climactic zones, ranging from tropical to polar, which means that a trip here will be an adventure in more ways than one!

Time

The USA has four time zones (not including Hawaii and Alaska) all of which are behind the Greenwich Mean Time. They are:

- Eastern time; five hours behind GMT (New York)
- Central time; six hours behind GMT (Chicago, Texas)
- Mountain time; seven hours behind GMT(Rocky Mountains, Southwest)
- Pacific time; eight hours behind GMT(California, Nevada)

Don't forget to take Daylight Saving Time into account from mid-March to early November

Electricity

In the USA the electric system is 120 Volts and frequency 60 Hertz. If your device does not accept power at this voltage you will need an adapter. Outlets in United States of America / USA generally accept 1 type of plug:

Flat blade plug

Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of reommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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