



## 1. Tip a little extra

Gratuities are included in your all-inclusive vacation stay, but a few US dollar bills will go a long way when it comes to personal service. The resort staff is happy to service you, but if you slip your pool bar guy or gal some cash when you get there, you will have free-flowing beverages all day long.

We also like to tip our housekeeper daily while we are there. We tip when we are in the US, so we see this as no different. You will be amazed what items get stocked in the fridge more often. Personally, we might tip the housekeeper \$5 a day, the pool guy or gal either a buck or two for each delivery, or a \$20 for the day and you will have devoted service. Nothing that will break your bank, but your servers will work harder for you for a little incentive.

## 2. Bring a thermal water bottle or drink cup

Those cool frothy drinks may look good for a while, but as the sun beats down on them, they will lose their appeal. If you put them in a thermal cup, they will stay nice and cold.

## 3. Pack light!

You don't need a lot of clothing at an all-inclusive. A swimsuit, shorts and top by day, sundress and slacks in the evening will be perfect. Men, you should have a pair of khakis and a collared shirt, like a polo, and closed-toed shoes for dinner.

## 4. You get what you pay for

When it comes to an all-inclusive, it is our experience that what you spend really is determinant of the experience you will have. If your budget is lower than where you want to go, either cut the nights down or save a little while longer until you have a little more. If you pay for a cheap resort, you will get a cheap resort. No one ever says upon arrival, "Wow, I'm so glad we went with the cheapest resort we could find." No one... ever.

## 5. Upgrade if you can!

Always upgrade to the best room type that you can squeeze out of your budget. A "tropical view" maybe a view of the backside of the property overlooking scrub brush. For a little more, you may get yourself an ocean view; it's well worth that money. Also on that topic, a "partial ocean view" room means that you can see some part of the ocean, from some sort of angle of your room even if you have to crane your neck to see it. For a true ocean view room, you will want "oceanfront."

## 6. Drink bottled water

It's always better to drink bottled water instead of tap water when you're visiting another country.

## 7. Bring wide reusable straws

There will be plenty to drink, so bringing a reusable straw is a great idea if you want to be environmentally friend during your stay. Remember to bring WIDE straws, though, so smoothies and frozen drinks will fit through them nicely!



## 8. Bring a day bag

You'll want to bring a day bag or beach bag for taking your stuff to the pool or out on an excursion. You might be flying home with wet swimsuits, so it's a good idea to throw in a plastic bag for your return trip home.

## 9. Bring Lysol wipes

It's a good idea to make sure to wipe down heavily touched surfaces in the room when you get there.

## 10. Don't bring your own towels

Towels are provided at the pools, so you can save the luggage space for more important items.

## 11. Bring travel size hair products

Not all resort shampoo and condition is great. Sometimes they are, but if you are fussy with your hair products, it's a good idea to bring travel sizes of your favorites with you.

## 12. Men should bring long pants and shoes for evening wear

There are usually dress codes for evening dinners at all-inclusive resorts. Some resorts will allow men to wear shorts, but definitely bring at least one pair of long pants. Collared shirts and close-toed shoes are a must for these restaurants, as well.

## 13. Bring a waterproof phone case

Especially if your phone is doubling as your camera, you'll want to bring a good waterproof case so that you don't miss those photo ops just because you are in the water!

## 14. Learn a little bit of the native language

"Thank you," "please," "hello," "good morning, afternoon, and evening," are small gestures that will go a long way in showing courtesy to those in service to you. Remember that you are in their country and yet they learned your language to serve you.

## 15. Be nice!

Don't be the demanding stereotypical American traveler. Show courtesy to not only the staff serving you but to your fellow travelers, as well.

## 16. Contact your DMC to confirm your departure time

At least 24 hours prior to your departure from the resort, you should contact your DMC (destination management company). They are the ones who brought you to the resort, and now you will need to schedule your return to the airport. Do not put that off until the last day. Their hours of operation on the property are limited, so you will want to connect with them earlier in your stay, so you can forget about it for the rest of your relaxing time!



## 17. Drink responsibly

Even though it is an all-inclusive, make sure to drink responsibly because you don't want to end up in a foreign hospital.

## 18. Exchange cash at the front desk

When you get to the resort, you'll be able to exchange any large bills for small ones at the front desk. It will be great to have smaller bills for tipping or shopping.

## 19. Avoid "Unlimited Vacation Club"

You might see a desk at the resort for an "Unlimited Vacation Club." They may look like they belong, but beware that this might be a timeshare presentation that will waste a lot of your time! It's best to just avoid them all together.

## 20. Purchase trip insurance

I never go anywhere without a trip insurance policy for any of my travels. Each insurance company and policy offers different coverage. If you can get a Cancel For Any Reason policy, those are going to be your best option for the most unusual and unforeseen circumstances. We always offer our clients insurance options at the time of the vacation quote or within a day of booking the trip.

## 21. Book your excursions ahead of time

If you know you want to swim with dolphins, we can arrange that to happen before you leave. If your day happens to be rainy, you can switch the excursion to a different day.

If you are looking for a relaxing beach vacation with no agenda, doing the things you want to do when you want to do them, this is a great option for you! We have been to the islands and Mexico, know the resorts well, so if you are interested in this type of vacation, we will book you the best resort for your budget!