



Five tips for staying sane during long trips

Transcript 011

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Linda: Hi, I'm Linda.

Craig: And I'm Craig.

Linda: And this is the indie travel podcast episode 11 at www.indietravelpodcast.com. This week's show was recorded in Oberschützen in Austria and this week we'll be giving you five tips for staying sane during long trips. We're looking at those long periods of travel where you just want to get there, but it seems to be taking forever.

Craig: Last week, we finished up our Easter holiday in Dublin, having enjoyed a great couple of weeks with family and friends in the UK and in Ireland and it was time to get back to work. Unfortunately work was two days away... that's two planes, two coaches, two taxis, three trains, a minibus and a car trip.

Linda: It didn't look like much on the map, but the trip itself seemed to take forever. And whenever us Kiwis want to head overseas it takes at least 3 hours - and that's only if we're going to Fiji or Sydney, in Australia. If you've never experienced the joy of a long trip, Craig's going to read you an excerpt from something he wrote en-route from Auckland to Hong Kong a year ago.

Craig: Stuffed. Stuffed full of biscuits and sugar, stuffed into this cramped economy seat and stuffed after a stressful couple of days packing down a life into a suitcase.

The woman beside me coughs again. Polite and almost apologetic she sifts through a broadsheet [...]. Conscious of my health -- or paranoid by the latest WHO press-release -- she hasn't removed her facemask for the last seven hours. Surgical green coughs.

I'm acutely aware of the lack of turbulence. I eye the fasten-seatbelt sign again. It's a staring match that I won't win. But until it does no coffee will come my

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way. Nor will the coughing gatekeeper allow me into the aisle to wander, stretch and people-watch. A prisoner of my own making...Three hours more until the Hong Kong tarmac grapples with our undercarriage.

Linda: We've learned a lot since then...so here are our five tips for staying sane during long trips.

Craig: Tip number one - Leave yourself a reasonable buffer time between connections. Missing connections is a major cause of travel-related stress. Check out the reliability of the transport options you've chosen and plan accordingly. Air travel is notorious for being late -- at least anecdotally. Train and bus information always seems to change, especially when you're standing at the platform or bus stop and their timeliness varies dramatically from region to region.

Linda: Number two carries on from that - When possible, know what gate or platform you're going to arrive at before you actually get there. There's usually a map of large airports in the in-flight magazine if you're flying - if you have to catch another flight after you arrive, it might be worth having a look at that map. Sometimes you have to catch a bus or train to another terminal at the airport to catch your connecting flight – make sure you know how to get there.

Also, make sure you listen to those annoying announcements. It might be your bus or train that's just leaving from a different platform, without you on it.

Craig: Number three is a comfort issue. Think about what you're eating and drinking before and during the trip. Hangovers don't make for good travel, so have your leaving party a day or two early. Lighten up on drinking alcohol during your trip - there's no need to be a tee-totaller, but drinking will dull your reaction time and mess up your decision-making processes. And then there's toilets...Alcohol's a dehydrate so it'll make you want to visit them more than is needful. I've found one or two clean toilets on public transport, but I'm yet to find one I want to return to. Think twice about foods that'll make you hyper [hyperactive] and - for the sake of those around you - cut down on garlic!

Linda: Yeah, Craig. I know all about garlic. Also, make sure you've got some food with you. We always carry water and some snack food with us because we've been

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stuck without it, and that really really sucks. If you're flying, you can't take bottled water through security, but you can often take your bottle. If you hate paying airport prices for water, just empty your bottle, take it through with you and fill it up again on the other side of security - either ask cafe staff, or use a water fountain or just use the bathroom sinks (unless there's a sign telling you not to).

Craig: Tip number four: Don't plan important work during your travelling time. There are gonna be distractions and discomforts so you won't be performing at your peak. Take some time to relax, to nap, to read. If you feel the need to get stuff done make it some background reading or maintenance tasks like organising photos or sketching out your next itinerary.

Linda: And the last of our five tips for staying sane during long trips is to relax. Margaret Atwood says in "the Blind Assassin" that "It's better to travel than to arrive", and she does have a point. Your journey is a large part of your trip. Relax and enjoy it – enjoy the people you're with, the view, your book. It's worth having something to do that's relatively painless and unimportant - I usually have a puzzle book with me. And if you're like Craig - needing to do things - try to make friends with the lost time.

Craig: Well, that brings us to the end of today's show. Drop by the site www.indietravelpodcast.com to check out the resources page or you can send us an email using the form there, or mail@indietravelpodcast.com. If you do want to support us don't send money now - just leave a review at the itunes store or suggest our show to a friend or two.

Linda: So, until next week, travel well.

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