ROUND-THE-WORLD TRAVEL

Sure, you can spend a few months traveling around Europe. Or Australia and New Zealand. Or Southeast Asia, which is more of a bargain these days than are some more traditional destinations. There’s nothing wrong with any of those choices. But have you considered a round-the-world trip?

Believe it or not, a round-the-world journey is both easier to plan and easier on the budget than you might have imagined. Following is some information and resources to get you started.

Why a round-the-world trip?

- Well, for one, do you know that list you keep in your drawer of your dream destinations around the world? Can you imagine visiting several of them during a single trip? It's possible if you plan a round-the-world adventure, which would enable you to skip across several continents on one journey.

- It's also a fascinating way to experience multiple cultures back to back. Spend some time in Europe and Africa, or Asia and Latin America, or the Caribbean and the South Pacific. There is also some nice symbolism involved – you travel in a circle around the globe and then return home with an abundance of experiences and memories.

- Because it’s a dream of yours. Lots of people fantasize about a journey like this, but few of them follow through and make it a reality. You can.

Planning and budgets

O.K., so now you’re intrigued. But how exactly does one go about planning or affording a trip around the world? Here are some tips:

**What does it cost?**

There is no simple answer to this question, but two people can spend several months traveling around the world for about the cost of a new car. For one person, obviously, it’s even cheaper. Now, whether your trip equates to the purchase of a Kia or a Cadillac will depend on the countries you visit, the types of lodging you choose and the amount of money you spend on food and other items. If you think about it, a journey like this can be a bargain - consider how easy it is to drop several thousand dollars just on a two-week trip to Europe. For not much more than that, and with a little planning, you can take three months, six months, or more and go around the world.

**Round-the-world plane tickets**

The place to begin - and the key to both your planning and your budget – is with a round-the-world ticket. These package deals tend to be considerably cheaper than anything you can put together on a flight-to-flight basis and you have the added benefit of purchasing all or most of your plane tickets from the same source. There are two ways of purchasing a round-the-world ticket, each with its own pros and cons.
One is to go through an air broker or air consolidator, who will help you put together your entire itinerary at a competitive price. The advantage is that you can go anywhere in the world on any airline. The disadvantage is that it's difficult to change your itinerary once it is booked and, if you want to maximize savings, you may find yourself flying on less established airlines.

The second option is to purchase a round-the-world fare through one of the major airline alliances which team up to offer a global network. Their round-the-world fares all differ slightly, but they generally offer you a chance to book flights on any of their partner airlines, so long as you fly in one direction around the world. The cost is based on the number of miles you fly and/or the number of stops you make. The disadvantage of this option is that you're restricted to flights offered by the partner airlines. The advantage is that it’s usually fairly easy to change your itinerary, or at least your flight dates, as you go along. You can also get frequent flyer miles on your home airline.

Regardless of the type of ticket you purchase, you are allowed to land in one city or country, travel some distance by land, and then fly out from another destination. This presents a mind-boggling array of interesting travel options.

For additional information on air brokers or airline alliances, see the resources section at the end of this document.

**Other costs**
The round-the-world ticket is your major cost. Other significant budget items will be lodging, food and local transportation. For lodging, you can easily pass up Western hotel chains for local hotels and guest houses that are much less expensive. For meals, you can find lodging that includes breakfast and then eat at local markets and non-touristy restaurants for lunch and dinner. To move around a country, you can take buses and trains instead of flying. There are innumerable ways to travel cheaply once you actually arrive in a country.

Of course, the most obvious way to cut down on expenses is to go to less expensive countries. Croatia instead of Italy, Vietnam instead of Japan, Argentina instead of Australia. There is an incredible array of interesting countries around the globe and not all of them cost a fortune to travel in.

**Sample itineraries**

Your options are literally endless. These are just a few ideas to get you inspired.

Itinerary #1: Boston – Athens – island hop through Greece to Turkey – travel by land through Turkey to Istanbul – Nairobi – Kenyan safari – Singapore – Bali – Bangkok – travel by land through Thailand – Hong Kong – travel by land through China to Beijing – Tokyo – Los Angeles - Boston

Itinerary #3: Los Angeles – Auckland – drive through New Zealand – Bangkok – travel locally through Thailand and Malaysia, then fly out Singapore – New Delhi – travel by land through India, then fly out of Mumbai – Mauritius – Victoria Falls – travel locally from Zambia through Botswana and Namibia into South Africa, then fly out of Cape Town – Prague – travel by land through central Europe to Paris – New York – Los Angeles

Itinerary #4: Miami – Santiago – divert for a few days from Chile to Easter Island - Buenos Aires – Cape Town - Cairo – Dubai – Kuala Lumpur – travel locally through Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia into Vietnam, then fly out of Saigon – Hong Kong – Hawaii – San Francisco - Miami
Books and resources

Books – Personal experiences

“Two Laps Around the World: Tales and Insights from a Life Sabbatical,” by Bob Riel

“Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman’s Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia,” by Elizabeth Gilbert

“Take Me with You: A Round-the-World Journey to Invite a Stranger Home,” by Brad Newsham

“One Year Off: Leaving It All Behind for a Round-the-World Journey with Our Children,” By David Elliot Cohen

Books – How-To

“Vagabonding: An Uncommon Guide to the Art of Long-Term World Travel,” By Rolf Potts


“The Practical Nomad: How to Travel Around the World,” by Edward Hasbrouck

Round-the-world plane tickets

Airline alliances:
One World (American, British Airways, Cathay Pacific and others) – www.oneworld.com
Sky Team (Continental, Northwest, KLM and others) – www.skyteam.com
Star Alliance (United, US Airways, Singapore Airlines and others) – www.staralliance.com

Air consolidators:
Air Brokers – www.airbrokers.com
Air Treks – www.airroks.com

Websites

BootsnAll round-the-world guide - www.bootsnall.com/rtw
Round-the-World flight info - wikitravel.org/en/Round_the_world_flights
Round-the-World info - www.roundtheworldticket.com
Rolf Potts’ Vagabonding - www.vagablogging.net