

# Travelling with kids

## Find out how with the experts

If the thought of organising a family holiday sends you spiralling into a state of anxiety, you are not alone. Whether it be a short weekend trip away or a long overseas stay, there are more considerations to make when you are travelling with kids. With the school holidays just around the corner we have some great tips to help you make the most of whatever holiday you take together.

### FAILING TO PLAN IS PLANNING TO FAIL

holiday. After driving around Australia with her husband and two kids, the family decided to embark on a journey driving around the world. After much organisation they embarked on their year-long adventure and went on to write a book about the experience (Drive Around the World: One Family, One Car, One Year, One Planet, RRP \$35).

Sandy advises parents to involve kids in the planning so they know where they are going and why. Older kids will also be able to help with researching activities and places to stay. Sandy also recommends acknowledging the different travel needs of the family and accommodating these needs in the planning.

### DESTINATION UNKNOWN

The destination is one of the most important decisions you will make in

the holiday planning stage. Every family is different and needs to consider their individual circumstances, budget and what they want to achieve from the holiday. I couldn't think of anything worse than facing a cold snowy ski trip but have friends who love taking their kids to hit the slopes.

When it comes to choosing a destination, Caz Makepeace, founder of ytravelblog.com says parents need to consider available activities in the area, the cost of the destination so as not to under budget, the age of children for age appropriate activities and even the climate when choosing a destination. She points out, 'Two weeks of rain will drive you insane when you travel with kids'.

Cruising is one great option, recommended by Lisa Allan, Manger of Shire Travel, the Travel with Kidz Agency of the Year in 2012. "One of the benefits of a cruise holiday is that the kids get a good night's sleep whilst you are on the move through the night and then you arrive into the next destination fresh the following day ready to explore", she said. On a cruise the kids get to see multiple destinations without the hassle of long flights or car trips.

Lindy Klim, co-founder of Milk & Co (milkandco.com.au) and wife of Olympian Michael Klim, grew up in Bali and travels there regularly with her children. "I find that so many Asian countries are fantastic for children as there are always loads of activities specifically designed for kids", she said. Khazam travelled extensively through South-East Asia on her driving adventure and agrees with Klim, "South-East Asia – friendly people, beautiful

countryside, great food, interesting sights, short distances and a variety of accommodation."

### THE SKILL OF PACKING

Robyn Amott, Professional Organiser and owner of Bless this Mess (blessthisMESS.com.au), advises a simple approach to packing



Lindy and Frankie Klim on the beach in Bali



for a holiday and only taking the essentials. When she travels with her family, Mum and Dad share a bag as do her two daughters. Her motto is 'If you haven't packed it you are only away for a short time so you probably don't need it'.

Amott suggests staying in an apartment with a self-contained laundry for longer holidays so you



Sandy Khazam on the road

can limit the amount of clothing you take and wash throughout the holiday. She also advises checking on the facilities and packages offered by your hotel such as towels and hair dryers to avoid packing unnecessary items.

Makepeace lists a first aid kit as one of her travel essentials as well as a baby carrier, such as a Baby Bjorn, so you aren't limited to the activities you can

do. Klim also advises to add Wet-Wipes to the travel bags and a stash of snacks. As Khazam says, "Kids with their mouths full can't ask 'are we there yet'".

### ON THE ROAD

Getting to the destination can be long and tiresome depending on your method of travel and distance from home. If driving, Khazam advice is to "keep the daily driving time to a minimum and make sure there's an activity either side of the driving. Stopping at playgrounds when you see them for a quick release of energy is good too."

If flying, be aware of the fact that kids may not appreciate having to sit still while the seat belt sign is on. Klim recalls an experience with her eldest child, "I was travelling with our daughter Stella who was three at the time. Just as we were landing she decided she urgently needed to go to the bathroom and couldn't understand why the seat belt sign being on meant she couldn't get up, even to go to the bathroom. I gently tried to explain it to her but nothing could stop her crying. It was pretty distressing! Since then, we always make a trip to the bathroom 10-20 minutes before landing."

### HOLIDAY TIME

You have planned, planned, planned and now you are at your destination. The biggest trick here is to be flexible. Know your destination and the types of activities you would like to do but don't be too inflexible so that you miss other unplanned opportunities that arise. "Parents often take a lot of things to entertain the kids but part of being on holidays is being able to explore", says Amott. "Take colouring in books and blocks for down-time at the hotel but explore and do things you wouldn't normally do if you were at home".



Allan's advise is to plan your day so that both the parents and kids get the most out of the holiday, "It is best to spend the morning sightseeing and shopping when children are fresh and excited and then plan to spend some time at the beach or around the hotel pool doing something that the children will love in the afternoon".

Many hotels also have kids clubs and it is worth looking into this during your planning stage. Allan recommends kids clubs to not only give the parents a break and some time to themselves but also a chance for the kids to make new friends and participate in fun kid-friendly activities.

BACK TO REALITY

The hardest part of the holiday is coming home and this can be especially hard for kids if they are to head back to school the next day. Amott advises keeping some kind of loose schedule while on holiday to help with the transition back to the everyday routine. She also suggests returning home a day or so before the kids go back to school and parents go back to work to give the kids time to adjust back to being at home.

My advice, once you are home start planning the next holiday to keep the kids momentum in adventuring and to give the whole family something to look forward to. Not every holiday has to be a grand event so treat simple weekends away with just as much excitement so the kids will stay

END 

**Find our experts**  
SandyKhazam: [drivearoundtheworld.wordpress.com](http://drivearoundtheworld.wordpress.com)  
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Robyn Amott: [blessthismess.com.au](http://blessthismess.com.au)



Caz Makepeace’s Top Six Travel Tips

Travel slowly and stay in fewer places. You never want to go on an amazing race with kids. Exhaustion levels will send you all home early and miserable.

Do your activities in the morning and allow for rest times in the afternoon.

Involve your children as much as possible in the planning of the holiday. This will make them feel a part of it and will build their excitement.

Arrange activities to suit all family member’s interests.

Keep as much structure and routine as you can but be very flexible with it. So if 1pm nap time rolls around when you are out exploring, don't be afraid to put bubs in the pram for her sleep.

Hire a babysitter for the night or send the kids to Kids Club so you can also have a little bit of down time.



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Travelling never looked so good

1 - Kathmandu Tailspin Trolley, \$139.98, [kathmandu.com.au](http://kathmandu.com.au) or 1800 333 484 2 – Ladybird Mini Backpack, \$29.99, [gooie.com.au](http://gooie.com.au) 3 – Henne Design Luggage Tag, \$13.95, [metroscope.com.au](http://metroscope.com.au) 4 – Ruby Luggage Tag, \$13.95, [metroscope.com.au](http://metroscope.com.au) 5 – Milk Baby Take Me Away Travel Pack, \$19.95, [milkandco.com.au](http://milkandco.com.au) 6 – Cocoon Couture Kinder Bags, \$29.95, [cocooncouture.com](http://cocooncouture.com) 7 – Bumble Bee Soft Toy Animal Blanket, currently on sale for \$26.99, [greenanttoys.com.au](http://greenanttoys.com.au)

