



# AFW TOUR TIPS



## FOREIGN COMPETITION TOUR - TRAVEL PREPARATIONS

### DOUCUMENTS TO BRING

- Passport
- Photocopy of travel documents
- Transportation/ticket number copies (*AFW will have/provide to those flying with us*)
- Where applicable Insurance Card & Phone Numbers (AFW covers student-athletes)
- Generic prescription names
- Student ID
- Replacement prescription for glasses or contacts
- Currency (*if easy access to Euros, otherwise we will secure some the 1<sup>st</sup> day in Italy*)
- Credit and/or ATM cards and their international 800 numbers



### PASSPORT

- ***Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return - please check.***
- For those over 18 years of age your passports are valid for 10 years; For those under 18 years of age they are valid for five years
- On occasion, foreign hotels will want your passport number at check-in. We are usually able to take care of this requirement by collecting passport info beforehand.
- For student travelers, we will collect your passport upon arrival at our first hotel then return them the morning of departure.



### AFW TOUR PASSPORT POLICY

- *Make two photocopies of the ID page on your passport. Stick one someplace in your luggage where you can leave it for the duration of the trip. It is best to have this just in case your passport is misplaced. Note, losing your passport on tour can delay your return to the US. Also, leave one copy at home with someone who can access it.*
- Before leaving home, our hotel(s), etc. double and triple check that you have your passport – you need it to get in and out of Italy.



### ADDITIONAL THINGS TO DO BEFORE DEPARTURE

- Clean out your wallet of items not needed
- Leave copies of key documents (passport) and itinerary with relatives
- Store valuables in a safe place
- Notify neighbors of travel
- Hold mail? Paper?
- Reduce utilities/water heater?
- Arrange for house and pet needs
- Lock all doors/windows
- Set up timed lighting system



# AFW TOUR TIPS



## YOUR ITALY TRAVEL PROGRAM

In the week or two before departure you will be provided with a final itinerary. It will include aspects of your ground stay including your country host tour manager, itinerary, accommodations and contact information, as well as an emergency phone number.

## WEATHER

You are encouraged to check the weather forecast for areas to be visited. Be mindful of both potential highs and *lows* as well. Note elevation can make a difference as well. It is always good to have in the least a light windbreaker, water repellent jacket to be able to utilize in the case of precipitation or high winds.

## ELECTRICITY CONSIDERATIONS

- ***In Europe “Adapters” for Electrical Outlets are needed*** (for most modern electronics this is all you need). It is a two-round prong adapter.
- “Converters” are needed for hair dyers, curling irons...and other high wattage equipment. It is unlikely that you would need a converter, but if you have any questions it is best to ask and resolve before departure.



## PACKING FOR EUROPE – ADDITIONAL TIPS AND REMINDERS

- Please consult the separate “Packing Guidelines” document
- Generally, be concise, pack light and utilize wheels where possible
- You are allowed one checked bag and try to just bring one more carry-on item
- Plan on wearing outer clothing items more than once
- Rather than bringing more clothes adding up to an additional piece of luggage it is better to do some select laundry during the trip possibly the middle of the tour (*bring a small container of liquid laundry soap for sink washing then hang*). You may also want to plan on purchasing an outer clothing item or two.
- Due to its compact nature relative to the US, space is ‘smaller’ in Europe. This affects the airlines and motor coach companies. They will be strict with the luggage guidelines you will receive. It is best to mind them.

## US TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND POLICIES

- When going through any airport *watch what you say (and do)*; DO NOT joke around as *security at airports is serious business*
- Review regulations at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)



## CARRY-ON & BACKPACK CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

- Note the TSA information on liquids ([www.tsa.org](http://www.tsa.org))
- Abide by 3-1-1 carry-on rule: 3 oz. bottle, 1 Qt. size clear bag, 1 per passenger
- To avoid delay at security place your liquid items in your checked luggage



# AFW TOUR TIPS



## MEALS (& SNACKS)

- Breakfast – Provided everyday. Note that European breakfasts are traditionally more of a continental nature (breaks, fruits, cereal). We are working with our hotels to include other items including eggs at our breakfasts. Either way, ‘load up’ for the day – and take a piece of fruit with you for later in the morning.
- Lunch – Depending on your tour this meal may or may not be provided. When not provided you will be given time to choose a restaurant, café or bistro or meal you desire. Tour managers should be available to offer suggestions.
- Dinner - Provided most every night. Please consult your tour inclusions.
- General Note – Realize that restaurants and hotels are accustomed to serving meals for ‘normal’ eaters. They simply do not have much experience with the appetites of 18-23 year-old American football players – which as you parents realize can be quite voracious. That shared, our tours are planned to and have done a great job in satisfying the eating desires of our travelers at all of our meals – especially in Italy. However, it has been our experience that no matter how much the players eat at a meal about two hours later many will think they are hungry and in some cases “starving”. If you are one of those guys we encourage you to - budget to buy some ‘between meal’ snacks that you need to survive. *Better yet, we suggest that you put in your luggage some of your favorite ‘snack/energy’ bars and take one or two with you everyday when we go out to tour.*

## MONEY, DEBIT, CREDIT CARDS & EXPENSES

- **Currency/Cash**
  - “Euros” are most of Europe’s form of currency
  - Cash (“Euros”) is the most commonly accepted form of payment in Europe. Many stores will take a debit or credit card, but do realize *some shops will only take cash/Euros*. It is always good to have a little bit of cash on you.
  - One critical tip is to **limit the number of times you both convert money and utilize electronic transactions as you will always lose some value** due to transaction costs.
  - **We do not feel this is necessary**, but before departure you can purchase some “Euros” possibly from where you bank – or at a currency exchange at a US airport. If you secure Euros from your bank, check to see that they will buy them back (possibly without another transaction fee) if you return with some.
  - For securing Euro currency we recommend you simply withdraw some from an ATM when you arrive in Europe. ATMs are fairly plentiful in Europe, generally provide a fair exchange rate and operate with minimal transaction costs. However, note that **before departure you MUST let your ATM card (and any credit card) provider know that you will be in Europe**. Call their customer service within 30 days of departure and notify them of your travel plans. You need to do this to be able to consistently use your card. Also,





# AFW TOUR TIPS



before departure, confirm your daily withdraw limit and your PIN number with your bank.

- Visit [www.ricksteves.com/travel-tips/money/cash-machine-atm-tips](http://www.ricksteves.com/travel-tips/money/cash-machine-atm-tips)
- We do not recommend Travelers Checks. These days they are rarely used. Though if lost or stolen you can get them replaced, you can waste a lot of time finding a bank to cash them and wherever exchanged often carry an unfavorable exchange rate. Should you go this route, you will need your passport on you to exchange travelers checks.
- Check the link <https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/> to determine the current currency exchange rate for your destination.
- Plan wisely and try to not go home with too much foreign currency Euros. At the end of the trip work with your teammates or a coach to convert dollars to Euro and vice-versa as needed.
- You will have the opportunity to either withdraw from an ATM or convert dollars to Euros our first day overseas. You can also convert at the arrival airport.
- When using an ATM, always have another person with you and be aware of your surroundings. Cover your hand as you insert your password.
- Do not handle cash openly and casually in public. Do not bring big amounts with you daily. Bring what you need and leave the rest in your hotel safe.
- It is suggested you withdraw 100 Euros our first day and try to make it last as long as possible. After a few days you can gauge how spending is going before making your next withdrawal.



## • Debit Cards

- It is suggested that you *do not* use your personal debit card (even if you let your provider know you will be in Europe) to repeatedly pay for small transactions. Should you do so there is a chance you will incur a fee every time you use it and this cost will add up.
- If you are used to using a debit card – and for other reasons – *you may want to consider purchasing a debit card designed for travel*. These cards can be loaded with a certain amount of funds – and have amounts added on to the card if needed. They are accepted at most stores, restaurants, etc. and they do not incur a transaction fee for each use. If lost, you do not lose your funds. Please feel free to google options under “Traveler Debit Cards”.



## • Credit Cards

- ***If you will possibly use one when on tour, within 30 days of departure contact your credit card company to let them know you will be traveling abroad.*** If you do not when you go to use the card in Europe, it will most



# AFW TOUR TIPS



likely be declined and if not the first time almost surely it will be declined the second time.

- Try not to use a credit card extensively. Due to transaction costs and potential “hidden fees” it is our recommendation you use credit cards for rare, larger transactions.
- **Expenses** - It is reasonable to spend close to 200 Euros on essentials while on tour. Above that amount is a matter of choice depending on a few personal decisions below.
  - You will only *need* Euros for lunch three times
  - You will need Euros for dinner once
  - You will *need* Euros for any beverages you purchase (water provided)
  - You *will* need Euros for your between meal snacking needs
  - You *may* need Euros if you choose to buy souvenirs.
  - In sum, is reasonable to budget a minimum of 20+ Euros a day.
  - You will need about 20 Euros for tipping. It is proper to give a good tour guide a Euro. In addition, it is recommended you budget 5 Euros for our driver and 10 Euros for our Italian tour manager.
- **Overall to avoid costs try to minimize electronic transactions**
- **Also, before you go make a daily budget and stick to it. If you go over one day, go under the next.**



## PHONE/INTERNET USAGE

- There are added **costs** for using the service providers (phone, internet, etc.) in foreign countries **and they can become substantial.** You will want to use wi-fi at our hotels or at restaurants whenever possible.
- ***It is recommended you turn off ‘roaming’ while traveling***
- ***For service beyond free wi-fi check with your US service provider regarding a favorable plan for calling from and receiving calls, texting and data use for while you are traveling well before leaving***
- Unless you are using free Wi-Fi (hotels, some restaurants) ***do not web surf or use data on your smart phone while in Europe***
- It is suggested you **do not utilize free wi-fi that you cannot identify**
- ***If you have not made affordable arrangements with a phone service provider before leaving, try to avoid making phone calls while in Europe. If you do have to call, keep it to the essentials. Players tell your girlfriends you will call once mid-trip and otherwise email, text or use free Wi-Fi to Skype or FaceTime when available.***





# AFW TOUR TIPS



- If you do not adhere to the above and use these services out of the country as if you are at home in the US, you are in for rude awakening when you return to your next phone bill.
- If you plan on using your smartphone bring your charger and adapter.
- *We will have Internet access at all our hotel stops. It should be free at most places but at some there may be a charge. In the least, Wi-Fi should be available in the hotel lobby. As for Wi-Fi use in rooms, that is a possibility but something that cannot be guaranteed.*
- *Lastly, DO NOT make any calls from your hotel phone.*

## PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND WEBCASTING

- **Photos and/or Tour Video** –Be prepared to take your own photos.
- **Game Video** – We will inquire, but are not sure if we will be able to provide a DVD copy of the game.
- **Webcasting** – We always try to work with our destination and opponent to have the game webcast but cannot make any promises.

## TIME DIFFERENCE

- Note the time difference between your destination and home.

## FINAL TIPS FOR A SAFE TRIP\*\*

- Do not attempt to bring anything illegal into or out of Europe
- It is your choice whether to use a money belt or pouch in which to keep valuables including your currency. If not, **keep all valuables including phones in your front pocket.**
- **Never leave your phone on a restaurant or café table or counter top.**
- Make sure that all purses are closed securely and wear in the front as often as possible
- Leave expensive jewelry at home in the US.
- Use caution and keep hands on your valuables when in a crowd.
- Do not leave a backpack, *anything*, lying around – even for a moment.
- **Always check the hotel room safe before checking out of a hotel**