

# GRADWEEK<sup>SM</sup>

## 2011 TRAVEL TIPS - VALUABLE TRAVEL INFORMATION



**Getting Ready!** Make sure you have your valid passport ready if you are going to Mexico or the Bahamas. If you are going to Hawaii, make sure you have a valid government issued picture I.D. If you are not a U.S. Citizen but you are a permanent legal resident of the US, you need to contact the Mexican Consulate or the Bahamas Consulate for the most up-to-date entry requirements. To locate the closest Mexican Consulate office, go online to [www.mexonline.com/consulate.htm](http://www.mexonline.com/consulate.htm). For the Bahamas, please call their main office at (305) 373-6295. You will be denied boarding at the airport if you do not have the proper documents and all charges to change your flight will be at your expense.

Packing your bags! Be aware that most airlines are charging to check-in your baggage and the costs do vary so try to pack light. Don't forget to fill out your Grad Week baggage tag and put it on your checked bag. The enclosed flight itinerary indicates the airline you will be traveling with. You can go on-line to the airline's web site to find out what the baggage fees are. Be aware of the restrictions for items in your carry-on bag by going to the TSA web site at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov). It is highly recommended that you put your name and phone number on a piece of paper and put that inside your checked luggage as well as your carry-on.



**Day of Departure!** Don't be late. You must arrive at the airport at least two hours prior to your scheduled flight time if you are going to Mexico or the Bahamas. If you are going to Hawaii, you must arrive 90 minutes prior to departure. You can be denied boarding if you are late and you will be responsible for any charges due to changes in flights. If your flight itinerary requires that you change planes in the US, you will not be required to retrieve your bags until you arrive at your final destination on the outbound only. When you arrive at your destination, make sure to retrieve your luggage and once you exit the building, look for a Grad Week Staff member that will direct you to the buses that will be taking you to your hotel. Do not talk to local vendors trying to sell you a transfer.



**Grad Week Staff** - While our Staff is available at your destination 24/7, we recommend that you contact them only in the event of an emergency. The **Hotel Staff** can help you with the every day requests, like more towels, more pillows and any questions about the hotel and nearby shopping, etc. The Grad Week Staff is there to ensure the program is running smoothly, coordinate transfers for all the arrivals, present the hotel orientation, coordinate the activities listed in the "Action Pac" as well as assist with any serious emergencies.

**At Your Hotel** - Once you get to your hotel, you will be given a full orientation by a Grad Week Staff member. They will explain the events that will be held during your stay and go over some basic guidelines to make your trip awesome and worry free. There is an "Action Pac" flyer enclosed in your packet listing the various costs and the application. You will be able to purchase your "Action Pac" at the orientation by cash, check or money order.

Once you check in to your room, we highly recommend you use the hotel's safety deposit box to store your documents, cash and valuables including cell phones and cameras when not being used. Take a few minutes to check that everything in your room is in good shape and in good working order. Please contact the staff immediately if you see anything broken or damaged to ensure you will not be held responsible for pre-existing damaged items.



**Exchanging Money in Mexico** - Your best option is to take a debit card and withdraw money in "Pesos" once you arrive. There are ATM machines everywhere and the fees to use are about the same as in the US. In the past, many vendors would accept US Dollars but due to some changes in their laws, this practice is not as available as before.

**Spending Money** - The amount you should take varies depending on how many nights your trip is and whether you are going to an all-inclusive resort or not. We highly recommend the use of debit cards at all of our destinations instead of taking cash. If going to the Bahamas, US dollars are accepted everywhere and there's no need to exchange money. If using credit cards, please be aware that most banks charge a conversion fee when traveling outside of the US so check with your credit card company.



**Calling Home** – Mom’s and Dad’s want to know you arrived ok so a quick call home to say you arrived is highly recommended. Most everyone travels with a cell phone now but not all phone companies charge the same when traveling outside the US. Contact your service provider to find out what the charges will be if calling from Mexico or the Bahamas. It is very expensive to call from your hotel room if you are in Mexico or the Bahamas. If you do not want to take your cell phone, the next best thing is to buy a long distance calling card that can be accessed by any public phone.



Ahhh...Paradise! This is your time to relax and have a good time. But, that does not mean you can do anything you want. All local laws are strictly enforced and the hotels will not tolerate disorderly conduct and any property damage will need to be paid for. Be smart and stay safe by going in a group when leaving your hotel.

**Returning Home** – Your Grad Week staff will post the time you need to be in the lobby to board the bus for your flight home. Make sure you have checked out of your room and have paid for any incidental charges not included in your package price. Carry your Travel Documents in hand to check-in at the airport. Do not bring back any alcohol if you are under 21, it’s against the law! Make sure your luggage gets loaded on your bus and keep your valuables with you at all times. If you are making connections in the US, you will be required to retrieve your luggage to go through Immigration and Customs. After exiting Customs, there will be an airline representative there to assist you with your luggage and gate information to board your connecting flight home.

**How to use the Medical Insurance Policy** - Even though over 95% of our travelers never encounter any sickness or injury, it still may occur. If sickness or injury occurs that requires medical attention, Grad Week or hotel staff can direct you to the medical facility at your destination. As part of your travel package, Grad Week has included Primary Sickness/Accident Insurance coverage through Travel Insured International. To receive insurance assistance, you can call **toll free from the US at (866) 684-0218** and reference policy **T-4510**. The agent will guide you through the process of how to get reimbursed for your approved medical costs up to the limits of the policy. Emergency Medical Evacuation insurance is also included in case of a serious emergency. Pre-existing conditions are not covered. Alcohol-related sickness or injury is not covered.

**Policy on Alcohol Consumption** - Grad Week does not promote the abuse of alcohol to its tour participants. Grad Week Travel is aware that on many events and activities in Mexico and the Bahamas alcoholic, as well as non-alcoholic, beverages are available. Each participant chooses for himself or herself whether or not to consume alcohol. The legal drinking age in Mexico and The Bahamas is 18 and loosely enforced. Drinking alcoholic beverages in Hawaii is against the law and may result in a hotel eviction at your expense.

**Money Wire Transfers** - Should you run out of money at your destination, Grad Week provides a money wire transfer service for those students who may need additional funds onsite. If you need this service, someone in the US needs to go to the [www.gradweek.com](http://www.gradweek.com) web site and go to the “Forms” link and print out a “Wire Transfer Authorization” form. This form needs to be filled out completely and faxed to the corporate office at (916) 939-8494 by no later than 3:00PM Monday thru Friday, Pacific Daylight Time. If any information is omitted, this will delay the wire transfer. The traveler receiving the money will then be able to pick up the cash at their destination at our Grad Week 24-hour staff room after 7:00PM, local time at that destination. The limit is \$300 and there’s a \$25 service charge. The person authorizing their credit card must sign this form and be prepared to have all the correct information to ensure the money gets to the right traveler.

**Parents wishing to Contact their Son/Daughter** - If a parent needs to contact their son/daughter, the hotel phone numbers are listed below. The hotels do not always list everyone in the room, so please find out all the roommates names so you can be connected to the correct room. The corporate office in El Dorado Hills cannot call the hotel on your behalf. However, the Customer Service agents are available to answer general questions from 8:30AM to 5:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time, Monday through Friday at 800-448-4444. During our Grad Week program, we do operate a 24-hour emergency line in case of a medical or family emergency. However, calls not deemed to be an emergency will be returned during normal business hours.

**HOTEL PHONE NUMBERS:**

<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>PHONE NUMBER</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>PHONE NUMBER</u>
<u>CANCUN</u>		<u>BAHAMAS</u>	
Hyatt Regency	011-52-998-891-5555	Wyndham Resort	1-242-327-6200
Gran Caribe Real	011-52-998-881-5500	Paradise Island Harbor Resort	1-242-363-2562
		Atlantis Hotel	1-242-363-2000
<u>PUERTO VALLARTA</u>		RIU Palace Paradise Island	1-242-363-3500
NH Krystal	011-52-322-224-0202	<u>HAWAII</u>	
		Marriott	1-808-922-6611
		Ohana East	1-808-922-5353