SAVVY NOMAD

2620 E. Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55812
Phone: 1.218.409.2540
Website: savvynomad.com

Relax RC Companion

Traveling Since 1973

Travel Considerations from Savvy Nomad

Over the years, we've honed our travel skills. In this tips sheet we'd like to share some travel considerations, best practices, tech ideas, and upcoming requirements for traveling to France.

Tech Tips & Travel Hacks.

Tech changes all the time, but here's a starting place:

1) Make sure you prearrange an international phone plan (cell and data). We have AT&T and have been happy with their option of $12/day for 10 days with unlimited calls and data in Europe. Verizon also offers an unlimited data plan, but sometimes it is for one specific country and if your phone "pings" a cell tower in another country (easy to happen as we are close to the border with Germany), you will be charged for 2 country's data plans for that day.

2) Use a map app (Google, etc.) to preview where you will be traveling and create a saved list on the app of the places you want to go.

3) If you are traveling by train in Europe, download the Trainline app or the SNCF app to monitor status.

4) Use a credit card which has no foreign transaction fees. Only use a debit card to get money from an ATM. Do know all of your PIN numbers for your cards.

5) If you are renting a car, use a credit card which offers insurance so you don't have to buy the expensive, supplemental insurance from the rental company.

6) Make reservations directly with hotels and airlines. If you use an intermediary provider (like Expedia, Booking.com, Hotels.com, etc.) and there ends up being a problem once you arrive, it is much easier to sort everything out if there is no one in between you and your service provider.

7) Keep digital **and** hard/print copies of all of your reservations and travel documents; your prescriptions; your ID's (passport and DL), and any other must-have information.

Physical fitness is necessary in weird ways.

Here's how:

1) Do you have good balance? To embark/debark you must walk on a potentially wobbly, one foot wide, six foot long plank with no hand rails. Also, the bow of the boat is wide open - no rails.

2) Can you climb a ladder? You might need to on the boat (or to get off the boat).

3) Can you step up and down a 2-foot span onto a moving platform? That's a boat!

4) Can you swim? (We do have life vests to wear if needed.)

5) Can you throw a rope 20 feet? Bollard-wrangling is a fun part of each day. Don't worry, we'll teach you.

6) Do you mind hitting your head? It will happen most days on a boat. (This is about mental attitude, not hard-headedness - lol! Every time we hit our heads we say, "It's a boat day!")

7) Can you walk a mile without stopping? We don't have a companion-car or bikes but we all love walking into small French villages along the canal.

8) Lugging your luggage: See "Over-packing" in the next tips section for the luggage considerations and best practices. And find our most recent packing list on our Resources page: Savvy Nomad Resources.

Over-packing is a detriment to enjoying your trip.

Here's why:

1) Can you climb up and down 4 flights of stairs carrying all your bags? You'll often need to in hotels and train stations in Europe.

2) Can you lift (bench press) your bags over your head and stow them in a luggage rack on the airplane and/or on the train? You'll need to.

3) Can you hustle all of your luggage off the train in your 2 minute stop?

4) Can you keep track of all your bags? If you have more than two bags, usually the answer is NO. We've seen it time and time again. If you have more bags than hands you will either lose one, get pickpocketed, or miss your train. Limit your packing to one bag (luggage) and one personal item (purse, man-bag, day pack, etc.) per person and put your address inside every bag.

There are new travel requirements on the horizon.

Here's what:

1) EES (Entry/Exit System). The EES is an automated IT system for registering non-EU nationals traveling for a short stay, each time they cross the external borders of European countries using the system. The EES replaces passport stamping and automates border control procedures. Expected to be implemented in the second half of 2024. More details here: https://travel-europe.europa.eu/ees

2) ETIAS (Travel Authorization System). Starting in late 2025, US citizens must apply online for the ETIAS visa-waiver to visit the EU.
More info here: https://travel-europe.europa.eu/etias

Travel Requirements Continued...

3) Not new, but important: your passport must be newer than 6 months before expiration in order to travel to the EU. Passports can take a very long time to receive so apply as soon as possible if renewal is necessary.

4) Never assume these are the only requirements. Things change all the time. We will keep you updated as best we can. But if you are traveling outside of the plans we make, you are responsible for knowing the rules of travel to the places you go.

All that said, nothing is insurmountable. As Dave says, "There's nothing that can't be solved by large applications of cash." But the best way to avoid needing large applications of cash is to be prepared.

Our packing list, found on our Resources Page, and this Travel Considerations document will pave the way for best travel practices.

You can find answers to even more of your questions on our FAQ page: https://savvynomad.com/faq/. We are also available to chat and assist with decision making as needed.

We look forward to traveling with you!
Sara & Dave