

Travel Tips: Surviving this Silly Season with Kids

Written by Rachel James

With the festive season fast approaching, now is the perfect time to take advantage of the Christmas break and travel somewhere new with your young jetsetters. Flights are often an anxious and stressful experience for many young families but traveling with kids this silly season doesn't have to be a nightmare for everyone on board, Bestjet's Managing Director and travel expert Rachel James has come up with 10 tips on how to survive the trip with your kids:-

1. Let your children know you're going on a flight. Let them know how they're expected to behave and what to expect during the flight but don't build it up with too much excitement as this could help to create anxiety. Make sure you keep your own emotions about the trip fairly level. Kids pick up on how you're feeling very quickly. If you seem nervous, stressed or overly excited it may just trigger a meltdown for them.
2. Pre-book children's meals and pre-request bassinets seats if required. This can be done through your travel agent or with the airline directly. An additional benefit to ordering a child-friendly meal is sometimes the airline will serve the child's meals first allowing you time to help them before your meal arrives.
3. Pack a carry-on bag for your child. My young kids love to have their own small backpack. It makes them feel included and responsible which in turn, helps them to behave at the airport. Be warned though- not to make it too big, as you will often end up having to carry it at some point along with your own.
4. Pack a change of clothes for 2 main reasons. The first is because accidents happen. In that small confined space, and with the possibility of turbulence, spillages do happen. The second is for climate control. Air conditioning on planes can often get cold so it's a good idea to have some warm clothing. Plus keep in mind, you may have left a cold destination and be arriving at a warm tropical island (or vice versa)
5. Pack healthy snacks. There can often be several hours between meal services and while this may be ok for an adult, the kids can get quite hungry. Sugary foods are probably not your best option when you need them to remain seated. However you may want to take some chewy lollies for them to have during take-off and landing to help with their ears. You may need to discard any uneaten food when you get off the plane depending on your destinations customs laws.
6. Pack activities. Some may cringe at this but I love re-useable stickers. The kids place them all over the tray table and window then keep re-arranging them. Be courteous and make sure they are all removed before leaving. I'm not a huge fan of colouring-in pencils or lots of small pieces. They tend to fall off the tray tables or in between seats and it's really difficult to pick them up when the seat in front of you is so close. iPads are always a great option. Pre-load some new movies or TV shows before your flight.

7. Take a small plastic bag for rubbish. You really need to keep your little space tidy. Stuff gets everywhere, especially during a long haul flight.
8. Show your child the seatbelt light and explain right from the start they have to remain seated (just like they do in a car trip). Only when the light is off are they allowed to go to the toilet. Make sure they go before you board.
9. Drugs: I'm personally not a fan of 'medicating' your child for the flight. Drugs like Phenergan can actually have the opposite desired effect and cause your child to be hyperactive. It would be essential for you to consult with your doctor and get proper medical advice before giving your child any medication.
10. You do need to ensure you pack any required medical prescriptions in your carry-on as this is safer than in your checked luggage which could go missing. Some medications require an accompanying letter from your doctor. You need to check for banned medicines in the country you are flying to.

- Ends -

About the Author:

Rachel James is the Managing Director for Bestjet, Australia's leading online specialist in discounted airfares. Australian-owned with a global reach, Bestjet was founded by Rachel James in 2012 and has rapidly become one of the nation's largest online travel booking agents.

Rachel James' leadership and governance has led Bestjet to achieve an incredible amount of success that can be attributed to the delivery of a 'next generation' booking experience for customers by utilising technology that is transforming the online travel game.

Rachel spends a significant amount of time monitoring industry trends and listening to customers to ensure the constant development of the business. She works collaboratively with the Bestjet team of knowledgeable professionals and understands the value in trusting her team's experience and utilising their strengths to grow the company.

Rachel is passionate about supporting women in business to achieve their career goals and, as a mother to four daughters, she is driven to set a positive example for women in corporate leadership positions. Rachel has recently been nominated as a finalist in the Entrepreneur of the Year and Technology categories for the 2016 Women in Travel Awards.