



CCUSA TRAVEL HANDBOOK

HINTS ON TRAVELING IN THE USA

[BE MORE THAN JUST A TOURIST]



CCUSA™

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Introduction

Once your work obligation has ended, you may have 30 days on your J1 visa to stay in the United States for the purpose of traveling (within the USA only). This manual will help you plan for your travels. All prices quoted in this handbook are in US Dollars.

Planning Your Trip

Many factors will determine your travel plans: (1) the amount of time you have, (2) the amount of money you intend to spend, (3) the number of people with whom you will travel, and (4) the destinations you want to see.

Length of Travel

The amount of time a participant has to travel is determined by the date they must be home, such as the start of their university or job. All CCUSA participants will need to leave the United States no later than 30 days after the end date printed on your DS2019 Form. You should ask your country director for clarification about the length of your grace period. Some US embassies give a date by which ALL J1 participants must be back which can mean this grace period is not available to you. If you depart the U.S. after the 30-day grace period has lapsed, you will face serious future problems entering the United States and jeopardize the program in your home country for future participants.

Budgeting

Plan on spending \$40-\$90/day to cover food, accommodations, and admission fees PLUS additional money for transportation. To avoid on-the-spot transportation costs, it is recommended you buy bus, plane, or rail passes in advance.

A limited budget should not spoil your travel plans. There are many inexpensive hostels located around the United States, some as low as \$25 a night. National Forests, many museums and other attractions have free entrance fees. If you are resourceful, you can stretch your budget to include quite a lot.

Traveling Companions

When considering the amount of money to take, also consider if you want to travel alone or with others. Traveling alone can be more expensive but you make all the decisions. Also think about the number of people with whom you will be traveling. A word of caution about traveling alone: be mindful of your personal safety; keep an eye on your possessions and be more aware of your surroundings. Travelers alone can be a target for crime.

Weigh the positives and negatives of large groups versus small groups and decide for yourself with whom to travel. If you get tired after a week of traveling with a group of people, you can always split up. Just as you made new friends at your camp/job, you can easily meet new people on the road and at hostels.

What to See

Many people leave their home country with a full itinerary of what to see after their camp/job assignment has ended without doing advance planning and underestimating the size of the United States. The US is a large country; it takes 4 days of straight driving, including nights, just to go from coast to coast. Take the time to plan your trip and do the necessary research. Travel guides and maps available at bookstores and libraries are full of information. American Automobile Association (AAA) members can obtain guidebooks and maps at no cost. If you have access to the Internet, use it. To buy tour books, visit one of the many used bookstores around the country for older, cheaper versions of travel guides. The information is typically the same as the current year's editions, and you can research in advance for increases in pricing or changes in phone numbers.

Essential Information

Before you embark on your journey, you need to take care of matters that do not necessarily involve traveling.

Insurance

Camp Counselor USA participants receive work and travel insurance to cover you from the start of your J1 visa till the end date of your J1 Visa (your Camp work dates).

Work Experience USA participants receive work and travel insurance to cover you from the start of your J1 visa till the end date of your J1 Visa (your work dates). For some countries it might be a set three or four months of insurance (refer to your program agreement for specific details).

Working Holiday USA participants receive work and travel insurance to cover you from the start of your J1 visa until the end date of your J1 Visa (your work dates).

For all programs you must make sure you have insurance for the entire duration of your visit - including any travel during your grace period before and after.

Check your Footprints for the exact dates of your insurance coverage.

If you intend to stay longer in the U.S., you must contact CCUSA to ask about obtaining an extension. Insurance extensions and upgrades must be made before your current policy runs out and are at the discretion of the insurance company (based on any prior claims)

J-1 Visa

Although you are in the US on a J1 visa - either on the Camp Counselor or the Summer Work/Travel category, during your 30-day grace period, you are under the auspices of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service (BCIS) and are, therefore, no longer the responsibility of CCUSA. Since CCUSA cannot protect and support you during this grace period, you are advised not to leave and attempt to reenter the borders of the United States on your J-1 visa, even if you have a multiple entry visa. You will not be allowed back into the U.S. on your J-1 visa and you may be deported back to your home country. If this should happen, CCUSA will NOT be able to assist you.

As determined by the U.S. government, your J-1 visa is not extendable and CCUSA cannot help you in obtaining a new visa. Those on a J-1 visa are required to leave the USA within 30 days of the expiration of the visa. Do not jeopardize future trips to the USA or the program for others in your home country by overstaying your visa.

Safety in America

In order to decrease your chances of becoming a victim of a crime, you should attempt to blend in with the rest of the crowd. Don't walk around a city with your backpack on your back, a camera around your neck and an open map in your hands. Instead, walk around with a small backpack, which contains only necessary items. Take out your camera only when you intend to take a picture and use a map inside a building to attract less attention to yourself. Be confident in your actions and you will look less appealing to a pickpocket or thief.

Your money, plane tickets, and above all, passport and visa documents, should be kept in a safe place at all times. U.S. law requires that you always carry your passport with you. A money belt should be used to hold important items when traveling. Do not store your passport, money and/or transportation tickets in your backpack or suitcase, as these items are easily stolen. If you lose your passport, you will need to get a replacement from your home country's embassy. This process can take anywhere from a day to a few weeks and is costly. Make sure to keep copies of your passport, visa documents, credit cards and traveler's checks. We suggest you scan and email yourself copies of these so you can access them quickly as well as leave at least one copy of your passport with your parents or a friend back home just in case you should lose yours.

Use credit cards, cash passports or traveler's checks instead of cash. All these can be replaced fairly easily when lost if you keep copies, your receipts and record your numbers. Traveler's checks can be exchanged at a currency exchange or used to make most purchases if in U.S. Dollars. If you use traveler's checks, you may need to show your passport to cash them so don't leave your passport at the hotel.

A few more notes about safety:

- Keep a small amount of money in a place separate from the rest of your cash as a precautionary measure.
- Label all of your belongings and luggage. If you get separated from any of your items, an honest person will know where to return them.
- Be cautious of con artists. Con artists are people who try to fool you into doing things you would not normally do, like giving all of your money to a stranger in return for a promising deal. An expensive item for a dirt-cheap price from a street vendor is another scam...you are going to get what you pay for. Trust your instincts.

- Always keep an eye on your luggage. Whenever you need to change buses, planes or trains, make sure your luggage gets moved too. On buses and trains, you should physically get off, pick up your stowed luggage and put it on the next bus or train. Don't leave your luggage on a bus and then wander off during a rest stop. The bus will leave the station, even if your luggage is on the bus and you are not! On airplanes, make sure at check-in that your luggage is checked all the way through to your final destination.
- Make photocopies of your passport, visa, DS2019 form and I-94. Keep one copy with you and send one copy home and scan and email it to yourself. Keep your copies in a separate place from the original documents.

If an emergency situation does arise and you need help, dial the Camp Counselors program at 1-800-999-2267 or the Work Experience program at 1-888-449-3872. You **MUST** call the appropriate program - these phone numbers are specific to each program, and are **NOT** interchangeable. CCUSA is available 24 hours a day during the summer season for emergency situations. For a life-threatening emergency that needs immediate attention, dial 911 from any phone in the U.S. This will connect you, at no charge, to an operator who will contact the local police, hospital or fire department for you.

Money

Use a budget when planning your travels. Ask about student or youth discounts. Check out to see if you are eligible for an International Student Identification Cards (ISIC) or International Youth Identification Cards (IYTC) which give discounts at many tourist attractions and hostels. Also consider purchasing a Youth Hostel card (such as YHA, Hostel International), which also give you discounts at selected hostels. Google search for details of what you will need to provide to get one of these cards and for your closest provider.

Another good way to get discounts is to join a travel club like AAA (American Automobile Association). AAA provides, at a reasonable price, tour books, maps, travel assistance, roadside assistance (for those who travel by automobile) and a discount card. There is no age restriction on AAA membership. The AAA membership card will get you better rates at some hotels and motels, car rentals, many tourist attractions and more. The cost of membership varies depending on the state through which you apply, but the discounts are available throughout the 50 states. An average membership costs approximately \$60 for the year. While this may seem a little expensive, those who travel with an AAA membership will most likely earn back more than the membership costs in discounts. Visit your closest AAA office to see what assistance is available to you.

If you do run out of money, hopefully you might be able to get them to put some on your credit card or have your parents or someone from home wire you money through a service such as Western Union or MoneyGram. To use their service, call their toll-free number and ask for directions on having money wired from overseas. The agency will provide you with the office closest to you. Then, have the person overseas contact their closest office. Once your overseas contact has given money to the overseas office, go to the office near you and pick up your money.

Western Union
MoneyGram

(800) 325-6000
(800) 926-9400

www.westernunion.com
www.moneygram.com

Weather

The U.S. has many different climates that can be divided into five different climactic regions.

- The Pacific Northwest is the wettest part of the country, with cool summers and cold but generally snow-free winters.
- The Rocky Mountain states, Northern California and Nevada are dry and sunny for most of the year with mild, moist winters in Northern California, and snowy winters in the Rockies.
- The Southwest, including southern California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and western Texas, is the hottest, driest part of the US. Rainfall comes mostly in the form of summer thunderstorms in desert areas. Rain along the Southern California coast is rare April through November.
- The Mid-Western states from Minnesota to Texas are moderately dry with most of the rain in spring and early summer. Summers are hot and can be humid. Winters are especially cold in the northern states of the country.
- The Eastern part of the country from Maine to Florida is moderately rainy, averaging between 30 and 50 inches a year. Summers tend to be hot and humid.

Go to <http://www.weatherbase.com/weather/state.php3?c=US> to check out the Average high temperatures across the U.S.A.

Temperature Conversion Charts

$\frac{[C \times 9]}{5} + 32 = F$ example: $\frac{[16C \times 9]}{5} + 32 = 60.8F$

Suggested Resources

Let's Go USA and the Lonely Planet Guide are resource books for young people traveling in the USA and are available in most major bookstores in the USA and abroad.

The Rand McNally Road Atlas has maps and travel information if you plan to travel by car or bus. This can be purchased in major bookstores abroad or in the USA.

The Complete Guide to America's National Parks has detailed information on America's National Parks. Pick up this book in the Travel Section of most major bookstores in the United States.

The Hostel Handbook is a guide that lists every hostel in the US and Canada. It is available at many bus stations and hostels around the country.

Phonecards

While you are traveling around the U.S., you will depend upon phone cards to call your family and friends back home and to make hostel reservations among other things. You will receive a promotional phone card at your Pre-departure Orientation Meeting in your home country from CCUSA charged with a small amount of money (enough to make one international phone call).

To add more calling time to this card, you can recharge it by credit card. You can also have your parents add time to your card, if they know your card number in advance of your departure for the States. You can put any amount you wish on the card and can recharge it any number of times during the summer.

Your EKIT card has voicemail, fax and e-mail capabilities, so friends and family can leave you messages. Whenever you call in to use your card, a voice message will tell you if you have any personal messages, faxes or e-mails waiting for you. If you have faxes or e-mails, give EKIT a fax number, and your messages will print out on that machine.

While there may appear to be better values on phone cards in the States, make sure you read the fine print. Other cards often have connection charges, might not offer toll-free access numbers and may not have voicemail and other capabilities. Also, they will probably not be able to be recharged.

USA Sim Cards & Cellular Phones

Stay in touch with your family and friends for less with a US sim card or cellular phone.

E-kit has been providing CCUSA participants with USA sim cards and cellular phones since 2003. Check out the available deals through your Footprints account or check out the deals here:

E-kit: <http://www.ccusa.ekit.com/ekit/home/>

How It Works

You require an unlocked, US-compatible triband, or quadband, phone to pick up signal on the GSM 1900Mhz band used by US GSM networks.

Visit your phone manufacturer's website to find out if your phone will pick up signal on GSM 1900Mhz.

Try a sim card from a different network to your home network to check that it is unlocked. If your phone powers on normally, then it will work with any sim card. If you get a response such as "incorrect card", or "enter subsidy password", you should call your home network's customer care department and ask for the sim unlock code. Alternatively, search the internet for phone unlocking services online.

If you have more questions, you can always email info@fonepool.com for assistance.

Work Experience USA & Working Holiday USA

Make your first few weeks easier when dealing with new employers and landlords, with a local US mobile number. Prepare your resume for US employers with your new US mobile phone number before you leave home. Check your voicemail box from overseas to see if you got the job.

Camp Counselors USA

Check coverage at your camp location on www.ekit.com. Some remote camp locations can be outside of the normal GSM coverage area, in this case you will pick up signal when traveling and on your weekends away from camp.

Traveling

Stay connected while traveling, with your US mobile phone. Meet friends without having to use payphones and expensive internet cafes. Your sim card from E-kit has nationwide service, there are no additional roaming charges across the USA coverage area.

Remember

Mobile phone companies in the USA use different technology and GSM bands to most of the rest of the world. Most new GSM (sim card) phones will pick up signal in the USA, but should be unlocked to work with any sim card. You can save money by using a local US mobile phone service. A sim card from E-kit is a great solution.

Where to Stay

There are many choices of where to stay during your travels, from campgrounds to luxury hotels. The majority of past participants have used youth hostels because they are located in most large cities and are low in cost. CCUSA does not recommend sleeping on beaches, public places or in cars. It is illegal and unsafe. It is also illegal for travelers to sleep in homeless shelters.

Friends & Family

Staying with friends and family is ideal. Ask the American friends you meet at work if they are willing to have you stay with them for a few days or even one night. Don't feel ashamed to ask. Many CCUSA participants choose to travel across the U.S. to meet up and stay with people they met during their job.

Youth Hostels

Youth hostels, for the most part, offer safe, clean, budget accommodations and are located in most major cities across the United States. Hostels do not offer all of the comforts of more expensive motels and hotels, but they do provide a decent night's sleep and many have kitchens. Rooms with bunk beds are usually shared with other travelers and shared bathrooms are standard. Hostels are a great choice if you want to meet people. Many hostels are full during the summer months so call ahead if you know the hostel takes reservations. Hostels in New York City in late August are usually fully booked so plan accordingly. An average price for a hostel is between \$20 and \$40 per person per night. Some hostels require you to become a member of a hostel association in order to stay there. You will be able to buy this membership at the hostel upon arrival. For some suggestions on hostels, check out Hostelling International USA. For additional listings visit www.hostels.com or www.hostelz.com, www.usahotelsweb.com

YMCAs

YMCAs are another great, inexpensive option to consider when traveling on a budget. Y's are available for all ages and offer more than a place to sleep. Sports and recreation facilities are usually offered along with your room. A typical room rate at a YMCA is about \$30 per night. Call 1-800-USA-YMCA for more information and bookings.

Bed & Breakfasts

The popularity of Bed & Breakfasts is growing in America. Vacationers can spend a comfortable night or two in someone's private home for a little more than the price of a hostel. Single and double rooms with private baths are typical, although shared baths are sometimes present. As the name implies, a breakfast is provided to guests every morning and is included in the room rate. Average prices of B&Bs are \$40 - \$70, but can be a lot more for desirable locations. If you are interested in staying at Bed & Breakfasts during your travels, many bookstores carry books that list B&B establishments throughout the country.

Motels

There are many reliable motel chains across America that offers a decent room at a reasonable rate. Motel rates start at around \$50, but can be \$120 or more depending on the location and the number of people per room. Most motels can accommodate up to four people per room and are a good option for larger groups of travelers. Many motels offer a complimentary continental breakfast.

Hotels

Hotels are similar to motels, but usually have nicer rooms and more services, including cable television, swimming pools, on-site restaurants and game rooms. For this added service, hotels will cost from \$70-\$300 or more per night. Some chain hotels, like Embassy Suites, offer two-room suites instead of single rooms. These provide a little more privacy for larger groups of travelers. Some hotels will offer a continental breakfast that is included in the room rate. Ask about this when making reservations. For discounts, try using agencies like www.hotels.com , www.wotif.com , www.priceline.com , www.kayak.com www.booking.com which provides reduced rates for hotels in big US cities.

Whenever making room reservations, ask if you are quoted the “lowest possible rate”. Motels and hotels have many prices they quote to visitors and might come down in price if you keep asking. If you are a member of AAA, you might get a discount on the room.

Motels and Hotels to consider include (all phone numbers listed below are toll free within the U.S.):

Best Western	www.bestwestern.com
Comfort Inn	www.comfortinn.com
Days Inn	www.daysinn.com
Econolodge	www.econolodge.com
Embassy Suites	www.embassysuites.com
Holiday Inn	www.holidayinn.com
Marriott	www.marriott.com
Motel 6	www.motel6.com
Quality Inn	www.qualityinn.com
Radisson	www.radisson.com
Ramada	www.ramada.com
Red Roof Inns	www.redroof.com
Renaissance Hotels	www.renaissancehotel.com
Sheraton	www.sheraton.com
Super 8 Lodge	www.super8.com
Travelodge	www.travelodge.com

Camping

Camping can be an inexpensive and unique method of seeing America. Campgrounds are located throughout the country with the most popular ones in the National Parks. Because these areas are so popular, reservations might be needed and a fee is usually involved, typically around \$15 per stay, per night. It is wise to call the park you intend to visit ahead of time to see if there is a vacancy. The National Parks usually have RV hookups, designated camping areas with toilet facilities, and running water. Less crowded and possibly less expensive are the National and State Forests which usually have fewer facilities such as no running water or toilets.

If you use camping as your main source of accommodations, make sure you have adequate equipment ~ a good sleeping bag, a lightweight, waterproof tent and cooking supplies are just some of the items you will need. If you want to cut costs, look into buying used equipment or renting. Using camping as an option will be expensive at first, but can save you money if done for extended periods of time.

A final few words about camping:

- Please be considerate of how you treat the environment.
- Don't litter – take out what you take in.
- Be careful when starting campfires, especially in dry climates.
- Know the weather forecast before you head out.
- Use common sense when you are out in the wilderness.
- Beware of bears. Make sure you properly store food.
- Do not go camping alone. Tell someone where you are going to be and for how long.

For more information about camping in the US, contact your local chapter of the Kampground of America (KOA) association (www.koa.com) or visit a local bookstore.

Ranches & Resorts

For those who want a more luxurious or exciting holiday, look into staying at a ranch or resort. Spend a week on a farm, tend to the horses, and learn how to corral a herd of cattle. If you want something more relaxing, look into staying at a spa and resort for a week. Pamper yourself with massages and body wraps. For more information on these options, check out a book from a local library or bookstore.

Hostelling International

Hostelling International USA (HI-USA) is the largest network of quality hostels in America with 70 hostels throughout the country. We provide quality accommodations to thousands of travelers from all over the world each year.

HI-USA hostels offer affordable and safe shared accommodations, facilities and activities for our guests combined with an international experience and knowledgeable staff. We promote culturally and environmentally conscious travel and give our many guests the opportunity to engage with fellow travelers and local communities. Our hostels deliver a truly unique stay experience that really sets us apart from many other accommodation options and makes us the best travel value for J1 participants coming to the USA this year!

What do we provide for our guests?

- self-service kitchen facilities for all of our guests to use
- common areas to play games
- access to the Internet with free Wi-Fi or computer stations
- opportunity to meet other guests from all over the world
- many have a continental breakfast
- ALL include towels and complete bedding (sheets, pillows and blankets)

All of our hostels must meet a set of standards; therefore you are guaranteed a clean, safe and secure facility wherever you travel.

Our key destination hostels are located in major cities such as:

- New York
- Boston
- Chicago
- Washington DC
- Los Angeles
- San Francisco
- San Diego
- Portland

These and many of our other urban locations offer a great city stay, close to all the sites and attractions. If you are looking for something a little more off the beaten path, we also have hostels in spectacular locations where you can explore National Parks, natural wonders, cultural and historic sites and many other activities. To learn more about our hostels, please visit us online at www.hiusa.org. For special rates and packages only for J1 participants, check out www.hiusa.org/J1.

Servas

Servas is an international cooperative system of hosts and travelers established to promote world peace, goodwill, and understanding by providing opportunities for deeper, more personal contacts among people of diverse cultures and backgrounds. Servas is non-profit, non-governmental, interracial, and interfaith. Servas International has United Nations consultative status as a Non-Governmental Organization.

Servas is not a travel agency or “cheap way” to travel. It is for the thoughtful traveler who wants to know individuals by entering their homes as one of the family, and sharing experiences, ideas, and activities. You plan your own trip using lists of hosts in countries around the world (including all 50 states in America). You share the everyday life of the hosts whom you visit. Stays are usually for two days.

Hosts around the world are waiting to welcome you with “Open Doors”! Whether you are studying or volunteering abroad, traveling to a country for the first time or returning to a favorite place, Servas homestays can help you understand the places you visit on a deeper level and make lasting friendships. An international Servas traveler shares in their host’s daily life and activities for 2 nights and 3 days, gaining insights unavailable to casual visitors. Through person-to-person contact, Servas travelers build bridges and overcome stereotypes. The international traveler fee is \$85 per adult for unlimited travel during a 12-month period and a \$25 deposit for up to 5 host lists.

For more information, send a request for a traveler application along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

US Servas, Inc:

Email info@usservas.org

www.usservas.org

Transportation

There are many options for traveling around the country. Look into all options before buying anything and don't settle for the first price you are quoted. Prices are very competitive and can change daily.

Domestic Air Travel

Check out your footprints for links to booking great discounted online and international airfares! <http://ccusa.directflightsearches.co.uk/>

Flying enables you to cover a great distance in a short amount of time. The cost of flying is dependent on many things: the city you are traveling to, the day on which you choose to fly, the date you purchase your ticket, return travel or one-way, etc.

To get the best deals, you should try to book your tickets at least 21 days in advance of flying. Airlines will often raise their prices as the flight date gets closer.

Look into many options when booking flights. Some areas have more than one airport and the cost of tickets can vary from airport to airport. You may save money by flying into an airport that is farther away, but still within driving distance.

When booking your tickets, check if flying to a city one day sooner or later would result in a cheaper cost. Usually, flying on Fridays and weekends will be more expensive than travel Monday through Thursday. If you are booking a return ticket, try to schedule your visit over a Saturday night.

The USA has many budget airlines which may have cheaper seats than the major carriers. Some airlines to consider are Southwest, Jet Blue, US Airways, Frontier and Virgin America.

Most U.S. domestic airlines, charge for some or all checked luggage - please check with the airline, and figure these extra charges into your travel budget.

Ground Transportation

Whatever airport you arrive in, always look for a Ground Transportation Desk for information on how to get into the city. There are often shuttle buses that are less expensive than taxis. There may also be trains or city buses that travel to the airport for a small amount of money. The subway at JFK Airport in New York and at Chicago O'Hare Airport are affordable options.

Train Travel

Amtrak is the national railway system in the US, which travels to most major cities within the U.S. and has coast-to-coast service. It will take longer to travel by train than by air but the view will be more scenic and the seats roomier. If you are interested in taking a trip by Amtrak, call 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245), visit their website: www.amtrak.com or go to any Amtrak ticket window to make a purchase and to find out about schedules. Call ahead to see if reservations are necessary. Be flexible with your times and dates of travel. Trains departing to the same city at different times may cost a different amount.

Amtrak offers the USA Rail Pass to international travelers, which can be purchased at any Amtrak station if you show your international passport. For detailed information and updated prices, call 1-800-USA-RAIL or contact your nearest travel agency.

All passes require that you stop at an Amtrak office for issuance of tickets to be used on the train. Reservations are required for most travel on trains and should be made in advance.

Buses

The most widely used and least expensive method of travel is the bus. However, buses are not as comfortable or fast as trains.

Greyhound Bus Lines is the most well-known coach service with routes to all parts of the country and beyond. To purchase bus tickets through Greyhound or to obtain bus schedules, call 1-800-231-2222 or visit their website: www.greyhound.com. You can purchase tickets on the day of your travel at any Greyhound ticket window. It is customary to line up before the bus departs and service is first come, first served. If you pre-purchase tickets in advance, you may be able to save a lot of money but you will still need to arrive at least 30-60 minutes prior to the bus' departure. Greyhound often issues low one-way fares if you purchase tickets more than 21 days in advance.

Traveling by Car

For the most freedom, traveling by car is the answer. When driving, please be aware that each of the 50 States has its own traffic rules, but generally, the maximum speed limit is 55 to 65 miles per hour with signs indicating higher or lower speeds. Seatbelts are mandatory in all states and speed limits are strictly enforced – tourists are often required to pay fines on the spot. International travelers must have a valid international driver's permit or a state license.

Open containers of alcohol (even if the driver is not drinking) are illegal and, if caught, you will likely spend time in jail. The law is very strict regarding drinking alcohol and operating a vehicle. If you are convicted of driving with alcohol or drugs in your body, you will be imprisoned, fined heavily and possibly be deported. Please be aware of the hazards of driving while intoxicated. To avoid this risk, assign a "designated driver" when you and your friends go out. A "designated driver" agrees to stay sober (no drinking) for the night and to bring others in the car home safely. If you are drunk driving, in a car with a drunk driver, or drunk while a passenger in a car, your insurance will not cover you.

Buying A Car

If you are interested in buying a car, carefully consider the pros and cons. Buying a used car can be fairly inexpensive, especially if a few people share costs. In order to buy a car, you must have a valid state driver's license and be able to show proof of car insurance. Ask the person from whom you buy the car for suggestions on local companies that will issue insurance to internationals. Please note that it can be very difficult for internationals to obtain insurance. Make some phone calls before buying a car.

The purchaser of the car must also register the car in the state where they bought it. The registration rates vary by state and car and can be as low as \$40 or as high as \$400. Do some advance research before purchasing a car to save on costs. Some states also require smog tests which can cost over \$100.

To sell your car, newspaper ads are effective but can be expensive. The easiest and cheapest way is to simply put a sign in the window of the car and leave it parked during the day in commercial areas. Do not keep your car parked in business districts for extended periods of time as you run the risk of violating city parking laws and possible towing. If your car is in bad condition, making it difficult to sell at the end of your travels, you can dump it at a scrap yard or donate it to a charity. Please keep in mind that selling a car can take from a few short days to many weeks. Do not abandon your car. It is registered to you and you will be tracked down and heavily fined.

Renting A Car

Renting a car is less involved than buying a car although there are more restrictions. Fees will vary by the type of car you hire, the agency you use and the location you are renting from. Taxes and gas will be extra and you will also need to purchase insurance (get the best coverage available) from the rental company; the travel insurance you have through CCUSA does not include car insurance. If you are renting from an airport agency, there may also be an airport tax or other hidden fees on your bill. Ask for the final price before signing for the car. A credit card is mandatory when renting a car.

Many car rental agencies will only rent to drivers aged 25 and older. Agencies that do rent to people under the age of 25 will often charge an additional per day fee that can be around \$25 per day. Enterprise Rent-a-car charges a reduced fee of \$10/day if you are under the age of 25.

When renting cars, it is wise to ask about mileage restrictions and driving boundaries. Some agencies will only allow you to rent a car if you agree to stay within the state you started from or its connecting states. Also ask about drop off charges. Drop off charges are incurred when you pick up the car from one location and drop it off at another. You will likely want to refill the gas tank before dropping the car off, as the agency will charge you very high fuel rates if the gas tank is not full upon return.

Insurance is very expensive and there are many options to choose from when renting a car. Here is what each type of insurance covers:

The Collision-Damage Waiver (CDW) relieves you of responsibility for damage to, or theft of, the vehicle. Liability covers the cost of your injuring someone else and/or their vehicle. You must have this in order to rent a car. Personal Accident is an injury and life insurance policy. You must have this as well as Personal Effects coverage, which protects any belongings in the car that are damaged or stolen.

Some of the agencies you may want to contact include:

Alamo	www.alamo.com
Avis	www.avis.com
Budget	www.budget.com
Dollar	www.dollar.com
Enterprise	www.enterprise.com
Hertz	www.hertz.com
National	www.nationalcar.com
Rent-A-Wreck	www.rent-a-wreck.com
Thrifty	www.thrifty.com

Recreational Vehicles (RVs)

A unique way of seeing the country is to rent a recreational vehicle or RV. RVs are similar to moving homes. They are completely equipped with beds, toilets, kitchens and other comforts of life. Thousands of state and national parks are able to accommodate RVs with services such as running water, electricity and sewer hookups. There are many RV rental agencies located throughout the country.

www.motorhomebookers.com/usa

You can also contact car rental agencies to see if they offer RV rentals. RV rentals are expensive, so it is a good idea to have a large group to travel with to share in the costs. But you won't need to stay in hotels and hostels, so consider that in your budget.

Driveaway Service

One of the least expensive ways of driving around the U.S. is with a Driveaway Service. Travelers have the opportunity to deliver privately-owned vehicles throughout North America with no rental or mileage charge. Driveaway companies are commissioned by the car owners and rental car agencies to find drivers for vehicles that require personal delivery from one city to another. A refundable deposit and gas money (except for the first tank) is all you pay.

If you are at least 23 years of age and have a valid driver's license, you are eligible to be a "driveaway driver."

Check out: www.autodriveaway.com/driver or Google search for other available companies.

Be very careful about using a Driveaway. If you get into an accident, you may lose all of your deposit, even if the accident was not your fault. Also report to the company any scratches or dents or missing equipment before you drive it away. This will be your only defense should the owner of the car blame you for any damages.

Hitchhiking

Hitchhiking is not recommended by CCUSA. It is dangerous and illegal in many parts of the country. Every year, travelers enter strange cars while hitchhiking and are never heard from or seen again. Do not accept rides from strangers or pick up hitchhikers either!

Touring Companies

If you don't want the hassle of planning itineraries, there are plenty of touring companies that will do it for you. Some tours arrange everything; their fee includes transportation, accommodations, admission fees and food. Other companies provide only the basics.

Because you have a limited time to travel, why not make the most of your holiday and see as much as you can. Itineraries include all of the most popular destinations in the USA and are very affordable for those on a budget. Visit National Parks, historic monuments like Mount Rushmore and Niagara Falls, as well as exciting cities such as Miami, San Francisco, Boston, New Orleans and Chicago. While on tour you will have the opportunity to go whitewater rafting, horseback riding, mountain biking, kayaking, and much more!

Most trek companies have small group sizes and include travelers of many nationalities from around the world. If you want to see the USA before returning home, but you don't want to do it

on your own, this is the way to go! You will find that the groups are friendly, enthusiastic, and always willing to try something new.

Most trek companies provide all camping gear except a sleeping bag and they operate on a food kitty system and everyone contributes approximately \$7 per day for meals. Many tours depart from New York and Los Angeles, so it is easy to do a tour before returning home from one of these cities. You may even be able to save the cost of a flight by taking a cross-country trek to New York or Los Angeles instead of having to add a domestic flight before your departure.

For more information check out your footprints account.

Other Tour Companies

There are many other tour companies that bring together small groups of travelers for fun and adventure. They range in price from very inexpensive short five-day trips to grand itineraries that last for many weeks. Request brochures as soon as you arrive in the U.S. Tours fill up quickly.

AdventureBus:- www.adventurebus.com

Contiki Tours:- www.contiki.com/destinations/north-america/tours

Green Tortoise:- www.greentortoise.com

Incredible Adventures:- www.incadventures.com

LA City Tours:- www.lacitytours.com

Suntrek Tours:- www.suntrek.com

Suggestions

This travel manual is offered to CCUSA participants to help them prepare more effectively for their post-work travels. As such, we encourage you to provide us with feedback so that we may improve this book in future years. Some topics to consider are:

- What did you learn on your travels that you would like to share with future participants?
- What would you like to see added to this manual?
- What did you do during your travels?
- Did you find any information in this book that was incorrect (wrong telephone numbers, addresses...?) If so, what is the correct information?
- Did you use any of the hostels/companies advertised in this manual? How would you rate them?

Please mail back any comments to CCUSA at:

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