



6 TRAVEL TIPS FOR SMARTPHONES

Are you planning a trip out of the country this spring or summer? Let's talk about precautions you should take so you don't come home to a smartphone bill that'll ruin your vacation after-glow.

1. Call Your Cell Phone Service Provider – Before traveling overseas call the company you pay for your cell phone and ask what packages they offer for international use. Think about how you might use your phone (calling the U.S., calling within the country you're visiting, texting, email...) and ask how each of those is billed under your provider's international plan.

2. Turn Off Data Roaming – The moment you board the plane, for your international destination, go into the Settings on your smartphone and turn off Data Roaming and the Cellular Data Plan. That's the best way to prevent your phone from randomly using data to search for emails and texts throughout the day. Better that you control specifically when the Cellular Data is used. You can turn the Cellular Data on and off as you need it so as not to exceed the plan you've chosen.

3. WiFi Is Your New BFF – If the hotel or home you're visiting has wifi, you're all set. When on wifi you can check email, visit websites, send photos, text, and use the GPS feature on your phone. You want to be careful when you're outside of that wifi area. That's when things can get pricey. Wifi is a free zone where you can use almost all of the features of your phone without incurring additional charges. The one exception is voice calling. You may still be charged international fees for phone calls (in and out). You might have the option of turning on wifi.

“IS THIS THING ON?”



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4. Skype Your Phone Calls – Skype is a free app that allows you to use your smartphone, tablet, or computer to call, text, or video chat internationally for free or at greatly reduced prices. When you're in a wifi area and communicating with another Skype user, your calls, video chats, or texts are free. FREE! Using a credit card you can open a Skype account and pay a very small (and I mean VERY SMALL) amount to call people who aren't registered with Skype. I have yet to see a phone company offer more competitive pricing than Skype for international phone calls.

5. When In Doubt, Use Airplane Mode – If you arrive at your destination and can't remember what your smartphone plan allows for, simply go to your Settings and turn on Airplane Mode. Airplane Mode will stop all transmission to or from the phone. So no emails, texts, phone calls, or visiting websites. No signal = no ugly phone bills. You can still take and view photos, read your notes, or listen to any music saved on your phone. Once back in the safety of a wifi area you can turn **off** Airplane Mode and turn **on** wifi.

6. Document With Your Camera – Of course you're going to take photos of everything you love about your visit. Why not also take a photo of your passport and the back and front of your credit cards so you'll have that information on your phone at all times? I even take a photo of my rental car, when traveling, and it's license plate to make it easier to identify in a parking lot full of cars.

Remember that to put away your smartphone for a day is a great vacation choice. Smell the roses, enjoy the sea breeze, linger in a museum while your smartphone becomes your personal assistant taking all of your messages.

Bon Voyage!