

Gadgets, comfort, luggage: A gift guide for travelers

November 14 2017, by Beth J. Harpaz



This undated image from the Flight 001 travel store shows the company's mini-bar kit, with tiny glass bottles and metal flasks for storing your favorite alcohol-and-mixer ingredients for cocktails on the road. The portable happy hour also includes a funnel, stir spoon and cocktail recipe booklet. (Flight 001 via AP)

What's in your bag when you take a trip? What gadgets, tools and

comfort items are essential?

The Associated Press crowdsourced that question on a Facebook thread as fodder for a holiday gift guide for travelers. We heard from folks around the world, from millennials to retirees, from frequent-flying business travelers to once-in-a-while vacationers. Here are their recommendations, plus a few of our favorites.

GADGETS

—A universal travel adapter that converts electric current around the world. The travel store Flight 001 has a "5-in-1" color-coded adapter , \$35.

—Portable chargers to keep devices running on the road. Anker's PowerCore 26800 , \$48, can charge an iPhone more than six times. For hikers and beach bums, Anker's PowerPort Solar Lite , \$51, was deemed the best solar charger by The New York Times' Wirecutter product-testing company.

—The Tile, \$35, to keep track of belongings. Attach the Tile to an object like keys or bags, or tuck it inside a passport case or wallet, and you can locate the item with Bluetooth and GPS technology. For outdoor gear, Tile Sport is waterproof.

—Tiny Bluetooth speakers, like the \$28 Oontz , to fill a hotel room or vacation rental with music.

—Power strip or cube tap (a cube-shaped adapter with multiple outlets) to charge multiple devices in hotel rooms and airports.



This undated image provided by trtl shows the trtl travel pillow. The trtl pillow supports the head and neck with a system of ribs inside a soft fleece, in a design that is very different from traditional U-shaped travel pillows. (Trtl via AP)

—Headlamp for hiking, reading and crafting. Or the mini Lumio lamp and battery pack, which opens and closes like a book, \$150.

PACKING AND LUGGAGE

—Compression storage bags so packed clothes take up less room. No vacuum needed for Roomier Life Roll-Up Space Saver Bags , \$16 on Amazon: The air is expelled through an opening when they're rolled up.

—Packing cubes and ultralight nylon packing bags for organizing. Flight 001's Spacepak bags , \$42 and up, have dual compartments to separate dirty and clean clothes, and also have air vents for compression.

—Hand-held scale for weighing bags.

—Colorful luggage tags.

—Luggage. For inexpensive and serviceable, Target and Costco; sturdy and sensible, L.L. Bean; stylish, upscale and durable, Tumi. For organized hipsters, the \$220 Nomatic backpack/duffel bag . For day bags, Bagallini, LeSportsac and REI's \$33 compressible Sea To Summit Ultra-Sil Daypack . For high-tech, Bluesmart smart luggage includes a built-in weight scale, a GPS tracking device, a battery to charge a phone and laptop, and autolock activated by cellphone.

SLEEP



This undated image provided by Morpher Helmet shows the Morpher bike helmet. The helmet collapses to a flat shape when not in use, which makes it easy to store and carry, especially for cyclists who don't want to lug their own helmets when they travel, but who want to use bike share systems in cities where helmets may not be provided. (Morpher Helmet via AP)

—Travel pillow. The new trtl travel pillow looks like a neck wrap rather than the traditional U-shape. It supports the head and neck with a system of ribs inside a soft fleece, \$30.

—Ear plugs and contoured sleep masks that don't crush eyelids and lashes.

—Bose noise-canceling headphones : expensive at around \$350, but the brand of choice for frequent flyers.

—White noise machines like LectroFan , \$35.

COMFORT, HYGIENE, BEAUTY AND FITNESS

—Travel-size toiletries: toothpaste, sunscreen, deodorant, mouthwash, lotion, antibacterial wipes, hand sanitizer, lip balm, perfume, tissues. Gift a Birchbox subscription for \$10 a month and the recipient will get five samples of personal care and beauty products per delivery for hair, skin and style, all in TSA-compliant sizes for carry-on liquids and gels not exceeding 3.4 ounces.

—Toiletry bag that can be hung up upon arrival.

—Tennis ball-size T Spheres , aromatherapy-massage balls, can be heated or frozen, \$35.



This undated image provided by Tile shows the Tile device. By attaching the Tile hardware to an item you don't want to lose, you can use Bluetooth technology to locate the item. Travelers have begun using Tile to keep track of passports and other items on the road. (Tile via AP)

—Soaragami armrest divider , \$30. Have fun explaining it to the stranger on the plane sitting next to you in coach.

—Travel yoga mats.

—Inflatable Ten Toes stand-up paddleboard, \$500 and up.

—Bike helmets that fold flat. Morpher helmets are certified safe in the United States and Canada by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, \$149.

PRACTICAL AND FUN

—To make a hotel room or vacation rental homey, a flat-folding mesh laundry hamper; plastic, fold-out flower vase and 2-cup travel kettle for boiling water.

—For cocktails on the road, Flight 001 sells a \$65 mini-bar kit with tiny glass bottles, metal flasks, stir spoon, funnel and recipe booklet. The vials are sized to be TSA-compliant, but remember that it's not legal to drink your own booze on an airplane.

—Rain ponchos that fold into tiny flat squares.



This undated image provided by trtl shows the trtl travel pillow connected to the backpack. The trtl pillow supports the head and neck with a system of ribs inside

a soft fleece, in a design that is very different from traditional U-shaped travel pillows. (Trtl via AP)

—Disposable underwear.

—Pashmina or cotton print scarf, for warmth, modesty or even as a picnic or beach blanket.

GIFT CARDS ETC.

—Surprise someone in a destination with a bottle of Champagne or flowers in their room, helicopter tour, dinner cruise, show tickets or attractions pass.

—Give air travel using the new Skyhour website or app. One Skyhour costs \$60 and is worth an hour of flight time. Recipients can search for and book flights, just like they would on any booking site. More than 350 airlines participate.

—For Disney fans, the Gift of Disney Vacations program can pay for an experience, ticket or entire vacation at a Disney park.

—Kindle or iTunes gift card.

—Priority Pass membership for airport lounges.

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