The American Express guide to Long Haul Destinations

Now’s the time to visit those exotic destinations as a family

Agra, India
Here’s our long haul shortlist:

1 **VANCOUVER, CANADA**

As Vancouver is such a walkable city, the local advice is to start simply by stepping out of your hotel and exploring. That’s because whatever you’re looking for – from parks and pools, to museums, markets and mountains – chances are it’s right on your doorstep.

2 **TOKYO, JAPAN**

Tokyo is great fun for kids. Partly because it’s a city of doing, not just seeing. For instance, if train driving is their passion, at Popondetta Akihabara they can rent a line on a huge model railway. And any budding drummers are invited to let off steam at Asakusa’s Drum Museum.

3 **BENTOTA AND NUWARA ELIYA, SRI LANKA**

If you’re the kind of family that can never agree where to go, this two-centre holiday is the one for you. Bentota Beach offers white sands and water sports. While in the middle of the island, overlooked by Sri Lanka’s tallest mountain, Nuwara Eliya is an important tea-growing region – where the perfect cuppa is assured.

4 **GOLDEN TRIANGLE, INDIA**

The Golden Triangle spans three cities: Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. It’s the perfect introduction to India, as each city has something spectacularly unique: the Taj Mahal at Agra, bustling markets at Jaipur, and the city of two amazing halves, Delhi.

5 **GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA**

Despite the name, you can enjoy a lot of The Gold Coast for free. Such as a family drive to the wild and wonderful Mount Tamborine. Or to the child-friendly waters of Tallebudgera Creek. And don’t miss the free ‘Disney World’ of the Gold Coast, Broadwater Parklands.

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For parents travelling with young children like mine, long haul holidays may seem daunting. I found that when we visited Canada as a family last year, the children got so excited by being on holiday, that the journey itself was much easier than expected.

*James Cracknell, Amex Travel Ambassador & Olympic Gold Medallist*
OUR TOP TIPS FOR FAMILY TRIPS

Check our travel tips for your next faraway family foray.

Before you go

Your pre-flight checks:

- Check regulations about travelling with children to your destination
- If required, ask your GP for anti-malarials in syrup form for children
- Make sure the first leg of your journey is overnight so the whole family can sleep as normal
- Book kids’ meals for your flight(s), and also pack plenty of snacks in your hand-luggage
- Arrange for any bulky items, such as nappies, to be delivered to your accommodation on the day of your arrival so you can travel light.

Don’t forget to pack:

- Water sterilising tablets
- Medium-sized tupperware box to store sterilised items
- Portable mosquito nets
- Rash vests to protect sensitive skin from the sun
- Swimming nappies
- Pop-up sun tent
- Hand sanitizer.

During the journey:

- Take your child’s car seat on the flight, as the familiarity will help your child settle. Ask the airline for their seat specifications to ensure it fits
- Give your child a bottle at take-off and landing to comfort them and reduce ear ‘popping’
- Pack a spare set of light clothing for children in your hand luggage, in case of spillages
- Take care of yourself when flying and you’ll find it easier to take care of your kids. We recommend a quick and easy in-flight facial scrub you can make by mixing a sachet of sugar with lemon juice.

At your destination:

- If any member of your family has an allergy, write it down on a card in the local language. It could help a waiter recommend which dishes to try (or avoid)
- If you’re breastfeeding and are unsure about local regulations, head to the nearest international hotel and find their ladies’ washroom
- Pack clothes made from natural fibres, as they ‘breathe’ better so won’t irritate sensitive skin.

Happy travels

Happy landings
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