

campus life

'Tis the season to travel

Helpful tips for better traveling this holiday season

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Over 2,000 commercial flights will be cancelled this holiday year and 1,000 will be delayed. To avoid delays, fly around the problem cities. Chicago is a main hub for a lot of holiday flying, but it will cost less and be less time consuming if you fly a different route to get to where you are going. Simply avoid Chicago delays and snowy blizzards of cancellations.

Another city to be cautious of is the JFK New York Airport. JFK is a huge international airport, but beyond that, it's known for its stormy weather. Be careful flying into large northern cities, which are prone to winter weather. A lot of airlines offer cheaper flights that have longer routes (via Dallas, to Kansas, to Indianapolis,

to Baltimore) but it is sometimes safer and takes less time.

When flying, know the new regulations. All liquid items must be in a sandwich sized baggy and cannot be over 3 milliliters. Through security, you will need to take your shoes off, and any coats or over shirts you are wearing. Dress in light layers and shoes that are easy to take off quickly. Security goes so fast, you need to be aware of what you brought and



Photo courtesy of blogsouthwest.com

When traveling by air, make sure to travel light.

what you are leaving the area with. Make sure you have your ID, boarding pass, carry-on luggage, one personal item, and accessories. Flying can be very fast and easy, but without prior knowledge of what to expect you could be held up for an extra hour.

Arrive early to your airport of departure, check in at the counter. If you can travel light, I would suggest not checking your bag, simply to eliminate the baggage fee of \$25-50. Also, after Security, I would advise checking in at your gate to ensure your seat on the plane. With so many flights being cancelled or delayed, you want to make sure you are guaranteed the

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Shopping smart, saving money

Alternatives to the college student's noodles and pizza diet

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No matter how much you love Ramen noodles, pizza or Mac and Cheese, you probably do not want to be eating them for the next few years. With gas and grocery prices on the rise, it is expensive and hard to find good deals.

As a result, a good amount of students end up living on Ramen noodles, cold pizza from the night before and potato chips loaded with grease and fat. Here are some alternatives to the noodles-and-pizza diet.

Discount grocery stores. Do you ever wonder what happens to the slightly damaged cereal boxes on grocery store shelves that no one buys? Or where the

almost-expired in a month food goes? Although the cereal is safe inside the inner cardboard liner, the slightly crumpled boxes tend to end up getting avoided and pushed to the back of the shelf. Such stores are very valuable to college students and others on limited incomes that like to eat well without burning a hole the pocket.

Bonus cards will save you lots of money. You get pre priced discounts of specific food items, coupons every time you shop, and buy one get one free offers. It's an excellent way to save, and it's free!

Local restaurant student discounts. Some local restaurants give college student discounts all the way up to 15 percent off!

If you want to have a date night with your roommates, friend, or

significant other, it might be a good idea to look into who gives student discounts.

Food stamps. An article in USA today stated that with the high costs of living today, more and more college students are resorting to the food stamp option.

Did you know that you might be eligible for the U.S. government's Food stamp program? If you qualify, you could get funds from the state to help you pay your food bills.

Money is distributed on a card that works like an ATM card, and is accepted by most grocery stores. You can look up your eligibility at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp, or call Pennsylvania's food stamp information hotline at 1-800-692-7462.

Bulk Food Shopping. A popular

way to save on food is to shop at bulk buying stores such as a Sam's Club or Costco. You can find things such as cereal, frozen vegetables, frozen chicken, eggs, juices, pizza, snacks and water, all in large quantities.

The downside of a bulk-buying store is cost of membership. It might be a good idea to split the cost of membership with friends or roommates. Once you have bought all your food, you will want to package frozen foods in Ziploc bags and freeze them. This helps you have longer lasting food.

Dollar Stores. Many dollar stores sell dry stock foods, and some household items. Instead of paying \$3 at the grocery store, spend \$1 at the local Dollar Tree.

Use Coupons. You know that

annoying lady that you always get stuck behind when you go to the grocery store? The one who has a stack of coupons that could publish a book? That's the lady that walks off saving the big bucks! Coupons are free and all you have to do is cut them, save them and use them the next time you go grocery shopping. You would be surprised how much money you save!

Coupons are easy to find as well. Try the Sunday newspaper, Clipper magazine, Web sites of products and grocery store flyers.

Free Samples. This isn't much of a reliable shopping method, but it can be pretty neat getting free stuff! Search the Web sites of products you use all the way from foods to toiletries for free sample offers.