



tan. Blend in, when possible. The key to all of this is getting to know the people in a new place, and not just the other tourists. The friendships you bring home with you from your travels can be your most memorable souvenirs. Just think of the enriching possibilities of forging a lasting friendship with someone from a completely different environment. Who knows what you might learn about the people there, what you might learn about yourself?

The right mix is something you can

achieve on your own, if you try. Lie on the beach, go skiing, do whatever your vacationing heart desires, but make time to visit the museums and cathedrals, the theaters and the food markets. And make the effort to make new friends. You've made some good friends before, there's no reason to think you won't make them again. Don't fall into the tourist trap every time you travel. Strike a balance between fun and culture and you'll turn your vacation into a truly wonderful holiday.

CASE IN POINT

The best way to illustrate our point about the intellectual and cultural benefits of traveling is to introduce you to someone who is already wise in the ways of world travel.

Helene, a 23-year-old graphic artist from Boston, celebrated the end of her undergraduate days last year with a memorable trip to Denmark. "I was planning to travel alone," she recalls, "and I remembered an exchange student we had in our high school. I couldn't recall his name, just that he was from Denmark, and I didn't even know if he'd remember me, but I figured I'd give it a shot and try to track him down. I don't know what I was hoping for, but I figured maybe he could tell me a good place to stay, things like that."

And so Helene dusted off her high school yearbook, found his name, and got his home address from her high school. "I called before I went," she says. "I mean, I didn't even know if his family would still be living there." Luckily, they were; the exchange student fondly remembered his high school days back in Worcester, Massachusetts.

On his invitation, Helene made plans to stay with him and his family for a few days, until she got her bearings and went off on her own. "As it turned out, I stayed with them the whole time," she remembers with a smile. "His family was just wonderful to me. They took me everywhere, to parties, all these Danish events and festivals. It was like I was an honorary citizen. I don't mean to make it sound like all we did was go to parties, but I really did get a good feel for their social customs. I picked up on all the local phrases. It

was absolutely fantastic, like nothing I could have expected. We even sat down to breakfast each morning with chocolate sandwiches, which is something I never would have gotten to do if I'd stayed in a hotel. It was just a thoroughly rewarding experience."



Helene has since returned the favor. "He came to visit me in Boston last year," she says, "and it was like I was on vacation all over again. It's funny, but I live here and I never quite saw this city the way I do now, after seeing it through his eyes. We discovered Boston together, and we drove up the coast of Maine, things I never get motivated enough to do on my own. We even drove down to Worcester and stayed with my folks for a few days and looked in on our old high school."

"Looking him up was one of the best moves I ever made," she insists. "Really, it's

not like I would have been lost over there without him, but it's just that I had such a fantastic time with him. It made the whole thing a much richer and more memorable experience. They made me feel like a part of the family, and I think he feels the same way about my family here. We write each other letters now all the time, and we talk once in a while. We both gained something from this that will last a long, long time."

MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS TRIPS

We know, a business trip is certainly not a vacation, but it does require some travel planning, and we thought a word or two on the art of business traveling would be helpful here.

Business and pleasure can be a tough mix, tougher still when a sudden business trip sends you packing from the home office to parts unknown. To get ahead in the business world you'll have to get moving, which means you'll literally have to pick yourself up and move to where the action is. Once you start your first job, there's a good chance you'll have to travel to meet with an out-of-town client, to make a presentation to colleagues in a branch office, or to represent your company at a conference. And, as you climb the corporate ladder, your road trips will surely increase in length and frequency.

The myth of the wild and crazy, company-sponsored junket is just that — a myth. Oh, it may happen now and then, and here and there, but you shouldn't count on it. In truth, most business trips can be tedious and exhausting affairs, with little opportunity to get away from the business at hand.

- A business trip is not a vacation. Your travel wardrobe should be a notch or two above what you might normally wear on your own time; remember, you are representing your company, and first impressions do count for something.

- If you're traveling solo, leave some work for the plane. Too often, people knock themselves out getting ready for an out-of-town meeting, only to twiddle their thumbs with nothing to do on a cross-country flight. Figure at least half the scheduled flight time will be available for concentrated work; put the time on the ground to personal use.

- Meetings taken out of town should be accorded the same importance and formality you'd expect to find in your office.

- Do not expect to have a good time, but be prepared to have one if necessary. You might be called on to attend a dinner, or a show, or a sporting event, when what you'd most like to do is order up room service and a movie on cable. Put on a happy face and be social; if you're with your boss, or an out-of-town colleague, you can build a strong and lasting connection when you're on the