

Student travel can be affordable

■ Student discounts and other secrets can knock off big bucks from expenses

By Brian Goodell
Oregon Daily Emerald

For students, a trip to Europe can be an enlightening experience. It can also mean spending money — lots and lots of money.

Even if the flight over is cheap, little things add up. A train ride can cost about \$100. A good deal for a room is \$50 and food can run anywhere from \$5 for the cheap stuff to \$40 for the good stuff.

To the uninformed student, a trip to Europe can mean a trip to bankruptcy court.

On Thursday, the staff of Eugene's Council Travel gave roughly 100 students a quick lesson on how to make a trip to Europe work on a thin budget.

"We negotiate fares specifically for student, teacher and youth travelers with every major airline in the world — not just to Europe, but everywhere," Nancy Kivlen, regional director for Council Travel, said. "Students can get up to 50 percent off airline tickets if they book through us."

The trick to saving money in Europe, Kivlen said, is to get an International Student Identification Card. Most destinations in Europe honor student discounts but will not recognize a University of Oregon ID With an ISIC, students can save on anything from train fares to theater tickets.

The ISIC also insures youth travelers for up to \$10,000 on medical expenses and serves as a phone card with 24-hour access to English-speaking operators.

"This option is great if you're in a country like Czechoslovakia or Greece where nobody speaks English," Kivlen said. "This card is essential for anyone who wants to travel to Europe on a budget."

Senior sociology major Katie Garrett, who attended the seminar, said she purchased the card before going to Europe last summer, and it paid off.

"I was able to save about \$300 off the cost of my flight to Ireland," Garrett said. "Most of the places I visited offered a student discount too. I think I saved a total of about \$500 on my entire vacation."

Another trick to saving money, Kivlen said, is to take advantage of the Eurail pass. This pass offers travelers in Europe the option of spending a bulk rate to have unlimited travel on most of the trains in Europe. For \$388, a student can have unlimited access between 21 European nations. The pass is also good for most of the ferry transportation from the Baltic countries and the U.K. to the mainland.

Junior journalism major Robert Mackay, who plans to travel to Europe soon, said he would definitely buy a Eurail Pass.

"If I'm going all the way to Europe, I don't want to see just a few of the countries," Mackay said. "It looks like this is the best and the cheapest way to see all of Europe. I think it's a great deal."

In addition to the Eurail pass, students can purchase a Euro pass. The Euro pass works like the Eurail pass but only covers three or four countries for about half the cost of the Eurail pass.

Kim Henry, manager of the Eugene Council Travel offices, said students can save a lot of money

Travel tips

Make sure you have a signed, valid passport and/or foreign entry visa no later than six weeks prior to your departure.

Make two photocopies of your passport ID page — one for home and one to carry with you.

Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for health and shots information. 1-888-232-2338 or www.cdc.gov

Remember, in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws.

Do not be a target for theft. Avoid conspicuous clothing and expensive jewelry, and do not carry excessive amounts of money or unnecessary credit cards.

SOURCE: U.S. State Department

on airfare by traveling before the peak season, which starts on June 15. If the traveler leaves before June 15 but does not return until after peak season begins, the lower rate still applies.

Kivlen said Europe's least expensive area to visit is eastern Europe.

"It's one of the best deals you can get," Kivlen said. "Eastern Europe is extremely inexpensive and really good for budget travel."

If a trip to Europe still seems out of reach, Kivlen said students should consider a work abroad program.

"We have access to information on programs where you can work in Ireland, Germany, Holland; and you can make a living while seeing Europe," Kivlen said. "This is a great way to see Europe on a budget."

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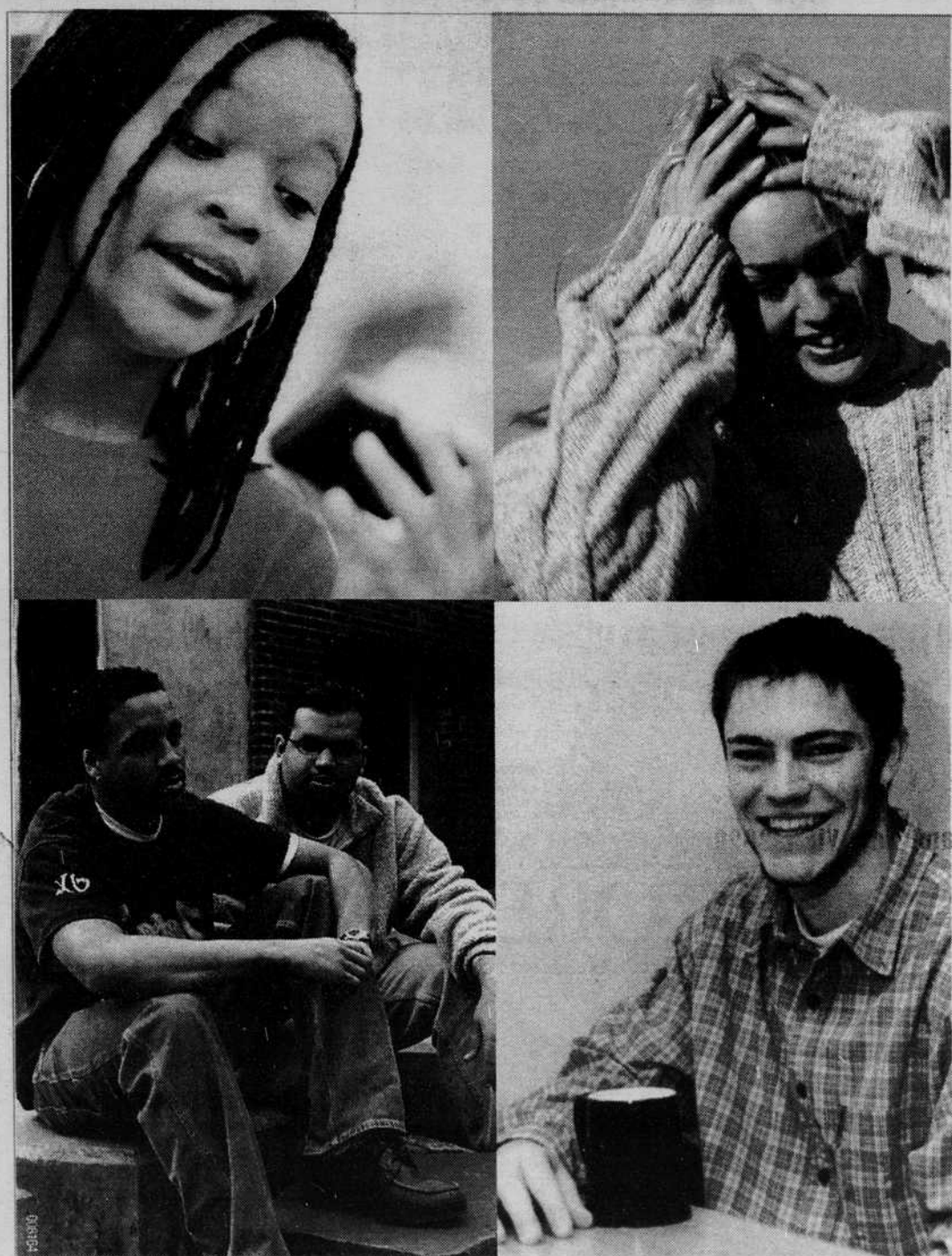
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NEW VIEW 2000

Data taken from 1998 UO Health Center Survey.

Office of Student Life