**Immersing yourself in the local culture, tips, and real-life experiences**

When traveling abroad, people want to get the more out of their experiences and bring back home amazing experiences that will be the topic of conversation for years. While nowadays it is easy to to book flights and accommodations of different sorts, as a traveler you cannot get the authenticity and flavor of the place you are visiting unless you really immerse into local culture. Having traveled for the last 15 years to remote and touristy locations I believe I had learn some tips, and here I am sharing the fundamental ones with you.

**Travel light and mingle yourself with the locals**

Imagine what would happen when you pack a 23 kg bag plus a carry on luggage and a backpack. The moment you arrive to your destination you are sweating over the weight of your stuff and you will be looking for a cab to get to your hotel.

Personally, I do love to have plenty of gadgets and clothing at home, but when I travel I prefer to have the few fundamental things I need with me. So, travel light, you don't need two pair of sneakers, just the comfortable ones, I think I made my point here.

When you travel light, upon arrival to your destination you can use public transport therefore you´ll mingle with the locals instantly. Be curious and cautious, there is always someone who will talk to you and facilitate your life. I found that by doing this, you get more confident to explore unknown parts of a destination, and if you got in love with a nice and bulky product, you might be able to bring it back home at no additional cost as you will have space and kgs available within your return ticket. In my trips to Africa I used to bring amazing stuff I found at local markets.

Tip: When packaging your bag put aside all those things you ¨might need¨ because you actually won´t. For my trips I have the following rule of thumb: clothing for 4-5 days, hygienic stuff my camera and tablet, plus a portable charger, that's actually my last addition after I got ¨unplugged¨ few times in the deep forest.

**Finding the real food haunts and discovering local culture**

Remember food connects people. No matter where you’re from, food is the common ground with which to make conversation. Food is life force, and locals just love to talk about food, it is the safest topic to strike up a discussion across the globe. Once on location, just go there and ask locals about their favorite places! Get brownie points and greet the person first in the local language and ask if they speak English, chances are they do! I love getting to non-touristy food markets when I visit a city and spot a table at one of those restaurants in the surrounding area, recently on a trip to Belgrade I got to know plenty of people and enjoy liters of beers simply by asking next table what would they recommend on the menu for a first commer.

Tip: Often finding local joints is a daunting task because you don’t speak the language or because your time is limited. Remember that sensory memory is the most powerful, you’re much more likely to remember the pleasant bite of the fresh paella paired with [local wine in Barcelona](https://barcelonaeatlocal.com/best-wine-shops-of-barcelona/) rather than the beautiful sightseeing you undertook which is very likely to be recorded with your camera. By getting off the tourist track, talking to as many people you can along your way, and observing the local patrons, you’re without a doubt going to have the most unforgettable experience no matter where you travel.

**Participating into local events**

Get off the tourist tracks and check the agenda for local events. I rather prefer to find a coffee bar and ask around about it than asking the hotel reception. In most cities there is a website or free magazine that showcase all sorts of events, simply find something that genuinely interest you.

Be intrepid as you feel, and spend time discovering the lesser known areas of your destination, you will most probably find a lushness of the culture that's matched by the lack of tourists. In a trip I made to Senegal I entered into a music instruments store, I love all sorts of music (except classic), and I asked where I could go and listen to local music. The experience was unforgettable, and I came back several times to the bar that hosted local artists almost every night.  
  
Tip: try finding a local store that sells products you are genuinely interested at, and establish a conversation with one of the vendors. You should get set to start your cultural adventures.

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