

Mark Lakin Talks Honeymooning: From Prepping for a Long Flight to Jet-Lag Cures

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Aisle or window?

Aisle. I don't sleep on flights and use the time to catch up on work so I can enjoy myself when I get to my destination. Since I'm awake sometimes for up to 16 hours on a long-haul flight, I like the freedom to walk around the cabin and stretch without disturbing my neighbor.

Check or carry-on?

Check. I'm a professional photographer and travel with a 50-pound camera bag.

What electronics do you always pack?

Beats earbuds. They're compact, easy to carry in my pocket, and useful to both block out noise and enhance the way I experience something. Good music is the soundtrack to my happiest and most profound moments.

What are your tips for fitting souvenirs in your suitcase?

I'm a collector at heart, and my home is filled with artifacts from around the world. I pack a large empty duffle bag in my suitcase, and as I acquire things along the way, I fill it up. It's a lot less expensive and more reliable to pay for an extra bag on the flight home than to ship the goods by courier.

Favorite souvenir from your travels:

I have more souvenirs than I do regular household items—even my soap has a fascinating story to tell. But the ones that matter to me most are those that consistently bring a smile to my face and have brought rich meaningful experiences

to my life, such as meeting an elderly blind man who made a humble living by handcrafting soaps.

What destinations would be ideal for a bachelorette party weekend and why?

I recently planned a bachelorette party in Iceland for a group of women from New York City. After a direct 4.5-hour flight to Reykjavik and a short car ride, the ladies were in the turquoise geothermal waters of the [Blue Lagoon](#) followed by an in-water massage. They spent the rest of their days hiking, snowmobiling, shopping in chic Scandinavian boutiques, and drinking wine while lazing by the most stunning waterfalls, volcanoes, and geysers. Their evenings were spent dining in fabulous restaurants and dancing the night away at Reykjavik's many cool nightclubs.

Most romantic hotel?

[Little Kulala](#) is a luxurious desert retreat adjacent to Namibia's famed Sossusvlei dune fields. The 11 stylish, thatched-roof villas have floor-to-ceiling glass walls and merge impeccably into the desert landscape. Each villa has a private plunge pool, an outdoor shower for two, and a rooftop star bed (in addition to the luxe bed inside) for romantic star gazing while cozied up under the comforter. All this plus top-notch wining and dining under the sparkling skies makes this place the perfect spot to turn up the romance.

HOTELS FOR YOUR HONEYMOON WITH AMAZING VIEWS

Most romantic meal?

Dining on delicious, locally sourced, fresh food barefoot with your toes in the sand. Whether it's a fireside dinner on your own sandbar in the middle of the Indian Ocean off Mozambique or a barbecue with your own chef on a private atoll in the Maldives, seeing your loved one bathing in candle light set to the sounds of the waves at sunset will make any heart skip a beat.

How do you prepare for a long flight?

My goal on the plane is to be healthy and productive. Flights are often treated as dead time that people fill by eating too much and killing time. I do the opposite. I bring healthy food from home like nuts, a grilled chicken salad, and a protein bar. That and lots of water get me through. Eating minimally and staying hydrated also helps with jetlag.

What are your tips for planning a once in a lifetime trip?

Hire a travel expert. The advent of Kayak and similar online services is the way to go for a long weekend in Miami, but using them for a trip of a lifetime is a huge mistake. A good expert will have many years' worth of travel knowledge from staying in hotels, eating in the best restaurants and local hideouts, and experiencing activities like hot air balloon rides, vineyards, and spas. They also have access to the best deals and know many of the property owners personally.

What camera do you recommend?

I am a [Canon EOS 5D Mark III](#) loyalist and generally bring a range of lenses from a wide angle to capture the landscapes to a 400mm zoom for close-up portraits of a tiger. It's relatively easy to use, takes amazing photos and videos even in automatic mode, works well in low light, and has so many pixels that you can blow up that image of the tiger to life size and hang it on your wall!

What are your go-to travel apps?

I use Google maps religiously to make sure that I am not being taken for a ride around town by a predatory taxi cab driver on the meter. I use [Seat Guru](#) to check out the best seats on my actual plane. I also use Google Translate to help me read menus and make sure that I don't miss out on any local treats.

What are your in-flight beauty tips?

Stay clean and hydrated. That tray you are eating on has never been properly cleaned since it was made... ever. When I first sit down, I take antibacterial hand wipes and clean everything in my vicinity. I also drink an excessive amount of water since planes are dry and dehydrate you and your skin.

How do you look refreshed after a long flight?

I don't... Sunglasses and a hat!

How do you fight jet lag?

I force myself to stay awake the first night until it's my regular sleep time and then take a sleeping aid. This gets me on the right schedule from the get-go.

Where are you going next?

Epic Road is expanding to New Zealand and the South Pacific. I am headed there for five weeks to scout out the luxury properties and special experiences.

For some major Instagram honeymoon inspiration, check out [@mark_lakin](#).