

Traveling Smart

The woman behind the fashionable and functional business bags on Careerbags.Com shares strategies for traveling smart and staying organized.

In these days of long airport lines, increased security and carry-on restrictions, women travelers need be savvy to arrive at their destination ready for business. Pre Nine Eleven travel was already filled with delays, packed airplanes and inefficient and often surly customer service. Over the past five years airline travel has only become more difficult as security breaches, flaws and threats occur on a regular basis.

Now merely packing for a trip whether for a quick meeting or a four-day conference is a constant challenge. Ellen Hart, president of Careerbags.com shares how to de-stress your travel experience without compromising on style or your personal and professional needs.

Smart traveling begins with a laptop bag or business tote that also functions as a handbag. Mary Repke, founder of Coakley Business Class and a designer featured on www.careerbags.com designs and manufactures laptop bags and business totes "that have a system including a clutch and easy access from outside the bag when it's on the body. I can easily unzip the bag without removing it from my shoulder and get cash to buy coffee, present my ID and tickets." This removes the frustration of setting your bag down and rifling through it. "Having one bag that you can wear and easily access necessities frees women up to simply feel and look more together," says Repke.

Another idea is to try and find the smallest travel bag you can tolerate and challenge your self to pack within that. You can find many small lightweight travel bags in our luggage and travel bag section. If you're traveling more than three days consider sending a bag ahead via Federal Express or UPS. It just makes life so much easier to do that. To avoid time in security lanes put as many carry-on items as possible into Zip-lock bags for fast TSA access and scrutiny.

Take those bulky power cords and chargers and store them in Zip-lock bags in your suitcase and save room for in-flight necessities to carry in your laptop bag. You can't use them on the plane anyway. Since removing shoes is now standard operating procedure carry thin cotton travel socks in your bag's side pocket so you won't have to walk barefoot through grimy security check-points.

Careerbags.com offers a wonderful selection of rolling computer bags and the smartest collection from Clark& Mayfield

Has a "Pass Through Pocket" so it fits over your luggage handle. No need to pull two bags on wheels. Keeping all of your information in one computer is more important these days and Desk Top computer sales have slowed and more people are using "17" Laptops. They are heavy so we suggest using one of our fashionable rolling computer bags.

Lightening up is what it's all about. Boarding an aircraft and getting organized prior to taking your seat is always stressful with anxious travelers at your elbow. Organize all your immediate on-board supplies like reading material, glasses, medication, water and food in zippered cases, pouches and Ziplock bags. This way you simply grab the bags, stow your carry-on and slide into your seat in seconds. Since liquids and lotions are currently capped by the TSA at 3 ounces do take hotel amenities home. If you need a camera simply use your cell phone or a disposable. For that "just in case my checked bag gets lost" scenario a change in underwear and a clean top can easily fit in with your laptop bag. Forget your entire day planner if you don't use a Blackberry or PDA. Just copy those critical pages containing necessary schedule and contact information.

Consider investing in a great cashmere shawl or pashmina for traveling. It's the perfect feel and look good travel accessory. Use it as a cozy blanket for an in-flight nap. It adds significant style to your business attire and works as an evening wrap. Now you're ready to travel smart.