

Doc Holiday

Our experts solve your travel problems. Contact us at doc-holiday@bigpond.com

Questions should not exceed 100 words
Only a selection will be published
The Doc cannot reply personally
Please, no attachments

Travel Companion

Five of the best sleep masks

Compiled by Jen Kelly



Hibermate
from \$34.95

THE best of the bunch, the Hibermate delivers total blackness – not a ray of light peeks through when properly adjusted. It has a comfy cotton inner and satin exterior, it's machine washable and has an adjustable Velcro headband. Select pink, burgundy, navy or black (most effective).
Order online at
www.hibermate.com



Lights Out Sleep Mask
\$22

IF you hate the way most eye masks press against your eyelids, you'll love this one. The soft moulded bulge design leaves a pocket of air over each eye, so even the long-lashed can blink without touching the mask. That's designed to allow uninhibited rapid eye movement during the sleep cycle. Choose blue or black.
Order online at
www.flight001.com.au



Kathmandu Eye Mask Deluxe
\$29.98

THIS provides complete darkness thanks to a slip of satin that you can position around your nose, where light often seeps through on other masks. It also has a pocket of air over each eye, so it doesn't touch your eyelids. Black only.
Kathmandu stores.
Visit www.kathmandu.com.au or ph (03) 9267 9999 for stores.



Sleeping Beauty Eye Mask
\$14.95

THE big selling points for the Sleeping Beauty are it's Australian-made and comes in an ever-changing range of cute and colourful designs. Made from 100 per cent cotton, it's lightly padded and designed to provide slight pressure on your eyes to soothe them into sleep.
Order online at
www.gogogear.com.au

Q MY husband and I intend to take our first holiday to the UK in May and June. We wish to travel independently. We've investigated the hire car/B&B, but would consider hiring a campervan and using camping grounds. Is there a plentiful supply of camping grounds scattered throughout the UK? What are the per night charges on average? Is this a viable alternative to the car/B&B option?

A VisitBritain says "Britain is a great place for camping and has lots of camp/caravan sites to choose from across the country. It's impossible to give a general cost as it really depends on the area and what the park offers. There is an accommodation search on VisitBritain website (www.visitbritain.com.au/accommodation/holiday-village-and-campsite/index.aspx). There's also lots of products at our online shop visitbritain.com.au/shophttp: that will help with planning either type of trip."

Q THERE are three senior travellers in our family, including a 13-year-old well-behaved chihuahua. I've heard that dogs can go on the ferry to Tasmania? Can they stay in your own car, or come up on deck? Can you visit them during the trip? She has only ever travelled in our vehicle. We prefer not to use dog kennels, except in an emergency, as our little "fur-baby" suffers from separation anxiety.

A Unfortunately, the Doc doesn't make the rules so I'm not the one you have to convince.

All the information you need is in the FAQs section of the *Spirit of Tasmania's* website (spiritoftasmania.com.au).

Spirit of Tasmania says: "We have a limited number of kennels available on each sailing for \$22 a pet a voyage. Please note, all dogs entering Tasmania are subject to quarantine entry conditions and must be treated for hydatid tape worm within 14 days prior to entering Tasmania. Further information can be obtained by calling the Dogs to Tasmania Info Line on 1800 684 215."

Sadly, you cannot visit your pet during the voyage. The ship's crew visit the kennelled pets regularly.

Q WE want to drive from Perth to Sydney. When is the best time of the year to do it? Is two weeks enough time to do it? What type of car should we hire as about three sets of groups will be doing the trip? Will there be a caravan park on this trip at which we can stay?

A Yes, it is possible to do the trip in two weeks, although three weeks would be better. There's a surprising number of attractions along the way and you can read all about them on various websites – simply google Perth to Sydney. The vehicles you



TAKING IN THE VIEW: The Pyramids in Egypt.

ultimately hire will depend on availability, so talk to the rental companies as soon as possible.

Garth Morrison of GoSeeAustralia and New Zealand says: "The Eyre Highway (Nullarbor) roadhouses will provide accommodation and food. Most of the Nullarbor overnight stops are about 300km apart.

"Australia's biggest free caravan touring directory GoSeeAustralia.com.au has information features which will help. Just key Nullarbor into the Multi-Search box on the top right of the GoSee Home Page. Click Information Articles in the drop-down and then click search. The free features Nullarbor Winds, Eyre Highway, Around Australia and Beanie Bunch have practical advice. A similar search on Forums using the GoSee Multi-Search will yield more info from GoSeers on the road."

Q WE are off to Egypt on Wednesday on an Insight Nile tour. So far everyone has been telling us what a great time we will have. Now we hear "don't drink the water, don't eat fresh vegies or fruit that have been washed in the water, don't go walking/shopping on your own" and "don't swim or even put your hand in the Nile, as there is a

parasite in the water". But we haven't heard of anyone coming home sick, so is there any truth in this?

A Never listen to friends and relatives – they're invariably wrong. The Doc travelled the length and breadth of Egypt and his missus got the runs, even though we didn't drink tap water. However, that was a long time ago and things have improved.

Go immediately to traveldoctor.com.au and click on Travel Planner – bring up the Egypt section, which has a comprehensive list of do's and don'ts.

Also, see the Travel Advisory for Egypt on the Australian Government site www.dfat.gov.au

Q MY husband and I have decided to take our first European adventure and would like to visit the Greek Islands in September/October for three-four weeks, but where to start? Do we island-hop, take a cruise, book accommodation ahead or when we arrive? Do we book through an agent or online?

A When working out of London, the Doc made regular trips to Greece and the islands – about two dozen, if I recall. Firstly, study the Lonely Planet

guide for the Greek Islands because the islands differ greatly in the experiences they offer.

Some tend to attract the German and British "we don't know where we are but we'll get smashed anyway" crowd, while others have gone out of their way to attract a more genteel visitor.

Half the fun is island-hopping and getting your head around the various timetables, which, when I was last there, were notoriously erratic.

Also, I preferred to unearth a family-run taverna with rooms rather than stay in soulless holiday units. If you avoid public holidays you shouldn't have to book ahead; alternatively, book a day or two ahead before you depart one island for another.

With a bit of luck you'll come across travellers who'll be able to recommend the places at which they've stayed.

Helen emails: On January 10, a correspondent asked about Best Peru Tours operating in Peru. I have no knowledge of this company but if the writer is considering a Peru-based company I suggest Tambo Treks (tambotreks.net) We travelled to Peru with World Expeditions (worldexpeditions.com.au) who use TT as their local operator and we found them to be very good indeed.

5-star hotels in Ho Chi Minh City



5-star hotels in Ho Chi Minh City ranked by review scores based on location (as collected by Wego on review sites across the Web) Rates shown are the best found recently (last week) by Wego for travel at some point in the future. Rates are inclusive of all fees, shown in AUD.



Location Rank	Name	agoda.com	asiatravel.com	gtahotels.com	ratestogo.com	travelintelligence.com
1	Hotel Majestic	\$128	\$195	\$200	\$197	n/a
2	Caravelle Hotel	\$152	\$201	\$227	\$229	\$201
3	Duxton Hotel	\$101	\$127	\$138	\$132	n/a
4	Park Hyatt	n/a	\$280	\$416	n/a	\$270
5	Sofitel Plaza	\$159	\$145	\$202	n/a	n/a