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Prepping for Genealogical Travel

WHY travel?

-Honor your Heritage

Often we can first hand through photos, festivals, food, and trips!

-Benefits:

Tradition, family unity, foundational security, respect, cultural awareness, perspective

1. Onsite Genealogical Research Trip or Research Trip

- travel to a location to conduct research onsite at libraries or archives

2. Genealogy Trip

- having researched and preplanned, travel to where you know where your ancestors were from and immerse yourself in the culture and history of that area

3. Homeland Travel

- take a trip to the homeland, even if you don't know exactly where they were from, go either alone or with a tour group

Planning a Genealogical Research Trip

Plan ahead

Planning ahead will give you time to receive travel documents and needed vaccinations. Plan the logistics of your trip and identify your objective. You may even be able to plan an itinerary for better time management.

Prepare a budget (and start saving)

Make sure to set a budget. Decide now what you can afford to spend and how you'll pay for the trip. List any and all potential expenses, including airfare, hotel, meals, transportation, travel insurance and fees for travel documents. Don't forget to the incidentals, such as parking, copying costs, research service fees, snacks, souvenirs, tips, sightseeing admission fees and discretionary spending. It's always better to overestimate than underestimate.

Book early

It is best to book airfare 6 months in advance, but be flexible on arrival and departure times to get the best price. Also, prices are seasonal, check to see when the "off" season is for your destination. Check major discount websites. Also, consider a group trip sponsored by an organization such as the New England Historic and Genealogical Society or Road Scholar, although you may not be able to customize these trips to your personal family history needs.

Do your homework

Google the area you want to go and use Google Maps and plan routes to save time. Contact institutions ahead of time to check holdings, schedules, and fees. This would be a good time to locate banks or ATMs.

Do some genealogy in advance

Find out as much information as you possibly can through records you can access here. Before your trip, perhaps contact the local priest, mayor, or distant relatives that can give you more insightful information. Try DNA, Facebook, or Phonebook of the World.

Get a guide

If you don't want to "go it alone," get a guide. Make sure you receive cost estimates up front and clearly communicate with the guide what services you will receive. Make sure to get a



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written agreement or contract detailing your arrangement and fees and how the researcher would like to be paid. If you want his help searching for a specific record, say so: “I am looking for a baptism record for Mortimer Jonsdatter born 1872 Langlot, Sweden.”

Set realistic goals

Don't waste time searching for something that isn't there, you can do that at home! Find out about record losses and privacy restrictions ahead of time. This will save you time and money. Use resources such as The Family Tree Guidebook to Europe, the FamilySearch Wiki, and ask around to get some advice.

Pack efficiently

Make sure you have comfortable walking shoes and sturdy luggage. You will want to know the weight limits and fees for the airline, trains, and other transportation. If you plan to travel by any public transportation in your ancestral homeland, check those baggage rules, too. If possible, try to fit what you need into an airline-approved carry-on with wheels. Most airlines let you carry on one small personal item such as a briefcase, purse, or laptop bag, as well as a small suitcase. Remember to leave room for memorabilia.

Be flexible and have fun

Your itinerary is just an outline of the important things you would like to get done. Don't get bogged down with researching so much that you miss out on the experience. Meet and visit your relatives, go to the cemeteries, find out about local events and attend them. Take pictures!! Genealogy is all about documentation, documentation, documentation!

Share your experiences!

There are many ways to share your adventure. Share in real-time, on Facebook or start a Blog (blogspot.com). Keep a journal of your experiences. Update your Research Log as you go!! Take tons of pictures!! No one came home from a trip saying “I took too many pictures.” Pictures are best when people are in them.

TOURS

Road Scholar- www.roadscholar.org

European Focus- <https://www.europeanfocus.com/>

Ancestral Journeys of Scotland- contact@ancestraljourneysofscotland.com

Go Ahead Tours- <https://www.goaheadtours.com/tour-categories/ancestry-tours>

RESEARCH FORMS

Family Tree Magazine- <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/freeforms/researchforms/>