

Affordable Adventures: Traveling on a Budget



Travel Series | Episode 5

PRE-LISTENING | Warm-up

Prepare before you listen to the conversation.

Brainstorm

1. Look at the topic of this episode. Do you have any personal experiences related to this topic? If not, do you have any thoughts or opinions about it?
2. Below, write notes about what comes to your mind.

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Vocabulary

1. What vocabulary do you think will come up in this conversation? If you can't think of the English word, check it in a dictionary.
2. Write the vocabulary that you came up with in the table below.

LISTENING | Exercise

Listen to the conversation – feel free to pause any time or go back if you miss something.

In the conversation, Colin and Su discuss the topic of traveling on a budget. They emphasize the importance of finding affordable transportation, such as booking flights in advance to save money. The choice of transportation within the destination country also affects the budget, with options like buses and trains varying in price. They highlight the need to balance both time and money when planning a budget trip. Accommodation options, like small hotels, are recommended for city exploration. The conversation suggests that travelers can enjoy free or low-cost activities such as walking around the city, visiting museums, and exploring historical and cultural sites. It also touches on the concept of the “third place,” where people socialize and engage in various activities. Overall, the conversation provides useful tips for budget-conscious travelers to make the most of their journeys.

Note-taking

Identify the key points of the conversation and add notes on some details. Try to keep it short.

Key Points	Details

Quiz

Choose the correct answer – you can check your answers at the end of this PDF.

1. What is the main topic of the conversation?
 - a. Cooking
 - b. Traveling on a budget
 - c. Music
 - d. Sports
2. What does "traveling on a budget" mean?
 - a. Traveling with a lot of money
 - b. Traveling without any money
 - c. Traveling as cheaply as possible
 - d. Traveling in luxury
3. According to Colin, why is it a good idea to book flights in advance?
 - a. Last-minute flights are cheaper.
 - b. Booking flights in advance is not necessary.
 - c. Flights are more expensive when booked early.
 - d. Early booking can get you cheaper flights.
4. What are the different options for transportation within a country mentioned in the conversation?
 - a. Cars and bikes
 - b. Trains, fast trains, and buses
 - c. Taxis and trams
 - d. Walking and hiking
5. According to Su, why is it important to consider both money and time when budgeting for travel?
 - a. Money is the only important factor.
 - b. Time doesn't matter when traveling on a budget.
 - c. Balancing time and money is crucial in travel planning.
 - d. Money is more valuable than time.

6. What type of hotels does Su recommend for travelers who want to explore a city?

- a. Small hotels with only a bed and a shower
- b. Large hotels
- c. Luxury hotels
- d. Traditional hotels

7. What activity does Colin think is underrated when traveling?

- a. Visiting museums
- b. Taking guided tours
- c. Walking around and experiencing the city
- d. Staying in the hotel all day

8. Which city is mentioned as having many free museums?

- a. Paris
- b. London
- c. New York
- d. Rome

POST-LISTENING | Resources

Review the language used in the podcast

Word/Phrase	Class	Example Sentence
off season	<i>noun</i>	Traveling in the off season can save you money on accommodation.
A quiet period when prices may be lower.		
last minute	<i>adjective</i>	Booking a flight at the last minute can be expensive.
Happening or done at the final moment, often with higher costs.		
overnight buses	<i>noun</i>	We took an overnight bus to save time and money on accommodation.
Buses that travel during the night, allowing passengers to sleep.		
accommodation	<i>noun</i>	Finding affordable accommodation is essential when traveling on a budget.
A place to stay, such as a hotel or lodging.		
capsule hotel	<i>noun</i>	We stayed at a capsule hotel in Tokyo, and it was surprisingly comfortable.
A type of hotel with small, compact sleeping pods.		
cultural sites	<i>noun</i>	The city is filled with cultural sites, including museums and ancient ruins.
Locations with historical or cultural significance.		
third place	<i>noun</i>	The local coffee shop has become my third place for relaxing and meeting friends.
A place other than home or work where people socialize and spend time.		
acrobatics	<i>noun</i>	We watched street performers do acrobatics in the park.
Gymnastic and often entertaining physical feats.		
underrated	<i>adjective</i>	The local bakery is underrated; their pastries are amazing but not well-known.
Not receiving enough recognition or appreciation.		
guided tours	<i>noun</i>	The guided tour of the historic castle was informative and enjoyable.
Tours led by a guide who provides information and explanations.		

POST-LISTENING | Activities

Shadowing

Choose one part of the conversation and listen to it again. Try to repeat what you hear out loud. Make sure you copy pronunciation, pauses*, and stress*.

*Use the transcript to mark the **pauses** with a slash / and the **stress** with an underline ___.

Speaking Practice

Below are two questions you can use for speaking practice.

- 1. Read each question and write some notes. Keep them short and only use bullet points or a mind map – these notes are just to help you organize your ideas.*
- 2. Record yourself answering the questions. Try to speak for at least 2 minutes for each question.*

Q: Have you ever traveled on a tight budget? Share your experiences and discuss any challenges you faced.

Q: Imagine you are a travel advisor. Give recommendations to someone who is visiting a town or city that you know well. They have a tight budget - what transportation, accommodation, and activities would you suggest?

Transcript

Colin: This is episode five of our travel series, and today the topic is affordable adventures, traveling on a budget. Hello Su.

Su: Hey.

Colin: How are you?

Su: Good, how are you?

Colin: I'm very well. Um, traveling on a budget. Um, on a budget suggests cheap, not a lot of money.

Su: Trying to spend as little as possible.

Colin: Yeah. Uh, because traveling can be expensive. Um, going anywhere, leaving home, um, and trying to go somewhere new. It's going to cost you a lot of money. Um, so what's the first thing we should think about in terms of traveling on a budget?

Su: Well, the first thing is probably finding, uh, how you're going to get there for the best price. So looking for buses or flights, um, that are maybe off season or good offers, that's always a good place to start.

Colin: Yeah. So flights, um, you want to try to book your flights as far in advance as you can because flights are often cheaper the earlier you book them. If you book your flights last minute, it's going to cost you more. Um, so that's a big part of your expense, depending on where you're going. Um, but flights can be a big expense.

Um, transport within the country when you arrive. Um, again, you've got different options. Um, if we take Japan as an example, um, you can take trains, you can take fast trains, or you can take buses. Um, and there's different levels of pricing for each of those. So if you've got time, you can travel very cheaply, um, taking buses, maybe even taking overnight buses, for example, an overnight bus from Tokyo down to Osaka. Um, but if you don't have much time, then it's better to to pay for the high speed trains, um, between these cities.

Su: It's funny because, uh, when you think about budgeting, well, it's about money. But I think you also have to think about time. And sometimes time is money, right?

Colin: Yeah, I mean, think about it, we spend time and we spend money. Um, so you have a limited amount, you have a limited amount of money, you have a limited amount of time. Um, so you, you need to think about both. Definitely.

Su: Yeah, you need to balance, um, how long can you be traveling, how long do you have and how long do you want it to take from A to B?

Colin: Yeah, how much of your two week vacation do you want to spend sitting on a bus?

Su: Exactly.

Colin: Um, but like I said, if you've got the time, there are cheaper ways to do things. Um, another big expense when you travel is accommodation. Um, especially if you're traveling for,

you know, a week, two weeks or more. Every night you're going to have to find somewhere to sleep and that could cost you a lot. Um, what are your recommendations about accommodation?

Su: Especially if you go, um, to cities. Um, a small hotel. These hotels that are just like a bed and a shower, um, very, very small, almost like a capsule hotel, really.

Colin: Yeah, these are kind of new styles of hotel. People might know the capsule hotels in Japan. Very small, compact. Um, it's not a room. It's a box, basically, and you crawl in the end of the box. It's a very strange thing, but something that's much more common in Europe these days is very, very small hotels, as you said, maybe just a bed and very little space even to put your suitcase or your bag. But if you're there to see the city or to see the place you're visiting, you don't need a huge room in the hotel to lounge around in you want to have somewhere to sleep, somewhere to put your stuff, and then you can get out and explore the place you're visiting.

Su: Yes, it's not the same traveling to a city that you want to explore than going, for example, to a beach resort where you just want to stay and enjoy the place, right? So you need to think about what is it that you want to do and you can choose your best option.

Colin: Yeah. Okay, so we've arrived in the place we're staying, we have somewhere to sleep, um, but we want to do stuff when we're there. Um, and if you look carefully, if you take a bit of time, there are a lot of free or even low cost activities. What kind of things could we do for very little money?

Su: I mean, the first one is just walk around the city, that doesn't really cost you much and you can kind of get a feel for where you are.

Colin: I think that's a really good point. I think many people think that they need to be entertained every minute of their vacation. They need to be doing some kind of activity. They need to be doing something, um, on some sort of tour, but just being in the city, walking around, trying to feel what is this place like? You know, what are, what are the people like? What are the streets like? What is life like in this city? I think that's a really, um, underrated activity. And something that I very much enjoy. Um, many cities have free museums. So if you do want to go and enjoy a little bit of culture, um, learn something maybe about the place you're visiting very often, there's a city museum, maybe even a national museum that is, uh, free or maybe cheap to go to.

Su: Yes, those are very good activities. Um, going to museums. Um, some other places might be expensive. We traveled around Europe this summer. To go into this palace or to go into this other activity, it was, it was a lot of money, uh, for two people. So it's always good to know what would be a little bit cheaper and you enjoy it all the same.

Colin: Yeah, I mean, I think a little bit of Googling, searching online, you can find where these cheap or low cost museum options are. London is a great city for museums, many world class museums are free to enter. They're supported by the government. Um, and maybe they ask you for a donation, you know, just a few pounds maybe. Um, but if those museums were run as

a business, they would be expensive to enter. So if you're visiting London, there's some incredible museums and galleries that you can visit for free. Um and for many countries, there are a lot of interesting cultural sites, historical sites, um, that you can visit. I remember visiting some places in, in Mexico, um, places that have a lot of, um, historical importance, you know, connected to the independence, uh, those kinds of things. Um, but also remember that a lot of cities have parks, have open spaces. Um, that are free to, to enjoy as well. Um, and again, being in the park and seeing how people live, what kind of things are people doing.

Japan, Tokyo is a great place for that. You go to somewhere like Yoyogi Park in central Tokyo and you see all the different things that people are doing and people really use the parks as a third place. It's not work, it's not home, it's this third place where they can go and enjoy their hobbies, uh, or, you know, spend time with their friends.

Su: Yeah, you can see a lot of people playing their instrument. It's always nice.

Colin: Well, it's not always nice.

Su: Sometimes it's nice.

Colin: Sometimes you've, you've got people who are beginners with, you know, they're learning the saxophone. It's great. You're learning the saxophone, but they're not very good yet.

Su: Acrobatics, I've seen people just playing, uh, some sport.

Colin: Theatre.

Su: Theatre, yeah.

Colin: I've seen small groups of people doing theatre in the park. So, yeah, museums, parks, historical sites, those kind of things. Um, there's a lot of activities that you can do at a low cost or even for free.

ANSWERS – Multiple-Choice Questions

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|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 2. c | 3. d | 4. b |
| 5. c | 6. a | 7. c | 8. b |