

[00:00:35.840] - Intro

Welcome to the UK Travel Planning Podcast. Your host is the founder of The UK Travel Planning website, Tracy Collins. In this podcast, Tracy shares destination guides, travel tips, and itinerary ideas, as well as interviews with a variety of guests who share their knowledge and experience of UK travel to help you plan your perfect UK vacation. Join us as we explore the UK from cosmopolitan cities, to quaint villages, from historic castles to beautiful islands and from the picturesque countryside to seaside towns.

[00:00:36.830] - Tracy

Hi and welcome to Episode 49 of the UK Travel Planning Podcast. I'm actually going to start off by saying it's Episode 49. I can't believe that myself. I have got Karen again this week to chat. We're going to talk about flying this week and tips for flying long haul in particular. Karen has been on quite a few episodes recently. She has talked to me about my first couple of weeks in the UK for our trip report a few weeks ago. And we did an episode about Harry Potter as well, which was episode... So those are episode 45 and 46. And also you can hear Karen in episode 37 talk all about her six week trip back from Australia with her kids and husband last October for six weeks in the UK. So Karen has done lots of long haul flights in my life. I've done loads of long haul flights from quite a young age, actually. So I think we're pretty qualified to talk about long haul flights, Karen.

[00:01:32.460] - Karen

Thanks for having me again. Yes. And just to add, I've done lots of long haul flights and traveling with little kids as well, which is the whole extra dimension to the fun of flying long haul.

[00:01:43.110] - Tracy

Absolutely. So Karen has three children. I only have one. Mine is 27 now, I can't believe that. But I used to travel with her a lot when she was younger, from Europe to Africa. So she's done that long haul stuff. But without further ado, I just want you, Karen, to introduce yourself again, in case people haven't listened to or heard those other episodes.

[00:02:01.660] - Karen

Yeah. Hi, I'm Karen. I run a website called Smart Steps to Australia, where I help families make the move to Australia. As you can tell by my accent, I'm originally from the UK, just like Tracy. And now we both live close to one another in sunny Queensland.

[00:02:16.130] - Tracy

We do.

[00:02:16.590] - Karen

So we obviously both have different trips back to the UK and long haul flights planned. And yeah, we thought it would be good fun to have a bit of a chat about flying. Because I know flying long haul really does take more planning and more thought process, and there's a lot more involved in it, and it's also more exhausting. But yeah, I'm sure we can come together to share a lot of our flying tips.

[00:02:39.950] - Tracy

So I thought we'd start off by talking about... So we'll talk about the preparing for the flight, the flight itself, and then on arrival, just things to help with jet lag, because you really can't avoid it. It's going to happen. So it's just how you deal with it. So I guess the first thing that I always do, and I guess, Karen, it's what you... The first thing you work out is how you're going to get to the airport. So you're going to make sure you know what time the flight is, what time to check in, and what time you need to get there. How are you going to get there?

[00:03:07.520] - Karen

And which terminal you're going to as well. Especially if you're in London and places like that which have different terminals. You just need to make sure you know that information.

[00:03:15.920] - Tracy

Absolutely. So the packing for a long haul flight is always interesting. So I actually learned through my

job over the last years where I was travelling around Queensland doing short haul flights here, there and everywhere. But I also didn't... Once I put my bag, because I was actually really just taking a hand luggage on, when I put my bag in the overhead locker bit, I didn't want to have to get up and take stuff out. So what I started doing was making up little bags, little packing cubes with various different things in. So I have small bags, some with electricals in so I might have my earphones, I have one book, pen, paper, magazines. I have another set with a charger in it, and then I have another set with the toiletries, toothpaste, moisturiser, lip balm, deodorant. Actually, I put some photos of the little bags that are used in the show notes.

[00:04:08.580] - Karen

That was a game changer for us, actually, on this recent trip. I've never done that before. And I've seen so many travel bloggers talking about packing cubes being useful. So I went and bought packing cubes and I ended up realising just how important they were for our hand luggage because I always end up with a really heavy hand luggage. We always end up taking a lot with us that we want that we don't want to put in our hold luggage and being able to organise it all into compartments just makes life so much easier.

[00:04:35.460] - Tracy

Because I've been on flights where I'm trying to find that one thing and you haven't got the room to get everything out of your bag. So ideally what you want is a different colour packing cube which has got different things in it that you know what's in that. And then you just go, Oh, there's the bag, out. And then you take out what you need to put it back in. So there's no mess or no things dropping everywhere.

[00:04:55.400] - Karen

And you can leave the pack that you know you're going to need more often in the front of the seat compartment just so that you've got easy access to it through the whole flight, rather than needing to go back into your big bag every time you need anything.

[00:05:07.280] - Tracy

And I think it's also good to stay organised as well, because I know I'm talking to people that work on flights, that things get left behind. You arrive in the destination, you want to get off the plane. But if you've got everything in a little bag, you're less likely because you'll just keep everything in the bag during the flight. It's just in the front pocket of the seat in front of you. And then you just pick it up and put it into your bag. So that works really well. So I know I always take a change of clothes. I take more than one change of clothes actually with me in my hand luggage because I actually flew with my daughter to Johannesburg when she was about five, and our luggage didn't arrive. It didn't arrive actually for five days. And we were flying the next morning to Cape Town, so we had nothing. So the airline gave us a little bit of money, so I managed to go and get one change of clothing. And we were really tired as well. And it was really difficult to find things. So I now take at least two sets of clothes with me. And I put my favourite things in my hand luggage.

[00:06:08.420] - Karen

I think it's a good idea.

[00:06:10.150] - Tracy

If I lose that dress, I will cry. So that's what I do as well.

[00:06:16.280] - Karen

On that subject quickly, when we're packing our hold luggage, we cross pack. So we don't put all of one person's in one bag. And then we make sure that there's a mix or at least, like you say, a packing cube with an outfit for everybody in every pack, in every bag, so that if we lose four of the five suitcases, we've all still got something that we can wear the next day.

[00:06:37.600] - Tracy

I never think it's a good idea, if you're traveling with a few of you, you can, to just have your stuff in your suitcase. If you're packing it together, then just move stuff around so you've got that option. I

think once you've been parted from your luggage... We did get reunited with it after about five days in Cape Town. But once you've been parted with your luggage, you realise how important it is to think of those things. Everything turned up as I say, so it was all right. And then I keep things like moisturiser, lip balm, deodorant, my toothbrush and toothpaste, just have a travel one in a bag as well. Because if you want to go get up to go into the bathroom, the toilet, then you can just pick that and everything's easily kept in there and keeping yourself your face moisturised and lip balm because obviously it's dehydrating on flights.

[00:07:26.350] - Karen

The important thing for us was that we had a little one of those packing cups with medication in it. So I always find that I get really bad headaches on flights, so paracetamol and ibuprofen. And for the kids, I take the soluble paracetamol just so that they can have some in some water if they don't feel very good. Rehydration sachets and travel sick tablets and travel wristbands, because my kids get really travel sick. So that's really helpful just to have a little pack of first aid gear and plasters or band aids as well, just because you never quite know with kids what's going to happen. Just having a little medical first aid pack is really helpful.

[00:08:05.290] - Tracy

Yeah, that's definitely useful. And also take things to read, things to watch. I was on a flight a few years ago and that was actually from Birmingham to New York. And the console with the movie and everything, it didn't work. So you do need to have a backup. I mean, they did move me, but if it had been a full flight, they wouldn't have done. So I would have been stuck for, I think there was about seven hours flight without any entertainment. So always take a book, take your iPad, download any shows that you want to watch onto iPad because we love going to the movies. So quite often we're going to plan and we've watched all of the movie. So just think of things that will keep you occupied for the length of time. And especially, I mean, the long, long haul flight, from Australia back to London, you're talking really 23 hours. It's a long time. It's a long time you're sitting up in a seat as well. So that's always something to think about.

[00:09:01.780] - Karen

Back to the travel sick thing. My daughter gets horrendously travel sick towards the end of flights. We found that we needed to take extra sick bags because they do provide you with one each. And we got through that one very quickly. And then we had more and more and more. And then they ran out and had to give us bin liners. Now I try and whenever we all get on flights, we share the sick bags and we keep them for the next flight. If nobody needs them, then we've got extras just for travelling. And that's where the change of clothes comes in really handy as well. It's just to make sure that we've got something clean to put them in if they're not very well.

[00:09:42.100] - Tracy

So with the kids, do you encourage them to choose different things to put in their own bags so they take their own hand luggage on?

[00:09:48.360] - Karen

Yeah, we make sure that everyone's got a rucksack so that we're all hands free when we're walking. It just makes it a lot easier if you've got it on a rucksack and everybody will help pack their own bags so that they're all involved in what's in their bag and they know what's in there. Quite often, we'll end up in different parts of the plane because my husband works for an airline, so we end up on stand by seats and we can get separated. So I need to make sure that when we're packing that everybody's got access to everything because we may not all be sitting together. So everyone needs to make sure that they've got their own, whether it's colouring books, or puzzle books, or books, or iPad, or whatever they're going to want when they're on the plane, and that they've all got something to access and that they all know where it is in their bags and that they can access it on their own as well.

[00:10:38.350] - Tracy

Because I always book seats ahead. I'm very particular that I like to sit next to the window. So poor Doug, if he's on a flight with me, I don't think he's sat on the window for years now actually. Because I always like the window seat. So I'm very particular about that. I will put extra to sit on a window seat.

But I know that sometimes you can get changed seats.

[00:10:59.670] - Karen

I was just going to say, on our last flight back, which was from LA to Brisbane, there was a few people who'd paid and pre booked seats, specific seats that they wanted on the bulkhead by the window, and they were moved and they were quite upset about it. But planes the re-align who's sitting where in line with what they need at the time, and they can't always foresee what's going on. So just my tip is always just even if you've pre booked your seats, even if you're sure you know where you're going to be sitting, just be prepared mentally that things might change. And especially when you're traveling in a group that you may not always be together. Even if it looks like you are up until the moment you board the plane, things can still change at the last minute. People were getting moved around on that flight, literally as we were boarding.

[00:11:47.080] - Tracy

Oh, really?

[00:11:47.680] - Karen

So things do change.

[00:11:49.840] - Tracy

One thing I will say just after my last flight last year, back I was flying back from Singapore to Brisbane, is to make sure you sit in the right seat. Because the woman that sat next to me insisted that's why she was... In fact, she wanted my seat to start with because she said she had a window seat and I was like, No, this is definitely mine. This is my boarding card. She then sat next to me, insisted that was her seat. And then somebody actually got on and said, No, that's actually my seat. So she was arguing with him, No, it isn't. So she said that she couldn't find her boarding card by this point. So a bit suspicious. Anyway, so the hostess came and obviously the guy that was sitting next to me had his boarding card. So eventually actually it transpired. She was actually sitting in the middle of the plane, which clearly she didn't really want to do. But I think if you can, I always book seats. So if you sit down, you are sitting in the seat that you are allocated, and that's the one that you're going to be sitting in, make sure you keep your boarding card with you and close in case you need it, because somebody decides they want your seat.

[00:12:46.150] - Karen

And I will say, if you're in the air and you're not in the seat you want to be in, you can always ask. It doesn't hurt to ask. Because when we were flying back, my daughter and I were sitting, we were really lucky to get bulkhead seats. We were just allocated them just before we boarded because we were on stand by seats. We got these great bulkhead seats and we had seat free next to us and we were very excited. But within about 10 minutes of the flight, somebody else got moved into the seat next to us because they were one of the people that had been moved around from when they pre booked and they didn't want to be where they've been moved to. I think you can ask. It doesn't hurt to ask if ever you want a bit of extra space. It's always a good idea to just ask the question and they might be able to move you to a bigger space or somewhere where there is an empty seat next to you.

[00:13:28.800] - Tracy

First class would be good. That's my dream. So I always wear comfy clothes, warm layers. Take a blanket or a pashmina, something to keep you warm. I have never been as cold as I was on my flight in 20 or I think last time I was over, last year actually, 2022, flying from Brisbane to Dubai, I was freezing cold.

[00:13:50.370] - Karen

Why do they make flights so cold?

[00:13:52.730] - Tracy

Freezing. Literally, I had so many layers on and I was still really cold. So think about that, making sure that you've got take a pillow or a blanket. There's plenty of inflatable pillows that you can take. Flight socks, where obviously the ones to help with thrombosis. I've got those ones that you pull up that are

a bit tighter as well. But I also, like my husband, Doug always wears socks as well to keep his feet warm because his feet get really cold. The main thing for this... I just put leggings and jumpers. Something comfy. You don't need to look amazing. You just want to be comfortable. And you can always get changed before you land. And I used to do that quite a lot when I used to live in the UK and fly to Africa. I would leave in the winter and go in the summer. So I'd have summer clothes and I'd just get changed before we landed into my summer clothes. So you can always get changed if you've got stuff.

[00:14:45.870] - Karen

I just layer up and then you just take the layers off as you need them. But definitely, I'd take a zip up hoodie, an extra jumper, just all the layers. And like you say, a pillow or blanket. You do get a blanket on the plane and you do get a pillow, but not everyone wants to use the plane things. My kids love the little neck pillow things. I find them a bit cumbersome to carry around with you. But just taking layers and you want to be as warm and comfortable as you can be. There's nothing worse than being cold on a long flight.

[00:15:13.030] - Tracy

And then trying to get to sleep, which I guess is what I'm going to talk about next is if you can sleep, really try to get some sleep. That is always my aim when I get on, especially obviously night flights. So one of the tips I was reading about was to set the time to the time zone you're going to and try to sleep at those times. I can't do that. I have to say I just can't. Getting onto a night flight, a 13 hour night flight, and being aware that in the UK it's 10 hours before so it's during the day, I would have to sleep. There's no way I could stay awake. So that's lovely if you can do that. But I just know personally I can't. I think it is important during the flight though to do some exercise, walk around, stretch during the flight. If you can sleep, just make sure you've done a little bit maybe exercise before you get yourself settled down and snuggle down to sleep.

[00:16:05.310] - Karen

And for sleeping, I know some people have the foot sling hammock things you can use. I've not actually used them, but I've got an article on my website about inflatable pillows where I interviewed lots of travel bloggers about how they've got on with inflatable pillows for their kids so that you can turn the seat into a bit of a bed for small kids. And I do wish we'd got those for our kids when they were really young, but we never got around to it. And then by the time I realised that they sounded really good, our kids were too old and too big for them, but they're worth exploring. But you do need to make sure that you can use them on the airlines that you are planning on travelling on because there are a variety of different inflatable bed pillow things that you can use and different airlines have approved different products. So don't just assume that just because they're available for sale that you can use them on the airline you want to use them on. Check, they might only be available to be used on window seats. You might not be able to use them on an aisle seat because you're obviously blocking people in. So if you're going to use those, then have a little read about the legalities of using them on your plane because you don't really want to buy it and bring it all the way to a plane to find out that you're not allowed to use it and they don't let you use it.

[00:17:18.280] - Tracy

That's good to know. I mean, I guess it's because for me, obviously, I travel either with Doug or myself these days, so I don't have to think about kids. So I can just snuggle myself down, have a bit of my lavender spray, which is really good. I've just actually downloaded some sleep apps to try Pzizz or Paziz, which is apparently JK Rowen uses, and Calm, which I'm going to try to see how they work. And something like the lavender spray, which I really like, to be honest, it's going to sound really funny. But for me, the best way to go to sleep is to listen to a podcast, not mine or my friends. I should just taste it to add. But yeah, sometimes with podcasts, I just find that it just... I don't know if it's a voice, it just soothes me to sleep. And then I've had some podcast where I've been listening about five times and given up because I just fall asleep every time. And it's not because I'm bored and it's just because I get really good at sleep.

[00:18:09.210] - Karen

Or put on an audio book. They have audio books on there and it's like 15 hours of audio book and I

start listening to those and it sends me straight off as well. But yeah, I'm not very good at sleeping on planes. I find that I wake up every five seconds and I really struggle to get the thought of it.

[00:18:23.630] - Tracy

I have to sleep. The thought of 23 hours without sleep, it just doesn't bode well for me.

[00:18:30.310] - Karen

Now, are you in the camp where you print out everything? Because I am. I've always printed out every booking information, all of the information about the trips. So my whole trip is always planned out on a spreadsheet of some kind. And I've got Air BnBs, hotel bookings, tour bookings, coaches, trains, anything that I've booked, I print it out because you never know when you're going to get WiFi, when you're going to show your phone proof that you've made the booking.

[00:18:59.260] - Tracy

Or you lose your phone or your phone gets nicked. Yes.

[00:19:01.820] - Karen

I have one folder that I keep in the family. I wouldn't trust anyone else to do it. And it has all of the booking information, all of our visa printouts. And if we're going to a country to stop over where we need a visa or anything like that. And I always carry that with me.

[00:19:16.660] - Tracy

So Doug normally does that. If I'm traveling on my own, I keep the passports and the paperwork. And sometimes I have in the past, put it, printed it out and kept it that way. I'm starting to try to use a bit more spreadsheets. I use Airtable table and I really find that works really well for me. And then you can share that. But yes, I also do like paper copies of things because I just think it's just you never know when you can't get on WiFi, your phone doesn't work, or it's something like that. So it is useful. And it's always worth checking. You may need a visa for the UK. I can't say you don't need a visa because you may do. It's just checking that if you need a visa that you've got all your visa paperwork, up to date, check your passport. Just make sure you've got all of that sorted before you get on the flight. I'm just thinking I went to Singapore. It's slightly different, but again, I didn't prepare. I went to the airport and didn't realise I had to fill in a form, a COVID form for Singapore. I was like, oh, I should have known this. Just sometimes it's like things can slip through. I know there are going to be some changes in the UK later on in the year that they're bringing in for some countries to have to pay. It's a bit like going into the states where you've got to pay for a visa. So I'm trying to track that at the moment and the EU are introducing something. So it's just keeping track of those things so you know. I'm just going to actually look because obviously it's a long time since I travelled with Dominique as a small child on an aeroplane. But you've got twins and you've got a younger daughter. So how did you find it when you travelled with when they were really small?

[00:20:57.270] - Karen

When they were really small, we actually made our first flight over to Australia with them. So we'd also done some short haul flights in Europe as well. So we've had a bit of experience of travelling with little kids. When it comes to lap babies, having a baby sitting on your lap for the journey. With twins, when they were really little, under two years old, we found that was challenging because you can only usually have one baby on your lap per row because there's only one extra oxygen mask that can pop down if oxygen masks are needed. So they can't put you and your partner with a baby each on a lap because there aren't enough oxygen masks for the other baby. So we then had to travel on the row in front and behind each other, which just added a bit of extra logistics of who had the nappies in the bags and all of that extra stuff that you might need for the kids. You didn't necessarily know you were definitely going to be sat one row apart from each other. You could have easily been split up much further apart. So that's something to consider if you've got two babies who are under two, that it's unlikely that you'd be able to sit next to one another with a baby on your lap. When we flew out to Australia, our twins were actually four, so they needed their own seat anyway. But our daughter was around two years old, and we were debating whether to book her seats if it was if they're under two, I believe you can have them as a lap child on your lap. And obviously, it's much cheaper to do that. In my opinion, it's not worth the saving of the cost. We decided we wouldn't rush to fly before she turned

two. We would just pay for a seat for her, regardless, because it was the best decision we ever made. She was a terrible toddler flying. She's very headstrong now. She's aged 10 now. But back then, she really knew her mind and she hated it. Just didn't want to sit or be where she was supposed to be. And even having her own seat was challenging. But having her on a lap would have been really hard.

[00:23:10.060] - Tracy

It would have been impossible.

[00:23:10.570] - Karen

I would have paid any fee to have her in her own space. So when people ask if it's maybe one flight, an eight to 10 hour flight, I think risk it if you want to. For the flight from Australia to the UK or two long haul flights personally, regardless of how long the flight was, I would pay for it. But for, say, a two or three hour flight, we were okay having the boys on our laps as toddlers. They were really good. We gave them some milk at take off and they just slept through the whole flight. And it was really absolutely fine. But you know your own kids as well. Our boys were pretty chilled out babies, but our daughter was very head strong and she was not somebody that you wanted on your lap for a few hours. So I just think it's not worth the cost saving for doing that. The other thing that I would say was to order kid's meals when you make booking of your flight. When we moved to Australia and we did that flight and our kids were four, four and two, we weren't told we needed to book kid's meals on flights. They didn't mention it. And when we got on the plane, we were all getting our food and we were looking around and all these kids were getting all these little cool Happy Meal type bundles with nuggets and crayons and things in it. And our kids had a choice of chicken tikka masala and steak or something. They didn't eat anything.

[00:24:33.350] - Tracy

They were like, no, I want the chicken nuggets, mum.

[00:24:36.000] - Karen

Yeah, exactly. The other thing that we found was that we were told that we couldn't... So if you're taking a child under two, you're usually allowed to take a car seat or a buggy with you, and you can take your buggy to the gate. But our kids were older, so we decided to travel just as my daughter just turned two and the boys were four. And we had her buggy, and it would have been really helpful to have taken that to the gate. And we were paying for her seat for her. So we didn't think, and when we booked it, we were advised we couldn't take the buggy to the gate. So we had to wrap the buggy and check it in. But it would have made our lives so much easier if we could have taken it to the gate. We met other families on the plane who had four year olds who'd taken a buggy to the gate. So the information we were given wasn't necessarily accurate. So do your research, because when we then had a wait at Singapore, it would have been really handy to have had the buggy for our daughter just to be able to sleep in and push around and just be an extra child we didn't have to carry and hold on to because.

[00:25:36.350] - Tracy

With two or three of them! Definitely.

[00:25:39.650] - Karen

The boys were runners, so that was a bit challenging. Just check things, like make sure you double check and triple check whether you need to book kid's meals. And if you do want to take a buggy with you to the gate, check if you can do that, even for older kids.

[00:25:53.240] - Tracy

That's brilliant. So we've flown, we've arrived, we've slept and everything's gone really well on the flight. So I think the jet lag issue comes up. I think I suffer far less than Doug does. He definitely seems to get hit harder by jet lag than I am. I don't know why. Maybe because I sleep on the flights, I don't know. But I think the biggest tip is to try and stay in the time zone. So whether you're ahead or behind the UK when you arrive is to really try to slip into that time zone. It's harder, I think, for us to do because we are ahead. So when you arrive, you arrive in the morning or at lunchtime, it's basically nine or 10 PM in Australia. So by that time, you really want to go to bed. And especially if you've not

slept for 23 hours, you really want to go to bed.

[00:26:44.180] - Karen

But the good thing about arriving is that you're excited. I know that when we get there, we've got family to see and friends to see and places to see.

[00:26:51.900] - Tracy

The first few hours, it's all adrenaline, isn't it?

[00:26:54.110] - Karen

Exactly. So that keeps you going. I find the way back is the hardest. That took a really long time to recover from on the way back. But on the way there, we did settle into it. But we did find that for probably the first three days, about three o'clock in the afternoon, we just crashed. And you just have to go to bed for half an hour. The kids randomly didn't at all. They just were normal. They just got there full of energy, carried on as normal.

[00:27:20.920] - Tracy

I think that's it, it's like you do say you arrive and you're dead excited because it's a new place and the rest of it. I always find that the second day is worse because by that you settled in and you're like, Okay, now all that travel is starting to catch up. So I advise if you're... Whether you're travelling from the States or whether you're traveling from Australia, to consider that second day you may be more tired to not over pack your itinerary. But when you do arrive, a good thing to do is have a warm bath, have a shower, whatever you need to do, just moisturise because you're all going to be dried up from the flight. Go and have something to eat, keep yourself awake, keep each other awake. Go and do something that first day. So without... I mean, often we said people thrive in London, go and do the hop on hop off bus. Go and do a cruise down the Thames. Do something where you can sit down, but you'll be still taking in all these new sights so you'll be excited.

[00:28:17.520] - Karen

Getting sunlight is really important. Getting outside in the fresh air and getting sunlight on your body. It just helps your body adapt to the new time zone.

[00:28:25.750] - Tracy

Absolutely. And one key thing to think about is how you're going to get from the airport to your accommodation. So I've got to the point in my life where I like to arrive in the airport and have somebody holding my name up so that I get whisked off to a transfer, a car that will take me to my accommodation. Doug's opposite, he likes to get on the public transport and he'll happily do that where he could do that. That's fine.

[00:28:52.640] - Karen

That's the worst idea for me. I like to know that we've got a plan in place for somebody to pick us up and just drive us where we need to go.

[00:28:59.480] - Tracy

Because you're tired. You're tired, especially you've got the kids, you're tired, you've got your luggage. You don't have your full wits about you because you've just been travelling for 10, 12, 24 hours. So you're more vulnerable in that because it might be a completely new airport in a completely new country and you can get overwhelmed.

[00:29:19.020] - Karen

And also just to say, we were travelling with a family of five of us, we had five suitcases, five hand luggages. So you've got to think how you're going to get a group that big, logistically, from A to B. And we were lucky. Obviously, we were from the UK. We had two family members came with their cars and we managed to travel across two cars with all of our luggage. It was fine. But when we moved to Australia and we arrived here, I went online and I was googling to try and find a taxi that was big enough with a luggage trailer that could be there meeting us to cope with it all because you didn't really want to split across two taxis and even that probably wouldn't fit with that much luggage.



[00:29:57.510] - Tracy

So I just think, I think maybe a little bit of added expense at the beginning of your holiday to do it. And I've done this all over the world. I've always organised somebody to pick me up. But to me, it just then... I'm less stressed through the flight because I know that somebody's going to meet me at the other side and take me to where I need to go. I'm less stressed about finding my way around a new airport or thinking, how am I going to pay for this, or how am I going to do? You don't have to think any of that. You can just literally get yourself to accommodation, freshen up, and then go, right, okay, I'm here, now, what. And I just think it's a really good start to your holiday. And one other tip actually, which I will share. And again, I guess it's not a budget on this one, but if your flight is arriving early in the morning, so you're 6, 7, 8 AM, and you can't check into your hotel accommodation till two or three in the afternoon, you consider booking the night before. Just let the hotel know so that when you arrive at that hotel, your room is ready.

[00:30:57.370] - Karen

That is your room. And so you can go in, you can freshen up. Just the thought for me now of arriving at 6.30 in the morning, at Heathrow and not being able to get my accommodation till three in the afternoon after 23 hours flight, not a chance. No way I would want to do that. I don't care. I'd pay that extra amount for that night for that hotel. So if you can do that, it's a really good option.

[00:31:18.490] - Karen

And also even if you don't have the budget to do the extra night, you can go to the hotel and drop your luggage. And they'll be happy usually to store it. Just ask them in advance, just say I'm going to be dropping X number of suitcases off. Is that okay? And they'll hold them for you for the day while you do go and have breakfast and then come back. And if you let them know that you really want to get in your room as soon as, they might be able to ring you at 12. Yes, exactly. It comes available a bit earlier. So there are ways around it. Just what we forgot to mention was cash money for when you arrive. When you land in the UK, you can go to a cash point or an ATM and draw out some cash in case you just need a bit of money for the trip, for getting around or any of those incidental things. But you generally don't need a lot of cash with you. As you travel around the UK, you use your card most of the time. For taxis and things like that, public transport, you can use your card, but it can sometimes be helpful to have a little bit of money.

[00:32:18.420] - Tracy

Definitely. No, I think that's great. I think I've just about covered everything that we were talking about before the episode. We did a little bit of a chat just to prepare ourselves. But I think we've covered everything that we thought about. So yeah, I think if you want to read our tips and obviously check out Karen's guide to inflatable pillows and obviously her tips for traveling with young children on long haul flights, there'll be a link to that article on her website in the show notes. And also just a link to all the different things that we talked about, the apps and where you can buy the things like the foot slings and inflatable pillows. Those things will all be in the show notes for this episode. So they'll be at [uktravelplanning.com/episode-49](http://uktravelplanning.com/episode-49).

[00:33:08.620] - Karen

I'm sure you've got a podcast about packing, have you?

[00:33:12.160] - Tracy

I haven't. As yet. No, I haven't done one about packing. I think maybe we'll have to do that one at some point, maybe later on in the year. We'll do that one again together. I think that would be good because between the two of us, we've got so much experience. I've had one child to pack. You've had three to sort out, so it's a slightly different ball game.

[00:33:31.230] - Karen

And travelling at different times of the year involves packing different things, doesn't it? It's different seasons.

[00:33:35.930] - Tracy

Yes, absolutely. That would be good. But I think for this episode, I think that's a wrap. I just want to say for myself and Karen, so thanks again, Karen, for coming on the episode and sharing all your extensive knowledge and experience.

[00:33:48.570] - Karen

Thanks for having me again.

[00:33:49.840] - Tracy

Yeah. So all that leaves me to say is until next week, happy UK travel planning.