

You are prepared for your trip to Europe. But how prepared?

Bags are packed, tickets are booked, and you have saved all your must see destinations on your Tiktok and Instagram account. Now it's time to wait... Not quite yet!

In 2022 I took my first big trip to Europe! Despite months of planning and my best friend being the travel expert that she is, there was still much I had to learn and I would love to share those little tidbits with you all. Let my experience help ensure your first trip to Europe is as seamless as it can be.

Take Charge!

Surely you got all your portable chargers ready and set to go. I even thought I was one step ahead, landing in Paris with my European phone charger already in my bag. However, when I left Paris for the UK, I was met with a shocking reality check. The UK charger was also different from the one used in Paris. I felt silly, I figured Europe would have the same type of adapter throughout all of, well, Europe. This small yet significant oversight cost me a night of sorting through my luggage instead of sorting through my pictures. I watched helplessly as my phone reached one percent. In a foreign country, that is scarier than it sounds. Thankfully, as I was being hosted by my lovely new friends, I only had to wait till morning before I could make arrangements to hit the local shops. Lesson? Research every single country and the chargers there to not be caught off guard like me.

Keep the Change!

Just like my little charger mishap, I also figured that Euros would carry me through all my European destinations. I was sitting in Wales with my dear English friend Jade. I was a bit tired and zoning out, while she was being a sweetheart and ordering me some treats at the Welsh café! I handed her a few Euros and sat patiently, lost in thought about the day ahead of me.

Suddenly, she comes back to the table holding a water bottle but handing me back some coins. I take the drink from her and push her hand back towards her. "Keep the change!" I exclaimed. Now I was completely zoned out and too lazy to zone back in.

She kept trying to tell me that the coins were not valid, I needed Quid! However, I kept thinking she was simply returning my change. Awkward! The whole cafe was watching me and by the time I snapped back into reality, I was blushing deeply. Yikes! My cheeks felt hotter than her mug of chocolate. One simple google search could have saved me some face in that quaint café that day.

Breakout in Barcelona!

A poke bowl, class of white wine and a best friend across the table. A perfect lunch in Barcelona. Until...Ladies and gentlemen. I was 20 years old on this trip. I was able to drink in Spain, but had no experience in drinking since Americans can drink at 21. I was new to the different alcohols I was tasting, but never ever had considered the possibility of me having an allergy to it.

My friend Brenda snaps a nice shot of me from across the table and looks down, admiring her good photography skills. Seconds later when she looks up at me, my cheeks are full of red blotchy hives! She was terrified and asked me if I was okay. I was pretty clueless, but the look on her face said it all. She showed me what I looked like and probably went into denial. She looked at my food, drink and back at me. She looked around then started to research the nearest hospital - just in case.



Neither of us had ever seen that! I had already been in Europe for a week and a half, and had tasted different drinks, so what was making my cheeks cherry red?

Although that remained a mystery for a while but still serves as a good story to this day, we realized we had a very close call. After some investigating, along with safe trial and error, I came to the conclusion I had a certain allergic reaction. The issue lies in the fact that none of us had come up with an emergency plan, nor had even considered what to do in the case of any one. Although I cleared up in about an hour's time, it was a wake-up call for sure.

Anything at any time can go wrong. Don't risk it! Educate yourself on the local emergency number, nearest hospital and have a safety plan.