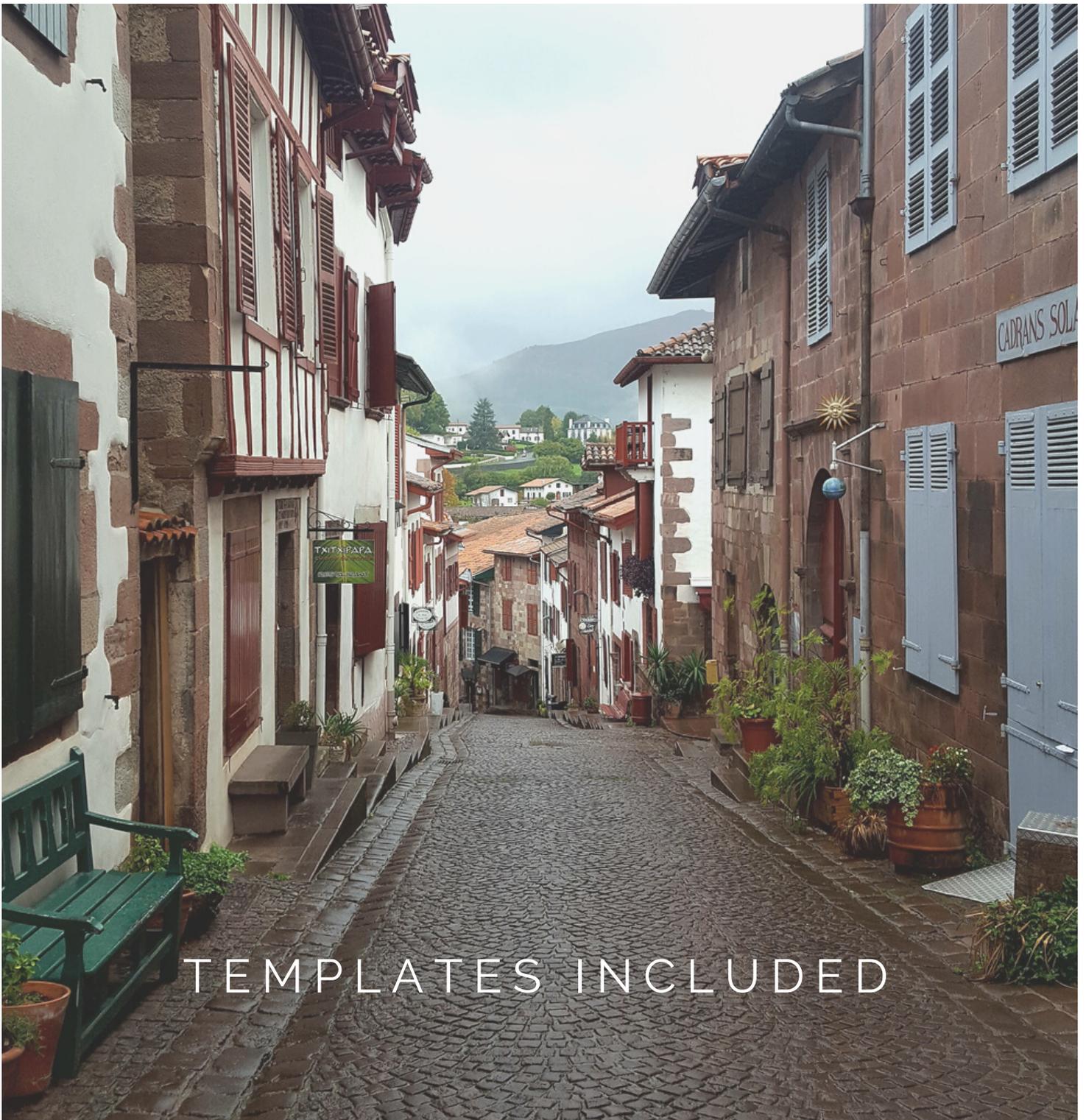


GUIDE & CHECKLIST

ITINERARY PLANNER

TRAVEL CHARM



TEMPLATES INCLUDED

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Planning a trip is exciting! But it can also be completely overwhelming.

Follow the easy step by step process outlined in this guide. Record all the information in the handy Travel Planning Pack, which you can download below. And you will be ready to book a trip you'll love, without the overwhelm.

I use these steps when I plan travel. I have been planning travel for over eight years, and I wish I had this list when I first started. My first big trip took me three years to plan! Yikes!

Follow the steps, click on the [highlighted text](#) links to access bonuses and downloads to make this process even easier and most of all have fun planning your trip!

Happy Travels

Cindy x

STEP BY STEP PLANNING

1. Decide on your destination/s
2. Determine your travel style and type of trip
3. Start researching your trip by saving articles and websites in one place. I recommend [Pocket](#) a handy free app to store information.
4. Organise your research by recording all interesting information into notebook.
5. Plan places to stay.
6. Plan your route and stops.
7. Research itinerary components - accommodation transport, activities and enter into Itinerary Template..
8. Review Budget. Check money saving ideas.
9. Build Your Itinerary.
10. Plan Daily Schedule.
11. Add relevant details of trip into Travel Planner as a summary of your trip and important information.
12. Review and Adjust Itinerary if required.
13. Book your trip

1. WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO? List all the places you want to spend a night or more. Start with a wish list, you can always change it later if you have too many or too few places.

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR TRIP? Don't forget to allow for travel days.

HOW MANY NIGHTS IN EACH LOCATION Do you need to adjust number of nights in each location? Do you need to exclude a location?

TIP: I recommend no less than three nights in each destination - the day of arrival, one full day to explore new location, and one day to join a tour or go on a day trip (or explore destination more).

2. WHAT'S YOUR TRAVEL STYLE?

DO YOU PREFER INDEPENDENT TRAVEL OR TOUR GROUPS? If you want independent travel you need to organise each component of your trip, a tour group will cover most aspects of your travel.

WHAT IS YOUR TRAVEL STYLE? 5 Star, budget, camping, hostels, private apartments. Independent travel or resort style.

TIP: If you need multiple rooms, possibly consider renting an apartment or entire house - great for families and also friends travelling together.
[Airbnb](#) is a good place to find a place to suit your needs.

WHAT IS BUDGET? An estimate is fine to start with. Or you might be trying to cost a trip without a budget in mind. That's ok, too.

BUDGET TIP: Each time you move from location to location it costs money. Factor in - taxi to the station, train fare and taxi to hotel. Or, longer car hire, more petrol, parking fees, road tolls and passes. Fewer places - less cost.

3. RESEARCH

PINTEREST

[Pinterest](#) is more of a search engine than a social media platform. Not only can you "pin" images to a board you create, you can follow the Visit or Read More to travel websites and blogs. Create an account if you don't already have one, create a Travel board (or destination name eg Scotland) and start searching for Pins in your category. Pin (Save) the ones you would like to read later.

FACEBOOK GROUPS

Join a Facebook Group relevant to your travel destination like [Traveling to Italy](#). Read posts, search for specific information or ask questions and get answers from experienced travellers. **Save interesting posts** in Facebook. Click the three dots in the top right hand corner of post and click save link. Access Saved items in menu on left hand side of news feed.

GOOGLE

Research your destination using Google and you will get a stack of options to read. Refine your search more if there are too many. For example - instead of Things to do in Florence, type free things to do in Italy for art lovers.

OTHER PLACES TO RESEARCH

Guidebooks can be a great place to start, I like to use a highlighter and tabs to mark places of interest. **TripAdvisor** can be a good place to start when looking at what hotels are available in an area, but the reviews are subjective. I do read them to get a general overview of people's opinions.

4. ORGANISE YOUR RESEARCH

NOTEBOOK

It can be fancy or cheap, it doesn't matter. Use it for scribbling notes as you research information. Record anything of interest including where to eat, shops to check out or tours that are recommended. Write down hotels until you narrow down your choice. This will be organised chaos waiting to transform into your dream trip.

TRAVEL PLANNERS

I use my Travel Planners to organise my travel information. Record the estimated costs in the Budget Planner, included in pack, to keep a travel of costs. Use the Daily Schedule to organise your days so you don't miss out on anything and over schedule. You can download the [Travel Planning Pack here](#).

ITINERARY TEMPLATE

The Itinerary Template will become your day to day itinerary including travel between destinations, accommodation and activities. While your Travel Planners will be a summary of your trip including the important details like contact and company details. You can download the [Itinerary Template here](#).

HANDY TOOL: Pocket is a useful app to save videos and articles that you read online. Great for storing information if you don't want to write everything down. Add a chrome extension to your computer browser, find an article want to save, add it to Pocket by clicking the icon.

Download the app to your phone.

[DOWNLOAD FREE POCKET APP HERE](#)

5. PLAN PLACES TO STAY

LOCATIONS

Once you have completed your research make your final decision on locations to stay and how many nights in each one.

6. PLAN YOUR ROUTE & STOPS

Using Google Maps and/or Rome 2 Rio to plan your route. Once you are happy with the route, you can plan stops along the way.

GOOGLE MAPS

Use [Google Maps](#) to see if the locations (or day trips) you have chosen flows, to see how far apart they are. You can use it to map out your Daily Schedule - find walking distances, public transport or driving times between venues.

ROME2RIO

[Rome2Rio](#) is a great tool for working out travel routes from buses and ferries to trains and driving. Download the app to your phone for easy use when you are on the go travelling.

View my Google Maps tutorial here. Find out how to decide on the destinations to include in your itinerary.

[VIEW HERE](#)

7. RESEARCH ITINERARY COMPONENTS

Record all the details in your Itinerary Template (and later your Travel Planners) as you go. I suggest using pencil so it is easy to change. Add costs to your Budget Planner as you go.

ACCOMMODATION

- a. Find accommodation for the number of people travelling?
- b. Is it in the right location? Cheaper can mean out of the way.
- c. Does it suit your budget?

TRANSPORT/TRANSFERS

You will need:

- a. Transfer to and from airport at home.
- b. Transfer or transport from the airport to accommodation.
- c. Organise/research transport pass like a Metro or Subway pass.

ACTIVITIES/TOURS

- a. Tours (include free and paid).
- b. Day trips, museums, galleries, experiences, tours costs etc.
- c. Include all free activities in Travel Planner.
- d. Enter information into the Travel and Budget Planner.

BUDGET

- a. Complete the Budget Planner.
- b. Use a Currency Converter for foreign currency.
- c. Add it up.
- d. DON'T FREAK OUT!

BUDGET TIP: Use a [Currency Converter](#) for sites that don't have your local currency. This way you can stay on top of your travel budget. Download an app for your phone.

8. REVIEW BUDGET

REVIEW ITINERARY & BUDGET

Check your Budget Planner. How is your budget? If your budget is completely blown, then go back and make adjustments. On the following page are examples of the ways you can make changes to your itinerary and save money.

MONEY SAVING IDEAS

There are many ways to save money travelling. See if these ideas work for you.

Private transfer	→	Public transport
5-star hotel	→	Decent budget hotel
Paid Tour	→	Free walking or self-guided tour
Hop on, Hop off Bus	→	Weekly Metro pass
Eating out every meal	→	Apartment with kitchen
Laundry service	→	Apartment with a laundry
Direct Flights	→	Indirect flights
Car Hire (over 21 days)	→	Car Leasing (check terms)
Costly location (Santorini)	→	Cheaper location (Paros)
Hotel	→	Guesthouse, hostel, camping
Private Tours for day trips	→	Use map and public transport
Several locations in Itinerary	→	One location - more day trips
Purchasing tickets on the go	→	Prebook activities online
Staying in Tourist places	→	Stay in neighbourhoods away from city centre

PLANNING TIP: Find three hotels you like. Rank them in order of preference. This way if your first choice is unavailable then defer to your second or third choice. If travelling in peak season, popular places may be booked far in advance.

9. BUILD YOUR ITINERARY

BUILDING AN ITINERARY

- Open [Google Maps](#). This is an essential tool to help make your itinerary flow.
- Add in all the places you will stay. Does it flow? Are you backtracking?
- Enter places for day trips. Incorporate the ones along your route as stops (if you are driving) and allow time to explore.
- If they don't fit in the route, check if they can be included in itinerary as day trips.
- Update your Itinerary Template as you go along..

10. PLAN DAILY SCHEDULE

USING DAILY SCHEDULE

- a. Print as many copies of the Daily Schedule as needed (included in Travel Planners).
- b. Enter approximate departure and arrival times for flights, transfers, trains, drives etc.
- c. Include time required to travel to and from the airport, station etc.
- d. Enter places of interest you want to see along the way (check opening times and consider the length of time to spend there).
- e. Add check-in and check out times.
- f. Add Day Trips into schedule .
- g. Enter tour times.
- h. Enter all other activities you will book in advance.
- i. Leave room for flexibility and rest. Things will come up as you travel that you had not planned,

PLANNING TIP: Allow travel/walking time between activities and include extra in case of unknown delays like traffic, street closures or getting lost. You can always fill in time, you cannot get it back.

11. REVIEW & ADJUST ITINERARY

- Is everything included in your trip? Travel, accommodation, activities, tours?
- Note items that need to be paid in advance (or paid later) on Travel Planner. Can you use a credit card or need cash?
- Are you over budget? If yes, research cheaper alternatives. Can you forgo something like a tour, a location, day trip?
- Does your itinerary/daily schedule flow? If no, what can you change around? Perhaps create a MUST-SEE list and rework your trip around that.
- Have you allowed enough time for activities, travel and stops? What about downtime?
- Once you are happy with the details, complete your Travel Planner. This will be the summary of your trip you keep handy as it will contain important information like contact details and costs.

PLANNING TIP: NEVER completely fill your Daily Itinerary. The best travel moments come from those that are unplanned. You need space to relax in a cafe and take unplanned adventures.

12. BOOKING YOUR TRIP

Once you have the itinerary the way you want it and you are ready to book your trip, you need to decide if you are going to book your entire trip yourself, or in part or hand it over fully to a Travel Agent. Here are the steps you need to take:

BOOKING YOUR TRIP YOURSELF

1. Book each component in order of importance. If cheap flights are your priority, book those first. If you are travelling to see a particular event or participate in an activity that is only on at a certain time, then you will need to book activity, accommodation and travel together.
2. The same goes for any busy time of the year for your chosen destination. It can get a little harrowing, but you will get there.
3. Remember, there is no point booking a tour (e.g. to the Lavender Fields in Provence) if you cannot guarantee accommodation.
4. Next book transport, once you have your locations and accommodation secured.
5. Be aware of extra taxes that you may need to pay at check out, like city tax.
6. Book transfers last.
7. Be flexible; it is much easier to create an itinerary if you make adjustments as you need to.
8. Organise Travel Insurance. Don't travel without it.

BOOKING YOUR TRIP CONT'D

USING A TRAVEL AGENT

1. Take your itinerary to a Travel Agent.
2. Let your Travel Agent know the most important factors about your trip like a specific hotel you have chosen, a tour you want to take.
3. If your travel agent offers an alternative check it out online (reviews, location and price) before agreeing.
4. You may have chosen a particular place/activity that the Travel agent cannot book for you. They may be able to offer another choice. If you don't like what they offer, you might need to book that component yourself.
5. Quoted flights may not always be the cheapest. There may be other airlines. Ask for more quotes if you want to compare.
7. Be aware that Travel Agents may not be able to book private apartments, privately owned boutique hotels, Airbnb accommodation or similar. You will need to do this yourself or use a [Travel Planner](#).
8. Ask for an itemised account so you can compare prices to your. Not all agents will give you this. **Insist on it.**
9. Organise Travel Insurance. Don't travel without it.
10. When you are happy with all the details, go ahead and book your trip!

ENJOY YOUR TRIP!