



## Rants and Randomness with Luvvie Ajayi

### A Guide To Group Travel - BONUS Episode 9

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My peoples, welcome to Rants & Randomness. I'm Luvvie Ajayi Jones, and this is my show where I'm talking about things I'm loving, things I'm Side-Eyeing, and having a good conversation with people. I am here at [Chicago Recording Company](#), bringing y'all the radio voice as always.

On this episode, I'm actually doing a bonus episode about travel. Check out [my travel essentials episode](#) that I did a few episodes back where I talk about traveling often and traveling well. I talk about the must haves, the things that I have to have whenever I'm getting on a plane and going anywhere. I love the feedback on that and people have let me know how it's helped them. So let's keep the party going. On this episode, I partner with [Airbnb](#) and I'll be talking about group trips and how great ones happen. It's not by accident, so let's get into it. It's really helpful.

I travel a lot for work, but I make it a point to also travel with the people I love for pleasure. You got to go on vacations. It's so good for me because it recharges my spirit. I always had an incredible time. In the last couple of years, I've had probably at least four amazing group trips where over 10 of us traveled together and spent days together in the same place. A couple of years ago we did a family trip to New Orleans. It was 12 of us and it was four days long. Also, did a trip with my Voltron squad to Nigeria in Ghana in December 2018. It was 30 of us on the Nigeria side and 100 of us on the Ghana side, but the 30 of us that were went to Nigeria, that was very much, it felt more intimate. That's the one that I had a hand in planning and that was two weeks long.

Actually, the whole trip, the Nigeria and Ghana part was two weeks, so Nigeria was a week, Ghana was a week. January, 2018, did Woadies and Woes friends' trip to Fennville, Michigan, it was 16 of us over three days. July, 2019, my girlfriends, my close girlfriends actually took me on a dream trip, dream bachelorette trip to Anguilla and it was 10 of us over six days. So, the first three trips, the New Orleans, the Nigeria, the Fennville, we stayed in [Airbnb](#) houses and I'm currently planning our annual family trip.

It's going to be 18 people over five days and it's also going to be an [Airbnb](#) house. We've already booked it, and that is why I'm [partnering with Airbnb](#) because it makes sense. I stay on that platform for my vacay if it's going to be more than me and just one other person. If it's three of us, it usually makes most sense to rock with the Airbnb. So yeah, group trips, I do them. I find that they bring me closer to the people I'd go on and we get to see each other in pajamas and with our hair down in our vacay selves. I think everyone has a vacation self. It's the version of you that's more relaxed, less high strung about the stresses of life.

It's really cool to see folks in that mode because a lot of times you see your friends who are hustling, who running back and forth, who being parents, you don't get to see them just be. And I think vacation allows people to just be. For me, the group trips that I've gone on have been amazing, so I think I've been lucky there, but I don't know if it's luck. I think group trips that are good, that unfold very well, they don't just happen. They're planned, they're curated, they're amazingly good times, but they are planned.

On this episode, I'm going to talk about the things that make good group trips because I get asked questions all the time whenever I post about one of my group trips, "Oh my God, I want to go on one with my friends. Oh my God, how did that happen?" I have a list of things that you got to make sure are in place for a dope trip to go down. For everyone who asked me how to make it happen, how they can also do it, this episode is going to answer all of that for you. Once you listen to it, feel free to hit me up. Let me know if you have other tips. You let me know if you have any questions, y'all can always hit me up, [luvvierants@gmail.com](mailto:luvvierants@gmail.com). I'm excited to give you these tips because I don't think I've actually given a deep dive on group travel before.

The first thing that I think is really important about planning a good group trip is to find a good planner for it, maybe two. One, maybe two. That's it. I'm not saying you have to go hire somebody. I'm saying in your friend group or your family group, whatever the group is that is traveling, there's got to be one or two planners identified. That's it. It cannot be a group planned trip. Why? Because everyone planning is no planning. Nothing will get done. I'm letting you know right now. If you're thinking, "Oh, 10 of us are going on a trip. We can all just figure it out." No, that's how nothing actually gets done and planned and nothing happens. We sometimes like to feel like we're including everybody in everything and that's how it's supposed to go. Unfortunately, humans are not just fickle, but we have a hard time making decisions.

You want to find a planner and somebody who's in charge of this because yes, they will be in charge, but they will also run things by you, but they're the ones who are making sure things are actually getting checked off the list. There's a quote by Roger Ebert that says, "A camel is a horse built by committee." Everything is not committee worthy, including planning the trip. If you have somebody at the helm, you know that there's somebody who's the go-to, the person who's going to answer most of the questions, who has most of the information? If everybody's forced to know everything equally, nobody's going to know anything actually. So, how do you figure out the planner for this trip in your group of friends?

The planner has to be someone who is a good project manager, right? They're the person who uses different tools. They use calendar all the time. They're usually somebody who's type A, and maybe even slightly anal about details. You actually do want the person who is anal about details to lead your trip. Why? Because nothing is going to get left undone. They won't have you show up in Guatemala at 9:00 PM, and then y'all are like, "Oh, snap. We didn't book the car to get us to a hotel and none of us speak Spanish." You want the person who's already thought about that. They answer questions that you haven't even asked yet.

The planner has to be someone with good sense. They cannot be your friend who was constantly getting in trouble or it's flaky or you side-eye for not having their general shit together. It will not work with them. You're going to end up being upset at this person because things are going to be in disarray. You want the person who is really organized in their everyday life because then they're going to organize this trip very well.

I am typically the planner for a lot of the group trips that I'm on and the other person who is a big planner on trips that I'm on, who I co-planned some with, including the Nigeria one is my girl Justina Omokhua. Justina is an amazing planner because she's somebody who I trust with everything because she's so organized. She does not let things go by the wayside. She thinks beyond what we need and is like thinking through contingency plans to the point where if something pops up, she already has an answer for it. Somebody like her who is very straight forward, who can handle authority, who knows how to handle people in general is the ideal planner.

She planned my bachelorette trip to Anguilla seamlessly and this was a surprise trip and it was one where everyone wasn't even starting from the same city. People actually met us on planes and how she did it was so seamless. It makes it look easy, but just know that something that looks seamless, especially a trip, took a lot of work. When me and Justina were planning the Nigeria and Ghana trip, we had to make sure that we were

getting everybody ... we were wrangling people, we were finalizing payments. The only thing we weren't responsible for were people's flights. Even then, we knew when everybody landed in Nigeria. So, you want your planner to be your friend who you trust with everything.

Your friend who you know pays their bills on time, because again, y'all don't want to show up and be like, "Aw man, we forgot to pay the hotel bill. They gave our rooms away." You don't want that. So, picking a good planner and being confident in this planner to make it happen because this person is the one who is liaison with the travel company, the transportation company, the hotel, and you don't want it to be the person who you have to constantly second guess because you won't have any type of faith that it's going well. So yes, pick your planner. Number one key for every group trip. This is not a democracy, right? Everybody can't be involved in all decisions all the time because nobody will make decisions at all. It's not a dictatorship, so the planner is not just unilaterally making decisions for everybody.

What they're doing is considering everyone's positions and then making the final decision because they know what's best for the group. It's basically more of an oligarchy. If it's two planners, then ultimately, they're the ones who are tie breaking stuff, who are making itineraries, who are giving people the guiding documents. Especially when people are like, "I don't know." I've seen what happens when everybody is given equal say in everything. It's happened with me. If you get 15 people equal say in let's say where we're going to dinner, nobody's going to agree on everything. All 15 won't be able to be like, "Yes, this is my favorite restaurant." What happens in that way is you decide, okay this is ... somewhere that everyone might like. Everyone can eat there. We will pick this because it is the least likely to cause any issues. It ain't for everybody to be like, "I got to be saying yes to that thing before we do it." No, this is why the planner comes in handy. You want to pick the friend, the family member who plans stuff in general and trust them.

Then the second thing about group planning that you have to do that is clutch, and if you do not do it, it can be disastrous or it might not happen, you have to pick a budget. You got to talk about money, monies, money coins, dinero, pesos, all of that. You got to talk about it. This is important because before you can talk about, let's say, where you're going to go with the group, you got to figure out how much are people willing to spend on activities and accommodations.

You only want to spend \$300, well, we might as well just rule out international because that's not going to go far. Keep it domestic then. If you know people's budget, the baseline budget, you can then narrow down where you want to go, or at least X out certain places. Agree on what your travel level and bougie is. What I mean by that is some people are Best Western and some are the Ritz. Both are fine, but can they exist on the same vacation? I doubt it. If you insist that you do want to go on vacation with somebody whose travel style is completely different from you, if you're not willing to compromise on their travel style, you might just have to be okay with, "You know what? I'm going to see you at dinner or at the activities, but we're going to have to stay at different places."

But be clear, if you stay at different places, it changes the dynamic a little bit. You don't get a chance to foster the togetherness that happens on group trips. Let's say you have a friend who's the Best Western and you're the Ritz-type travel based on what you can afford, your style, your preferences, whatever that is, you might also have to realize that there are some friends that you might not be able to actually travel with, and that's okay. I'm actually going to talk about that more later in terms of habits, but just talking about money, I wouldn't want to make a friend of mine go bankrupt because they have to travel with the taste that I have. You know what I mean? I have to make the decision to either, well, I'm just going to go with you and go where you can afford or I can just be like, "That's not going to work for me. I love you friend. I'll see you in Chicago. I see you in the city. We'll go to brunch then."

You have to agree on level. Are y'all going to be taking public transportation while there or is this a car service trip? Are we going to the Maldives? Which expensive, or are we going to Miami? Which is kind of expensive too, but not as expensive as Maldives. Are we going to Vegas or are we going to Fiji? Are we going Nigeria or are we going to Mexico? That stuff matters. Because if y'all are not aligned on budget, you're not going to be able to be aligned on much more. The money's real. We got to talk the money because that's what's in people's capability. If you're the person who cannot afford what the rest of your friends can afford, again, don't go bankrupt to keep up with the Joneses. You know what I mean? Maybe what it means is you might have to save for longer for this trip or opt out of certain activities on the trip if you want to go. I just find that it's hard for people with different travel styles to really truly compromise because they might end up resenting each other.

For the person who's best Western, who's like, "Yo, I don't want to spend all this money for a night at a hotel or for these accommodations, so now I got to come out of my pocket, all this ..." They're going to be on that trip mad because they're spending more money than they're comfortable spending and they don't feel like it's worth the value. Meanwhile, the person who is Ritz, let's say, they decide, "You know what? I'll go with accommodations that are less than what I typically go for with amenities and everything." They're going to spend the trip uncomfortable and being like, "I didn't even want to be in here, Lord". They'll be looking around like, "I'm used to something different." Again, I think it's better to make the decision like, "You know what? Maybe we can't travel together, but it doesn't mean I don't love you."

But yeah, so pick your budget and know what's realistic for you and your friends. Y'all agree on something, cool. You might not be an exact number of green, but have a range. If everyone's like, "I'm good spending 800 to 1,000," cool, then we know that. If everyone's like, "I'm good for this to be a \$3,000 trip." All right, bet. But the \$3,000 trip and the \$500 trip are not the same trip at all. They are never to the same place. Right? So that's important.

Then another thing is pick your crew. Pick your crew. Who all going to be there? Who's going on this trip? You cannot travel with everyone you love and that's real. Honestly, travel really lets you know who people are. There are people who you might've been friends with for 20 years and then you go on one trip with them and you learn everything about them that you didn't even know.

You learn how they are in the morning, you learn how messy they are, you learn how they deal with stress, you learn how they deal with situations that feel strange or how they treat people who they're unfamiliar with. You just learn so much about the people you travel with, and because of that, there are things that you can probably figure out in advance of the trip. To figure out who's good for a trip and who's not. You cannot travel with everyone you love, because ultimately, our habits don't always match. We can be friends who can go to brunch. We can be friends who can go to maybe sleep over for one night, but are we friends who can deal with each other 24 hours a day for four to seven days, maybe a week, maybe two weeks. That's different.

Do not be the person who invites the person who ruins the trip or acts up throughout. This is important because as you curate a group trip, you got to figure out the dynamics of everybody on the group. Who's going to work. If it's a group of 10 and eight of those people are extroverts, right? And two are deep introverts, are the people who are like, "Ah, after I talked to humans for two hours, I'm taking a six-day break," is that actually going to work? Meanwhile, everybody else is loud, going clubbing every night, coming back at four o'clock in the morning, you got to figure out the dynamics of the folks on this trip. You shouldn't be the person who invites somebody without thinking about everybody else on the trip. For example, if there's one person who is not really in the friend group, but you're like, "Ah, they should come on this trip." Why? Is this person's personality mesh with everybody else's?

You got to consider that because if that person's personality somehow clashes with the group, everybody's going to be looking at you like you brought them, at which point you did. Why? Why did you bring them? Does this person make sense for this group? Now, I know that you don't have to spend all of your time together on the trip. If you get sick of people on a group trip, take a break, do your own thing, go sight-see yourself four or six hours. You ain't got to cling to everybody all the time.

Generally, group trips, you're expected to hang with the crew for most of it, which is why dynamics are important. Who's going to fight? Who's going to get into argument? Who going to piss somebody off? That piece is important. As I curate my group trips, I am hyper sensitive to that. I'm always like, "I know I love this person, but I know they're very slow to warm up to people, so you know what? This is a group of 15 people, they prefer groups of three or less because otherwise they tap out, I'm going to let them sit this one out. I'm not going to ask them to come on this one."

You might be like, "Ah, what if my friend gets mad?" You can actually tell people in advance. Say, "Listen, I'm planning this group trip with the crew. Here's the thing. We're going to be in this place for five days together. It's 15 people. I know how you get tired of folks very quickly. I don't think this is going to be the trip for you because I don't want you to actually get that exhausted. We'll do the next trip. I'll let you know whenever we're going to do a small trip." Somebody got to respect that. Come to them in advance so they're not seeing your trip on Instagram and you ain't tell them in advance.

Just let them know, "Look, I don't think it's the right trip for you." Other times, you might not let somebody know depending on who they are. I curate the family trip very specifically to family members who I want to spend six days with. For me, it's like, look, I want everybody to have a good time. What you want at the end of a trip is not people being like, "Whew, I was ready to go home." You want people to be like, "Man that was too short, had too good of a time, can't wait to do it again." Because the people on the trip are what make the trip amazing. You can be in paradise and your trip can be trash because somebody's attitude messes it up, or we had to end up looking for somebody because they came up missing because they went MIA.

It does not really matter where you go, if the group that you're with is not ideal. Trips are made or broken based on who was there. That whole who are going to be there important. I'm the one asking it on trips that I'm not planning, who coming. Yeah, no, I can't make it. But thankfully I actually don't have that experience of having to sit out group trips because I don't like anybody on it. My group of friends are pretty solid, but I know that if I had to, I would. I'm also not going to spend my money to go spend very close time with somebody who I'm not meshing with. That's important. This is where you need to be discerning. Remembering that everybody you love or call a friend is not a suitable travel partner. That is not an insult on them or you, it just is. If I know you're super messy, I'm probably not going to want you on my trip because I'm like, "Friend, I love you but listen, I like clean environments," but I'm going to get to that part later too.

All right, so the problem with group trips that never happen is that people don't pick a date and a place and commit to it. A lot of times people are like, "Oh, I can't get my friends to do no group trips. Man, I wish my friends would go on group trip with me. Or, I want to go to this place but my friends don't want to go." This is also, again, back to the planner. You got to get your planner. If you're the planner, then own that. Pick a date and place. It's important because saying, "We should go on a trip," is not how trips happen.

Picking a firm date and place is how it happens. It gives people a definitive thing to plan towards and it's a signal that this isn't some abstract concept. You know when you're like, "We should go to brunch some time," and you're like, "Yeah," and you look up and four months have passed and nobody has gone to brunch? It's because no date and time and place was picked and committed to. For me, I got to put it on my calendar for it to happen.

If it's not on my calendar, I'm going to book something on it. Guaranteed. A lot of us are busy or we got a lot of things to do. Sometimes busy is relative, but we have a lot of things to do and we have friends who have calendars, who calendar everything, and if their calendars are open they will definitely fill it up with something.

It might mean planning at least six months in advance because then it gives people a chance to save money. You get to stack, you get to know what's coming. If you are the person who's like, "You know what? I'm typically less spendy and I will spend for this," the six months also allows you to put your money together and make sure that you have the money so you don't resent your friend who is like, "Yeah, I need better accommodations." Stack your coins, do it six months in advance. Related to picking a date and committing to it, most people you know have stuff to do, just in general, or they're parents and can get up and leave and go on a four-day trip, and just be like, "Hey, let's go to this place today." They got to go find somebody to watch their little broke best friends. Okay?

Six months gives people a chance to find caregivers, it gives them a chance to really make sure, "Oh, I've never left the kids by themselves such a long time." You basically have six months to get used to the kids not being with you all the time. So maybe we let them go to grandma's house for a day now, maybe the next time, two days. So, when four days comes, it's not a shock to your system or theirs. Give people advanced notice. I'm not just saying you're going to just get up and deciding a trip tomorrow and it's going to happen. It ain't. Give it some time. Even if you're not parents, it just allows you to look forward to something, and that picking a date and time, lets people know this is real, and they're less likely to be like, "Oh, I didn't see this coming," or "Oh, I can't make it." Or, "I couldn't get time off my job so that didn't work." Give people six months.

Then, decide on the length of your vacation. What's too long? What's too short? Again, I think amazing trips are the ones that I feel are too short because it meant, "Oh man, it was such a good time that I didn't want to leave." The ones that I think are too long means, you know what? I stopped having fun. I'm ready to go home. For me, I found that domestically, domestic vacations, four days is a sweet spot for me. I love it. Four days is perfect. It's me being gone from home long enough. I should get a chance to relax. I sleep a little bit. I have a little bit of fun and by day four when we're leaving, I'm like, "Aw man, I could've done one more day." Not really, because when I get home, I'm actually pleased to be home.

That four days works. It doesn't feel intensive. I can pack a carry on with no problem with four days. Honestly, if you also time it well, if you do four days, you actually don't even have to take off a lot of time for work because you can do weekend in that. So, you can do a Thursday through Monday. Only two the days are really working days out of that. For international, for me, seven days is my sweet spot, a week. Anything more feels long to me. Anything more, I'm like, "I'm missing my bed." Or, "Okay, I've seen everything. I can go home now." I think seven days is good. I've done, of course two weeks. That was good, but I honestly felt like I needed a vacation from that vacation. I was just like, "Whew, I'm exhausted from traveling for two weeks." I would probably do seven to 10 days.

For our honeymoon, which we're going to do this year, it's probably going to be around the 10-day mark. I was like, "I could do 14 days? That just feels long." Again, seven days for international trip, I can probably do a carry on with that. I've done that because I did Morocco and Spain over seven days and everything fit into a carry on. So it's possible.

Again, with group trips, tensions might run high and it doesn't matter how good of a friend you are, it doesn't matter how good the trip has been. If it goes too long, even people who love each other dearly and have nothing wrong to say might get tired of just being in such close proximity for such a long time. So you don't want that.

Longest trip I've done with my friends was the two weeks in Nigerian and Ghana and we didn't kill each other. We didn't hate each other. We actually got closer because of it and we still reflect on it, and we're going to do another group trip sometime this year. But yeah, figure out what your tolerance is and pick the length of this vacation so you can let everybody know, everybody can take their time off. It also affects the budget of course, the longer the trip, the more expensive. So if you're doing six days as opposed to four, what's the price difference to that? As a planner, you might be able to actually do all the math and give it to people as options, and ultimately, majority wins. "Oh, we're going to do four days." Or with everything about trips like this, when it comes to accommodations, activities, certain things you can actually be like, "You know what guys? I know you guys are going for six days. I'm going to go for four." That's okay. That is okay. Pick your part and be good with it.

Now, I am, again, I say this because I always warn people, I'm very picky, but I'm very travel bougie and my accommodations are everything. Everything. I am one of those people who, if the place that I'm staying is not right, it could ruin the trip for me. So, I'm the friend who will actually let you know, "Listen, if you pick a place that I'm not sure about and we show up and the place is not up to par, I'm probably going to move that day because it's important for me to feel comfortable where I lay my head." You might think, "Four days is not a long time. You can just deal with that." No, it's four days where I'm supposed to be recharging, where I'm supposed to be getting rejuvenated. I don't want to be irritated about where I am staying.

So for group trips, we book an [Airbnb](#). I use Airbnb for any trip that is over two people. Picking an amazing spot for a group is not easy, but it's also easy. It's not easy because of course everyone has different standards, but it's easy because you have a lot of options. If I'm traveling with more than one other person, I go to [Airbnb](#) rather than the hotel because it's more cost efficient and usually more spacious. I'm too old to be sleeping on top of somebody on a trip, unless that person is my husband. "Hey boo." Even that, I still would like a queen bed, at least a queen bed. I need a King most of the time. For me, [Airbnb's](#) makes sense because that money that you save, a hotel can't do it. I love hotels, but sometimes a house just makes sense.

So, let's say six of you are going on a trip, that's three hotel rooms because no more than two of us are staying in a room. Come on, we're grown. Stop it. I know that for the caliber of place that I'd like to stay, I'd probably be spending at least \$400 a night at a hotel. So, after four nights, I'm already at \$1,600 by myself. If I split the room with one other person, so that's \$800 per night, I mean per person ultimately, for four nights, right? Now, that's four nights, right? Four nights and we're at \$3,200 per person for this trip. So total, the six of us would spend \$19,200 for a hotel room that probably doesn't have a kitchen. If we wanted a suite, we're probably going to be spending double that.

I like suites because they come with kitchens and fridges because I like to have food and I usually will go track down a Nigerian restaurant wherever city I'm in and bring back the food. So, I need my room to be very specific or have certain amenities in it. Now, you get a house on [Airbnb](#) and you're probably paying \$400 total per night for a three to six-bedroom house, depending on what city that you're in, and it can be even be cheaper. Let's say that's \$1,600 for our accommodations for our entire stay at a place that is nice, that has kitchen, that has room, that has living room, we can congregate, usually has a dining room. \$1,600 compared to the \$19,200 we would have all been spent in total if we were staying at a hotel. It makes so much more sense for your budget to use [Airbnb's](#) for group trips. It really does.

I remember when we were going to New Orleans for the family trip, it was 12 of us, and we got this firehouse that had six bedrooms and nine beds. I think we spent \$3,500 for the four days total for 12 of us. You couldn't beat that with a stick. We loved that. My favorite part about that house, it had this long dining table that had 12 seats and so we would congregate there till three o'clock in the morning every night we were there, and I was thinking if we were in a hotel, everybody would have gone to their separate rooms by now and just be sitting

there. You might not be sleeping, but you ain't got nobody to talk to right then. I really love that houses for group trips, they foster togetherness. We sit around the dining room table, we play games. People would go to bed one by one until finally everyone's like, "All right, let's go to bed now." I love it.

For Nigeria, we got suites. They were on [Airbnb](#), so you can also even get hotels on there, but I like suites just because they're conjoined. We have a shared space. I like houses. For group trips, you want to see these people because y'all going to go back to your separate ways in four to seven days and not see each other for who knows how long again. I think it's really important to have that.

Now, a lot of people are wondering like, so how do you find the right place? People are usually concerned about safety and security. I always look for homes on [Airbnb](#) that are [hosted by Super Hosts](#). Those are the people who've received amazing reviews, they don't have cancellations and they go above and beyond for those who booked their spots. Sometimes super hosts will have flowers waiting for you or chocolates, or they'll even be on site and be like, "Do you need anything? If you need anything, call us."

[Super Hosts](#) have basically been vetted as people who show up on the platform well. They don't treat the people who book their things wrong, their houses are nice. Where I stay making the world of difference it's, if I'm comfortable in the place that I'm staying while on a trip, everything else is small because, okay, if it decides to rain, well, we're indoors, we'll play some games. Oh, okay, somebody is missing? Well, at least, we have a command center that we can sit in and feel comfortable and secure and we can figure something out. I'm always like, if the place that you're staying on your trip, you don't like it, you're constantly looking to get out of it, and that's not what a vacation is supposed to be.

I know of some people might want the adventure vacations where they're hiking, yeah, but where are you coming back to lay your head on? For the other people who are like, how do you also make sure that where you're staying actually is what that is based on the pictures? Because yeah, I've definitely ended up in places, and hotels too sometimes, where the picture doesn't match and you're like hell. People get mad creative on venue photography and hotel photography. You'd be like, "I guess I could see how you got that angle of a picture to represent this place." What I do to make sure about that is I usually look for [Airbnb](#) Plus homes. It means they've had a real person on their team go to the home, verify that it hits all the marks on their checklist, and it's basically super assurance that the pics match the actual place.

[Airbnb](#) Plus is their version of a blue check mark. So, they're vouching for these spaces. If you're new and you're nervous about using Airbnb, look for the super host and look for homes that have the Plus classification. It'll really give you peace of mind. Usually, if I'm planning a trip, before I book a spot for the group, I sent everyone on the trip, the listing, I tell them to check out all the pictures. I ask if they have any type of questions or if they're like, "Ah, I don't like what this thing looks like." I give everyone the final total for the house. Once everyone's like, "We good with it." Or at least most people. Most people have to say, "You know what? It looks good." You can't just be like, "I don't like it." Well, tell me why you don't like it. "Well, because ..." Because what?

Yeah, I usually will give everyone the pictures listing. Everyone agrees, most people agree, whatever, and I give them the final total for the house and then I tell them how much their portion will be and I go ahead and book it. Again, it's neither a dictatorship or a democracy. It's an oligarchy. Every single person might not agree on every single thing, including the exact house. I give people the choice to sit it out or, you know what? If for some odd reason you hate the house so much that we're picking, you have the option of getting your own accommodations. That's also fine. I'm not necessarily going to take it personally. If the whole group, but you are fine with something, then I don't know what to tell you.



Of importance, if you're booking accommodations for anything, no matter whether a hotel or [Airbnb](#), you will be held liable because you're the person who's actually booking it. Your name is on it. So book using a credit card because some of the money you're going to actually have to pay upfront. This is why the people that you're going on the trip with, they need to be financially trustworthy. They need to pay you your money and you need to pay the other people the money. You know what I'm saying? Don't be where you collected \$3,000 from your group and then they find out two months later you never paid the accommodations. You just held onto it. Be financially savvy. So Airbnb for example, collects half of the total at booking. Let's say your total for your group trip is \$3,000, \$1,500 is needed when you book to hold it down.

You need to be able to incur that cost. People can give you the money upfront. What we do with my family trip is I put down a deposit and then everyone pays me back in regular installments that are broken out leading up to the trip. Trips become way more affordable if you're spending say \$100 a month, as opposed to being expect to drop \$700 whenever the trip will happen. I collect everyone's money in installments. So as the planner, I'm the bank. But first, you have to be the person that people can trust to be the bank. You got to be the person that people can trust to give their money to and they know it's not being flushed down the toilet. Money for wherever you will all be staying, if it's in the same place, needs to be in your hand in advance.

I don't want to hear the day of the trip, "Ah, I don't have it." You might not have the last payment, but you at least have given me the rest of your payments. Do not be the person who's making people spend their money for not. Right? Don't have the planner or whoever's liable for payment having to chase you down for money. That's why the installment things comes in handy. I have a spreadsheet where I keep track of who has sent me what amount, what date. So, at any given point, I have the accounting to show, "Oh, you've given me this," because you've given me this over these couple of months.

All of that comes in handy because you're going to create an itinerary. If you're the planner listening to this, amazing group trips have itineraries. Itinerary will be a document that has address of where everyone's staying. Maybe a list of everyone's entry points, what cities they're coming in from, and what time they land, and what will you do on the days that you're on this trip? Have an itinerary as a guiding document. Let me be clear. Guiding document. The itinerary is not a blood oath. You got to be flexible and be able to move as necessary. If everyone's like, "Oh, we don't want to go whitewater rafting on Wednesday." "All right, cool. Y'all want to go on Tuesday?" "Yeah. All right." The itinerary allows people to have a starting point. It is not something that you are bound to unless you've already paid for activities in advance. Again, that has to be agreed to by the oligarchy, the two people who are the main planners, once they've talked to everybody else.

Yeah, those are my main tips on planning the trip well, but how are you the person who then goes on a good group trip and gets invited back? There's a few things that you have to avoid. Do not be the spendthrift. What I mean by that is, again, don't be the person the planner has to chase down for their share of the money. Nobody has time for that. Give the money without having to be like clocked and checked. And then on top of that, don't be the person who, between for every activity or dinner or everything, you're calculating everything down to a dime. "Well, I paid my share." Well, Lord, we're splitting it up in between everybody else.

Don't be the person who's now like a miser, calculating every diamond dollar. Who has time? Okay? Do not be the jerk/contrarian. Don't be someone who's constantly complaining or saying you don't like something that is suggested, especially with that your own solution. Don't be that person. Don't fight nobody as much as you can on this trip. Just don't be a jerk. Don't be the person that just makes it tough to be in your presence for these days where everyone has to stare in each other's faces. Then, don't be messy. The only baggage that we want to see is the one you wheeled in. So leave your emotional baggage at customs. We came here to have fun. If we do have the moments of, let's have real talk, let's have those real moments. But try not to bring your bad emotional

state into the room like where everything becomes a problem and everything is just, again, don't be the one complaining about everything and starting beef with somebody randomly because you just happen to be mad at something else that has nothing to do with this trip. Related, don't be physically messy either. Pick up your stuff. Everyone is in the same five, seven rooms. Please pick up your stuff, your drawers, all of that. Whatever messy habits you have at home, this ain't the place to show it. Do not be the habitual line stepper. We are not going to be spending any part of this trip bailing you out of jail. Okay?

This is not "The Hangover." We're not in a movie. This is not cute. We too old for that. We got stuff to lose. Right? Act like you got some sense. Act like you got some sense. Boundaries and rules. Respect them. Okay? Then, do not be the one that's MIA all the time. We came on this group trip together. Let's leave together. Let's spend some time together. I'm not saying we have to be together 24/7. I'm not saying that every activity everyone has to do. I'm saying, when we land and we get to the house that we're staying, I don't want the next time I see you to be when we're leaving. That really meant that you came on a solo trip that you happen to not have to pay too much on because you were able to put in on this house.

There are times on trips when people would just come up missing. No one knows where they went, and they'll show up a day later. "Oh, I just went with my friend." You didn't tell nobody. If you are going to go MIA, at least let somebody on the trip know so people aren't worried about you. That's a security issue. I didn't travel so I could not have to send out a search party for you. You could have went on a solo trip for that and be responsible in terms of the fact that you're also part of a group. People are responsible for you because they're on this trip. I can't go on a trip with somebody and be like, "Well, they're grown. Everything they do is on them." No, I need to make sure that you're okay because we came together. I won't feel right if you somehow get hurt on my watch, even though we're all grown, so we got to take care of each other.

Don't go MIA because the next group trip, I'm going to be like, Nah, they can't come. Because last time we had to go looking for them or last time we didn't see them at all. So it was like they weren't even on this trip." That's how you end up getting invited back. Don't be the spendthrift, don't be the contrarian, don't be the messy one, don't be habitual line stepper and don't be MIA.

Yeah, clean up after yourself. Don't leave somebody whose home in shambles. Look at some of the cleanup rules and adhere to them. Show that you have some home training. For Airbnb hosts, a lot of times they'll actually tell you, if you're leaving, take the trash out or take the sheets off the bed. Do that so this person can get their home cleaned and flipped right back over.

If I'm staying anywhere, I don't want to leave it in shambles. Just because it's not your home, just because you're on vacation does not mean now you have carte blanche to ruin somebody's property. Act like you have some sense. Clean up. Act like he has some brotopsy. A really key thing to good group trips is good people who aren't stingy and have common sense. Everything else is details and minutia. It can be figured out, but you want a well curated trip with people who want to have fun and will not be too inflexible and will not complain the whole time and will respect your space, both physical and emotional space.

Get an amazing spot that even if you don't feel like going anywhere that day, you can spend a whole day indoors just playing games, singing, doing karaoke, doing each other's hair, whatever y'all feel like doing, drinking a whatever that is. On my trips, the Airbnb homes that we've gotten have allowed us to do that. I remember one day, in New Orleans, we actually were like, "We're tired because we walked all yesterday." And we spent the whole day playing music in the house. Some people were on one floor, some people were on another floor. We were sitting on the dining table. We played Heads Up. There's video of it. One day we also spent the whole day at a tattoo parlor, but that's a different story. We even got my mother in law to get a tattoo. Also, different

story. But the best of group trips are the ones where yeah, you wake up in the morning, you go to the kitchen and people are there already and they're talking and they're laughing.

Those memories are what I take with me. Not even necessarily the excursions, is the moments in the house, in the pajamas, cooking or singing up until two o'clock in the morning. [Airbnb](#) has been a great platform for that, and I continue to use them for these trips and I'm happy to partner with them on this episode. It's a platform that isn't without its problems, but they're working it out. I use it, it's served me well, and it's why I'm recommending it to you. If you have a great spot, even if it's not a house, if it's an apartment, a condo, if it's a suite, if it's somewhere that's nice and clean, because even small group trips or solo ones, [you can put your house on Airbnb to make more money](#). Yeah, and part of that means, if a few days a week you're out of town or maybe a few days a month, you can definitely put your property up and become a host.

Airbnb's mission is to create a world where anyone can belong anywhere. I'd love to book more places on Airbnb that are [hosted by black and brown people](#). The platform does need to be more diverse and I think we should consider adding our own homes on there. And of course, just being a part of that platform, for those who end up using it to book places, so let's say you land somewhere and you book the place and for some reason it wasn't what you expected, they actually now are doing a guest guarantee where they announced ... [Airbnb](#) announced a new commitment called guest guarantee, where if a guest checks into a listing that doesn't meet Airbnb's accuracy standards, the company will rebook the guest to a new listing of equal or greater value, or they'll give you 100% of your money back. All the things you're afraid of, they're actually trying to combat that and fix it.

For me, it's just been a really good platform to use, especially as I go on these trips. I know a lot of people are putting travel as their resolutions and they're just saying they wish to travel more. I just want to tell you that travel is possible for you. It is well within your reach to travel. Sometimes you might have to save more for it. Every trip doesn't need to cost \$3,000, and every trip doesn't have to be disastrous. Things pop up, but good planning minimizes risk and part of my self-care is to continue to see the world with the people who I love the most. I'm going to keep doing that.

Y'all can follow me on social media while post my random travels. I even use the hashtag #TravelLuvv, L-U-V-V to document my shenanigans around the world. At this point, I've been to about 30 countries and it's climbing. Yeah, I just want people to travel well and travel efficiently. Check out my podcast episode before this one called [The Travel Essentials episode](#). That's really helpful. That'll give you the must haves for getting on a plane. Whether you're doing a solo trip or a group trip, here are the things that I always have with me. I hope y'all take more group trips. They're really fun. Find some good people, go with them, have some sense while on this trip and don't owe nobody money. Yeah, and shout out to [Airbnb](#) for partnering with me on this episode. You all can go to [airbnb.com](#) to sign up if you're not currently using it. So yeah.

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