



PLANNING

Pack everything you will need but always leave room for more.
Have a well thought out plan, but leave room for what you'll discover.



VISION

There's a reason that your rear view mirror is smaller.
It's OK to look back once in a while, but keep your focus on the road ahead.



ENDURANCE

Never allow your tank to get below half full.
You don't know how far you'll go, what you'll be getting, and what it will cost.



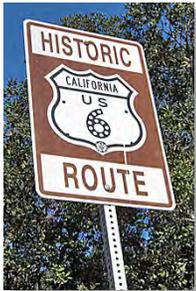
COLLABORATION

It's OK to fly solo, but only for a while and don't make it a habit.
The places you see will be great, but the people you meet will be even greater.



JUDGEMENT

Know when to take the interstate, and when you should get off it.
Let the journey become the reward.



ADVERSITY

Even the best road map (or GPS) will not always have all the answers.
Be ready for anything, the challenges you face will enhance your experiences.



FLEXIBILITY

Allow roadblocks and detours to become opportunities.
When a door closes another opens, but it is up to you to walk through it.



CAUTION

Don't go too fast, even when it all the signs indicate that you can.
You can't speed through everything and when you do, you can miss so much.



PRIORITIZATION

Don't put things off, for you don't know what lies ahead...or not.
Sometimes you have to make choices; it's not easy but you can't do it all.



PREPAREDNESS

Be ready for anything, but accept that you won't see everything.
Sometimes finding what you seek happens before you think. Be ready!



SEGMENTATION

When things start to get overwhelming, break it up into smaller pieces.
You'll see things that make you think or laugh, and people that make you smile.



REFLECTION

Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.
Take time to for yourself process it all, and create something to remember it by.



So, do you want to really get out there and hit the open road?

Here are some **SPECIFIC TIPS** that I was given or learned the hard way..

- **RENT A CAR!** It is WAY cheaper to rent than to put thousands of miles on (and significantly depreciate the value of) your own car; just DON'T get one at the airport. Most rental companies have "locations" at local service stations or other places you would not normally think of; these "locations" are not only cheaper but tend to be far less critical of returning a car with dings, scratches, etc. Look beyond the typical budget rental agencies - Hertz charged only \$850.00 for a full month rental of the Chevy Cruze I drove and even paid for an oil change!
- **USE AMERICAN EXPRESS!** Most credit card and rental car companies have insurance available, but American Express Platinum members can sign up for PRIMARY car rental insurance that is only \$25.00 for the duration of the rental. All you have to do is use your American Express card to rent the car and then decline insurance from the rental agency.
- **DO YOUR HOMEWORK AND MAKE A PLAN!** Take time to carefully think about where you want to go, who you want to see, and how you will get there. Create an itinerary that details how far and how long you will drive each day. Build in an extra 15-20% for rest stops, meals, photo ops, and attractions you will stumble upon along the way. Be ready to change your plan several times, and build in the flexibility to make that possible.
- **PACK FOR ANY WEATHER!** Even in the summer, it can get down into the 30s or 40s in some places. In addition to packing a warm coat, have rain gear and blankets.
- **UPDATE YOUR GPS!** Garmin and other manufacturers tend to put out updates every 2 or 3 months. They can typically be updated through a provided app (i.e. Garmin Express) by plugging your GPS into your computer or visiting the manufacturer website to download the files directly.

- **GET SOME APPS!** There are several apps for your cell phone that can enhance your trip and quite possibly be of great assistance out on the road. I used **Roadside America** to find hundreds of unique and offbeat attractions (such as “Standin’ on a Corner” in Winslow, Arizona) near to your location, the two apps **HotelsTonight** and **Booking.com** were great for getting a hotel room for the coming night at a big discount. If you are a member (highly recommended), **AAA** has an app for its members that can be very useful not only to obtain travel information but to obtain service if you run into car trouble.
- **SUBWAY!** If it’s a long driving day and you are looking to keep economical when it comes to eating, get a 12 inch sub in the morning (or sometimes BOGO for two 6 inch subs) and you’ve got two somewhat healthy (compared to most typical fast food) smaller meals for the price of one. When driving, smaller more frequent meals are better...
- **WATCH WHAT YOU EAT!** You should avoid eating heavily before or during a major drive; you will tend to become tired an hour or two afterward while your body focuses on digestion. Don’t rely on coffee, Mountain Dew or (especially) “5 hour energy drinks” to get you through a long drive, any benefit given by caffeine or other stimulants is far outweighed by the crash that comes later. Also, placing yourself in a situation where you will inevitably be in desperate need of a rest stop can become problematic, especially in remote areas.
- **GET A POWER INVERTER!** This will turn your 12 volt charging or cigarette lighter outlet into a 120 volt wall outlet. This will charge laptops, phones, etc. far more quickly and enable you to use most standard electrical devices in your car without an adapter.
- **HAVE A COOLER AND A SURVIVAL STASH!** Keep your cooler stocked with bottled water and leave room for food, etc. You’ll need to restock it with ice about every 36 hours. Have at least a case of bottled water with you, and a good supply of high protein snacks such as beef jerky. If you get stranded, these may become important.
- **STOP FREQUENTLY!** You should **NEVER** go more than two hours without making some kind of a stop, even if it is just to get out of the car for 5-10 minutes and walk or stretch. Look for offbeat road signs, attractions, or other photo ops to get you out of the car and keep the blood going. In other words, integrate these **NECESSARY** stops into your overall Road Trip experience.