
Prologue

At the rear of the trunk, we have built wire shelving to hold twenty-six large freezer bags. In each bag is a set of underwear, socks, and shirts. Twenty-two short sleeve bags, four long. There are just three real suitcases. We each have a portercase for casual eveningwear. We share one hanging bag for more formal eveningwear. The portercases are carry-on sized hard suitcases with wheels, one on each side of the trunk. An upright toiletry bag sits on top of one and a plastic bin full of shorts on the other. Between them are four activity-specific duffels, for hiking, swimming, running, and tennis. On top of those bags, there is a low wire basket full of jeans and sweatshirts. Tucked in the various corners are backpacks, car emergency accessories, a medical kit, hats, and hiking boots. The hanging bag does not fit so had to be draped over the back seat. A cooler behind the driver and a computer behind the passenger are the only other planned usages for the back. We had to save some space in case we buy something.

All recurring bills have been set up to automatically deduct, either by directly debiting our bank account or via a bill paying service. We have set up as potential payees all the vendors for which we have non-recurring payments. We hope. Our bank accounts contain sufficient monies to cover the expected expenses for the duration. We have set ourselves up to sell stock online in the event of the unexpected. We have pre-

paid all insurance, including health, life, and auto. The only thing we are not sure about is the boat insurance. But we have arranged with our cleaning service to pick up the mail once a week and send us the important looking mail once a month.

Most, but not all, of our planned destinations take reservations about 12 months in advance. So we had been make reservations as early as we could and following reservation opening dates as closely as possible. We have reservations for all but a few stops, those who only take reservations once they open for the season.

Everyone important to us has our itinerary. It shows the stop number, destination, place of lodging, date of arrival, number of nights, and the phone number we used to make the reservation. It might not always be the phone number of the actual hotel, so many are booked through central reservations these days. But we hope those who need to get in touch with us are savvy enough to figure that out and get through. We have set up an Internet site where we intend to display a photo for each stop. We distributed the link to friends and family that are interested in following our progress online. We have preprinted labels for our immediate families so it will be easy to send them postcards. We bought two books of postcard stamps, and are annoyed by reports that the postal rate may go up before we can use them all up.



The trunk of the Cadillac packed according to plan.

As the pile of clothes in the closet dwindled, Jennifer realized that the car-packing plan left no room for pajamas. Michael suggested a pajama bag. After all, as we pull a T-Shirt pouch and a pair of shorts from the trunk, we should have something to tuck them into to carry into the hotel. Jennifer's relief was tempered only by her anxiety that there was

absolutely no more room in the trunk. Somehow, the pajama bag fit, even with two nighttime reading books thrown in at the last minute.

Our preparedness extended to the format of the log. A template form outlines the minimum information we would like to capture at each stop.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Stop Number: | The number corresponding to any place that we spent at least one night. We plan to spend between one and five nights at each stop. |
| Arrival datetime: | The time we arrived at our lodging. |
| Sites visited: | The attractions that we visit during this stop. |
| Accommodations: | The place we stayed. |

As we leave one location on the way to the next stop, we will record:

Miles traveled:	The total number of miles on the odometer from the time we left the previous stop till the time we leave the next one. This includes side trip miles and getting lost miles.
Departure datetime:	The time we left our lodging.
Departure weather:	The weather at the time we left the stop.