



# GRADWEEK



## 2016 TRAVEL TIPS - VALUABLE TRIP INFORMATION

**Getting Ready!** Make sure you have your valid passport ready! Your passport cannot expire within three months of your return date of your trip and needs to be the passport booklet, not the card. If you are not a U.S. Citizen but you are a permanent legal resident, you need to contact the Bahamas Consulate for the most up-to-date entry requirements. Please call their main office at (305) 373-6295 or visit [www.bahamasny.net](http://www.bahamasny.net). You will be denied boarding at the airport if you do not have the correct required travel documents and all charges to change your flight will be at your expense.

**Packing your bags!** Be aware that most airlines charge to check luggage and the costs do vary so try to pack light and visit your airline's website to see baggage fees and weight restrictions. The enclosed flight itinerary indicates the airline you will be traveling with. Be aware of the restrictions for items in your carry-on bag by going to the TSA web site at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov). It is highly recommended that you make a photocopy of your passport and put your name and phone number on it and put the copy inside your checked luggage, but make sure your actual passport is in your carry on. To help you know what essentials you need to pack, check the weather in Nassau, Bahamas online a few days prior to your trip.

**Spending Money** - We recommend using debit cards and also take a small amount of cash. US dollars are accepted and there's no need to exchange money. It's always advisable to let your bank know when you will be using your debit card outside of the US. If using credit/debit cards, please be aware that most banks charge a service fee, plus a currency conversion fee when traveling outside of the US; so check with your bank or credit card company prior to travel. Getting around is typically done by Taxis so plan to have cash on hand for that and traveling in groups is the safest and most economical way to go. How much money you take is up to you but \$550 to \$750 is recommended for souvenirs, Action Pac, transportation, and food and drinks at the hotel.

**Day of Departure!** **DON'T BE LATE!** You are responsible for your own transportation to the airport and **must arrive at least three hours prior to your scheduled flight time**. We recommend checking the airports website in advance for directions to the correct terminal to ensure you arrive with plenty of time. You will be required to go to the check-in counter of your listed airline to obtain your boarding pass and check-in any luggage you aren't carrying on. Then you must go through security so have your boarding pass and passport handy. You can be denied boarding if you are late and/or do not have the required documents and you will be responsible for any charges due to changes in flights. If your flight itinerary requires that you change planes in the US, you will not be required to retrieve your bags until after you arrive at your final destination (Nassau). When you arrive at your destination, make sure to retrieve your luggage from baggage claim and follow signs to exit the building. Look for a GradWeek Staff member wearing GradWeek shirts & ID Badges that will direct you to the buses that will take you to your hotel. Do not talk to local vendors trying to sell you a transfer. These vendors will be everywhere as you exit customs - keep walking until you see the Gradweek staff in Blue shirts. Hotel Only packages DO NOT include the transfers, so if you are signed up for a HOTEL ONLY package you will need to arrange your own transfers.

**GradWeek Staff** - While our Staff is available at your destination 24/7, the **Hotel Staff** can help you with daily requests, like more towels, more pillows and any questions about the hotel and nearby shopping, events, etc. The GradWeek Staff is there to ensure the program is running smoothly, coordinate transfers for all the arrivals, present the Welcome hotel orientation, provide a Destination Guide with area map & Action Pac event schedule, and coordinate the activities listed in the "Action Pac" as well as assist with any serious emergencies or roommate situations

**At Your Hotel** - Once you arrive at your hotel, you will be given a full orientation by a GradWeek Staff member. They will explain the events that will be held during your stay and go over some basic guidelines and rules to make your trip awesome and worry free. There is will be an "Action Pac" flyer in your departure packet that lists the various events and price options as well as the application, which be required to be filled out to purchase. You will be able to purchase your "Action Pac" on-site only at the orientation by CASH ONLY.

**Checking In At The Atlantis** - Please be patient, the hotel will need to check in each person staying at the resort. Upon check-in each traveler will be required to place a credit card on their room. That card will be linked to your room key for charging inside the hotel. Be mindful of this as it can add up quickly. When you place the credit card down the hotel will automatically pull an authorization of \$150 for each day of your stay to ensure funds are there. For a 5 day stay this is a minimum of \$750. \*If your student will be presenting a credit card with their parent's name and that parent is not present the student will be required to provide a prefilled and signed copy of Atlantis's Credit Card Authorization Form. **Remember that your room key now becomes just like a credit card and if you lose or misplace it then you'll need to report it to the Front Desk A.S.A.P.!** \*If your student doesn't have their completed form upon check-in they will need to obtain a new copy, fill it out, get it signed (by the card holder) and email it to "**Attention Hotel Department**" at [ist\\_info@istours.com](mailto:ist_info@istours.com) and it will forwarded to the appropriate department at Atlantis for processing. You can find this form by logging into your student's online account at [www.gradweek.com](http://www.gradweek.com) and the form located under "Final Documents".

**In-room Security** Once you check in to your room, we strongly recommend you use your in-room safety deposit box to store your documents (passport), cash and valuables including cell phones, cameras, etc., when not being used, ensuring that it is securely locked at all times. Room doors should not be left open and unsecured. If you have purchased our additional insurance please be aware that it DOES NOT cover you for loss of personal items such as Cell Phones. **ANY** incidences of theft **MUST** be reported to the hotel first and while GradWeek Staff will assist with any local authorities if theft or loss occurs, we are not responsible for the cost of any cell phone replacements. We recommend bringing your state issued picture ID card for identification when going out and leaving your passport in the safety deposit box. Take a few minutes to check that everything in your room is in good shape and in good

working order. Please contact the GradWeek Staff or the Hotel's Front Desk personnel **immediately** if you see anything broken, damaged or not working properly, to ensure you will not be held responsible for pre-existing damaged items.

**Calling Home** – Parents want to know you arrived ok and to provide them with your room number in case they need to reach you at the hotel; so a quick call, text or e-mail home to say you arrived and provide them with a room number is highly recommended. Not all phone companies charge the same fees when traveling outside the U.S. Contact your service provider prior to travel to find out what the charges will be if calling to/from the Bahamas, and/or if they have international texting plans available. It is very expensive to call from your hotel room. If you do not want to take your cell phone, the next best thing is to buy a long distance calling card that can be accessed by any public phone.

**Ahhh...Paradise!** This is your time to relax and have a good time. **But, that does not mean you can do anything you want.** All local laws are strictly enforced in and outside of the hotel and they will not tolerate disorderly conduct or any property damage and you will be required to pay for any damages and risk being evicted from your hotel at your own expense; no exceptions! Be smart, behave appropriately and stay safe by traveling in a group whenever leaving your hotel. We highly recommend using the buddy system! Please go out in groups, especially when going back to your hotel at night. Always remember that there is safety in numbers and it doesn't hurt to always tell a friend if you are leaving the hotel or event before everyone else.

**Eating at the Atlantis on a Budget** - There are several restaurants that offer food at reasonable prices within the Atlantis hotel and the Marina area. Below you'll find a few suggested low cost restaurants/cafés:

- **Breakfast** - Starbucks (location: Marina) & Dunkin Donuts (location: Atlantis)
- **Lunch and/or Dinner** - Murry's Deli (sandwiches - location: hotel), Marina Pizza (by slice or whole - location: Marina), Quizno's (location: Marina), Viola (a short walk past the hotel's Beach Tower and RIU Hotel, and Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville (near the bridge and The Green Parrot).

**Returning Home** – Your GradWeek staff will post the time you need to be ready to board the bus for your flight home in the lobby of the student hotel. Make sure you have checked out of your room and have paid for any incidental charges not included in your package price. Have your Travel Documents in hand to check-in at the airport. Do not bring back any alcohol if you are under 21, it's against the law in the U.S.! Make sure your luggage gets loaded on your bus and keep your valuables with you at all times. Because you clear Immigration and Customs in the Bahamas, your checked in luggage will be automatically transferred at your connecting city and will be available for pick-up at your final destination.

**How to use the Emergency Medical Coverage** - Even though over 95% of our travelers never encounter any sickness or injury, it still may occur. If sickness or injury occurs that requires medical attention, GradWeek or hotel staff can direct you to the medical facility at your destination. If you purchased a Travel Protection Plan, through Travel Insured International, your plan helps provide coverage for medical emergencies and emergency medical evacuation. To receive assistance, you can call toll free from the U.S. at (866) 684-0218. The agent will guide you through the process of how to get reimbursed for your approved medical costs up to the limits of the plan.

**Policy on Alcohol Consumption** - GradWeek does not promote the use of alcohol to its tour participants. GradWeek is aware that many events and activities in the Bahamas have alcohol and non-alcoholic beverages available. Each participant chooses for themselves whether or not to consume alcohol. The legal drinking age in The Bahamas is 18 and many clubs require a picture ID upon entry.

**Money Wire Transfers** – Should you run out of money at your destination, GradWeek provides a money wire transfer service for those students who may need additional funds onsite. This service is only available during normal business hours, Monday thru Friday from 8:30am-300pm PST. If you need this service, have someone in the U.S. go to our website at [www.gradweek.com](http://www.gradweek.com) and print out the "Wire Transfer Authorization" form located under FORMS on our website. Please fill out the form completely and email it to [ist\\_info@istours.com](mailto:ist_info@istours.com) **BEFORE 3:00PM PST**, Monday through Friday. The traveler receiving the money can pick up the cash with a photo ID from our 24 hour GradWeek staff room at their hotel after 7:00pm (Nassau local time). The limit is \$300 and there is a \$25 service charge per wire transfer.

**Parents wishing to Contact their Son/Daughter** - If a parent needs to contact their son/daughter, the hotel phone numbers are listed below. The hotels do not always list everyone in the room, so please find out all your student's roommate first & last names (listed on your most recent invoice) before you call so you can be connected to the correct room. The corporate office **cannot** call the hotel on yours or anyone's behalf. However, the Customer Service agents are available to answer general questions Monday through Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00 PM PST at (800) 448-4444. During our GradWeek program, we do operate a 24-hour emergency line **ONLY in case of a medical or family emergency**. Calls not deemed to be an emergency will be returned during normal business hours. If your son or daughter are having an issue at the hotel, please do not call the corporate office – there is GradWeek Staff and GradWeek Manager at the hotel to handle any on-site problems.

Please visit our website at [www.gradweek.com](http://www.gradweek.com) under "Forms" to view all the valuable travel information and forms we provide including "Preparing for Travel" letter, Travel Tips, Action Pac and Travel Protection/Insurance information.

### **Hotels:**

### **Phone Number and Website**

Atlantis Casino Resort

1 (242) 363-3000 [www.atlantisbahamas.com](http://www.atlantisbahamas.com)