

9 Mistakes That Could Ruin Your Romantic Couples' Trip

These mistakes can seriously kill the mood on your next couples' vacation.

BY PATRICE J. WILLIAMS | JULY 12, 2020



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Whether you've been together for a few months or several decades, traveling as a couple creates a unique set of challenges. Even the most connected, communicative pair can run into hiccups. To help you tackle any issues before they arise and calmly handle problems while on a trip, we spoke to a few relationship experts and put together list of nine common mistakes couples make on vacation (and how to avoid them).

1. Not Defining a Purpose for the Trip

You've probably established the *where* (destination), but the *why* should be discussed before any plans are made. "Not every trip necessarily needs to

have a purpose, but establishing one prior will help stave off conflict during the trip,” said Merlelynn Harris, clinical director for [Bridge Counseling Associates](#), a nonprofit providing individual and family counseling. The purpose can be a way to reconnect, enjoy family time, relax, or have a purely adrenaline-filled adventure. [Reverend Roxanne Birchfield \(a.k.a. Rev Roxy\)](#), a wedding officiant and marriage counselor who appeared on Netflix’s *Love is Blind*, says doing this in advance will ensure there are similar expectations and fewer surprises.

2. Not Creating a Budget

Birchfield makes it clear: “If you fight over money constantly, it’s not a good idea to travel together. The finance issue will carry over into traveling.”

Arguing about money is a pretty common issue, but when you combine finances and travel, it becomes a double whammy and source of conflict. Brooklyn-based lifestyle blogger Lindsay Silberman says she and her husband rarely fight while traveling, “but we’ve definitely had disagreements in the trip planning process — mostly things related to budget.” Before finalizing plans, Silberman and her husband, Matthew, who’ve been together for 11 years, find a happy middle ground and always travel within their means. Most couples discuss a budget for the big-ticket items, like flights and hotels, but the same should go for meals and any other daily spending.

3. Letting One Person Do All the Planning

In many relationships, there’s one person who loves to plan and one who can’t be bothered with details. However, Harris, who’s counseled thousands of

couples, suggests, “Even if you’re the one doing all of the research and clicking the button to book, you still need to include your partner.” This ensures there are no surprises and that everyone’s on the same page. Additionally, both partners can use their individual strengths and character traits to contribute to planning, according to Tammy Shaklee, relationship expert and founder of H4M matchmaking service. “Often, an introvert will do all the research, and find the grandest location for the best deal and timing, while the extrovert will find the hottest nightlife spot or excursion. That makes for a great combo,” she said.

4. Diving Into Long or Group Trips Too Soon

“It’s best to start small with a weekend destination you can drive to or one that’s just a quick flight away. Whisking off to Japan for a 16-hour plane ride and a month-long stay is probably not the best idea,” says Rachel Federoff of Love and Matchmaking. Testing the waters with a shorter trip allows couples to determine how well they travel together. Federoff’s matchmaking and real-life partner (they’ve been married since 2011), Destin Pfaff, says the same goes for taking a group or family trip too soon. He says the addition of new personalities and experiences can lead to a “hellcation.” Sticking to short trips with just the two of you is the way to go early on.

5. Not Limiting Technology and Work Time

Whether you just started dating or have been married for years, Pfaff says “technology can be the ruiner of any trip.” One way to remedy this is to set

limits on social media use or have a rule that there are no phones out during meals or excursions. Discussing this ahead of time can curb any resentment. For those who can't fully unplug due to work commitments, there should still be a clear plan in place, like only checking emails in the morning or while your partner is off exploring on their own.

6. Having a Jam-packed Schedule

Silberman, who has traveled with her husband close to 100 times, says her biggest don't for couples is having a hectic schedule. "Don't overschedule yourself. I've learned that lesson the hard way," she said. There can be a natural desire to want to do everything, especially if it's your first time in a destination, but this can quickly backfire. The combination of overextending yourself, stimulation overload, and jet lag can create added stress and conflict between partners. Being flexible with plans or alternating a busy day with a relaxing day can create more balance.

7. Forgetting to Check in With One Another

"Once you're actually on the trip, check in with each other and ask what they're enjoying, or not so much," said Pfaff. The conversation can sound like, "I'm having fun. I really want to try and squeeze in X, if we can. How about you?" Federoff describes this "daily download" as a way to have a clear idea on what the highlight of the day may have been and how to possibly address any issues.

8. Spending Too Much Time Together

Of course, you absolutely adore each other, but that doesn't mean you have to spend every moment together. It's absolutely acceptable, and even necessary, to take some time apart while on a trip. This is especially great if you and your partner have varying interests. "A day to sleep in may allow the other partner a city street stroll and espresso. Then, meeting for a light lunch or an afternoon museum tour may provide for the first moment to connect, engage, and enjoy," said Shaklee.

9. Not Discussing Challenges in the Moment

Though no one wants to argue, especially on a trip you've likely been looking forward to, it can happen. It's all about how and when these issues are addressed. Travel blogger *Alicia T. Chew* recalls a trip early on in her relationship. The couple kept arguing and didn't address the matter until they returned home. She says this was a mistake. Now, the couple, who has been together for three years, has an entirely different approach. "We like to handle any disagreements in the moment. If I feel myself getting heated, I might leave the hotel room, or take a quick walk around the block, and once I've calmed down, [we] talk it out. We don't want major issues to linger any longer than needed."