



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 146

TRAVEL EDITION:
Packing, Mindset, Money
and All Things Travel

FRENCH KISS LIFE

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“Tonya, why do you like to travel so much?” When people ask me this question, sometimes it’s hard for me to find the right words to describe why travel is such an important part of my life. But then, I came across this passage from a book called *Neither Here Nor There: Travels in Europe*.

Here’s what Bill Bryson said, “But that’s the glory of foreign travel as far as I’m concerned. I don’t want to know what people are talking about. I can’t think of anything that excites a greater sense of childlike wonder than to be in a country where you are ignorant of almost everything. Suddenly, you’re five years old again. You can’t read anything. You have only the most rudimentary sense of how things work. You can’t even reliably cross the street without endangering your life. Your whole existence becomes a series of interesting guesses.”

Bonjour and welcome to The French Kiss Life Podcast, where personal development meets style. I’m Tonya Leigh, certified master life coach and the hostess of this party, where we explore how to live artfully and well. Each week, I’ll be sharing inspiring stories, practical tips, and timeless wisdom on how to elevate the quality of your everyday and celebrate along the way. Let’s dive into today’s episode.

Hello, beautiful people. Let’s kick off this episode with a Community Spotlight. So, this spotlight is on Kare222. She left me a five-star review on iTunes and here’s what Kare had to say, “Get inspired and use it to inspire others.

I love Tonya’s podcast. I’ve been following her for several years now, but I just started listening to the podcast this week. I’ve been binging on it while I commute, run, clean the house, or sit down to paint my toes. She talks about key statements that others have said that were game-changers for her. Well, one thing she said in particular that had the same effect on me, and that is, put down the hammer and pick up the paintbrush. Such an elegant way to help us see that no matter where anyone is right now, we can create the life we want now; not later when XYZ has happened, but now.

This is so empowering. I guarantee that if you spend a little time with Tonya, you will come away with not only inspiration, but practical tools to help you start creating, and then you’ll be equipped to help others do the same. Thank you, Tonya.”

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Well, thank you, Kare, for leaving that beautiful five-star review on iTunes. I really, really appreciate it. And yeah, I want you all to know that you are not something that needs to be fixed. You are an amazing human being that wants to be creative. You want to create your life in a way that feels true to you. So yeah, you all, put down the hammer and pick up the paintbrush.

So listen, if you want to be featured in an upcoming Community Spotlight, all you have to do is leave me a five-star review on iTunes and maybe, just maybe, you'll be in an upcoming episode.

Welcome to the travel edition of the *French Kiss Life Podcast*. I decided to switch it up a little bit because I get asked about travel a lot and I thought, wouldn't it be fun to do an entire podcast on the questions that you all have about travel. And also, it's such a fitting time because I'm about to leave for a seven-week European adventure. Well, in fact, tomorrow I leave to New York City for a week, then I come back for three days, then I'm going to have a quick turnaround and then I'm heading to Europe.

So I thought I would share some of the things that have really helped me to travel with more ease and elegance and grace, and to also answer your questions. So, what I did is, on Instagram, I asked you if you wanted this and 99% of you said yes, we want you to do a podcast on travel. And then I asked you what your pressing questions were, and so that's what I'm going to be answering for you today.

So, when I was going through the questions that you all had, I realized that there were some specific categories. So, many were around mindset. We had some on logistics. We had a lot around packing, which I'm not surprised, and then also money.

So, let's start with mindset first because mindset is everything, and that applies to travel, to career, to relationships, to life. But let's just talk specifically about travel mindset because we have a lot of questions around how do you plan and execute travel in a less overwhelming way. How do you avoid overwhelm? How do you deal with travel anxiety?

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So, let's just talk about overwhelm, because a lot of you think that overwhelm is because you have an upcoming trip. You think it's because you have lots of things to decide and to plan and to pack. But you've heard me probably say it before on the podcast, if you've been around for a while; overwhelm is a feeling being created by the thoughts in your head.

This is super, super important. It really has nothing to do with packing. It has nothing to do with the travel logistics. It has to do with what you're telling yourself about it. And so, I could give you a lot of tips and tools on how to avoid overwhelm, but it really does start in your mind. And I am going to give you some tips and tools on how I avoid overwhelm during the process, but I want you to also monitor what is happening in your head. Because you could follow all of the tips and still experience overwhelm because your mind is just going crazy.

So for me, in order to avoid overwhelm, I have to, number one, manage my mind. And let me assure you all, I'm having to do this on the regular these days because, as I was saying, I'm about to leave tomorrow to leave tomorrow to go to New York and then I come back and have three days, and then I'm off again to Europe. And if I didn't check in with my mind, I would be a hot mess right now.

If I didn't monitor and manage my own thoughts, I would be an overwhelmed mess because my mind already is saying things to me like, "You're not going to be prepared, you're going to forget things, this is going to be a mess." And you have to understand, all of those things are just thoughts. And they're thoughts that don't serve me and they definitely don't help me get organized and to plan and to execute.

So the first step is to manage your mind around travel. What are you telling yourself around it? Do your thoughts produce overwhelm, or do they produce ease and calm and excitement? You know, when I think about travel, I want to be excited. I don't want to be an overwhelmed mess when I arrive. And so you have to check in with your mind because, again, I could give you all the tools, but inevitably something is going to not work out the way you expected, especially when you travel.

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You'll probably forget something. You will probably have a delay at the airport. And so I want you to understand that even when those things happen, you can maintain a sense of poise and calm and not spin into overwhelm.

Now, on a practical level, when it comes to overwhelm, it's all about planning. So I love to plan ahead of time and really be thinking about what do I need to pack, where am I staying, what are the must-sees that I want to experience? And when I plan well, then I reduce the potential for overwhelm. My brain feels safe. My brain's like, okay, she's got this.

But even on those days when I don't plan well and I'm getting ready to go on a trip, I still don't have to produce overwhelm for myself. I can still be, like, "You know what, it's all going to be okay because it always is." And then I can just let go and relax and enjoy my trip.

Now, the other thing then – and this has to do with packing – is that I have a 72-hour packing rule for myself. Now, sometimes I break the rule. It's more like 12 hours or 24 hours. But what I've noticed is that when I have things ready 72 hours before my trip, again, there's less room for overwhelm. And then I have those 72 hours to think about anything else that maybe I want to take or I don't want to take. It just gives me space to think through the whole packing process.

So, for example, as I was saying, I'm going to New York and then I come back and I have three days before I leave again, so I'm already setting out piles of things that I intend to take with me to Europe. And again, it just – when you have a plan in place, I feel like it just helps your brain relax and it's less likely to spin into overwhelm. So if you want to reduce your overwhelm and have more ease in your travel, make sure you plan ahead of time and you manage your brain.

So the next question is, "Tonya, I'm terrified to fly. Do you have any advice for me?" Sister, I am right there with you. You may not know this about me, but I have an extreme fear of flying. It's so bad that my friends either, A, laugh hysterically at me during the entire flight, or B, they refuse to fly with me.

I was on a flight to Morocco last year with my two best friends and we hit turbulence and I grabbed both of their legs and they're like, "Jesus, Tonya, would

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you calm down?” I’m like, “No...” But I still get on a plane and I still go to the places.

There’s a really beautiful quote by Andre Gide who says, “Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore.” And that’s how I feel around flying. For many of us, it takes a lot of courage because we are afraid to be 30,000 feet in the air with our feet not on the ground. But when I focus on where I’m going, when I’m focused on the destination and arriving safely, I realize it’s so worth it.

And this is such a metaphor for all the things, right? You think about your dreams and your desires and it’s uncomfortable to pursue them. And a lot of times, we don’t pursue them because we’re not willing to feel that discomfort. But we have to have the courage to go after it. And so I’m going to share with you some practical tips on how I deal with my anxiety around flying.

So the first thing is to know the facts. I remember one time, I was on a flight and we were in heavy turbulence, but I had wifi. And one of the ways that I dealt with it is I got on the internet and I Googled statistics about turbulence and flying safety. And what I found out is that the chances of an air disaster is approximately one in three million; one in three million.

So that means you would need to fly one time a day for 8200 years to have three million flights. Which means the likelihood of any of us being involved in an airplane crash is extremely, extremely low. The second thing is that I don’t fight the feeling; and this is for life in general. What we resist persists. So I allow the feeling. I’m like, come on, anxiety, here we go. I was expecting you. You always show up whenever I get on a plane. And then I just talk to that part of my brain that’s freaked out.

I remind her that the statistics say that most likely this is not going to happen. And then I visualize myself arriving at the destination and how excited I’m going to be and how amazing it is. So through allowing the feeling and then visualizing the outcome that I want, which is to arrive safely, I’m able to just be with the emotion, not fight it, and then replace it with the images that I want my brain to focus on because the brain knows two things; the words you speak and the images in your head.

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And so I began to speak positive words to myself and imagine beautiful things, which really does calm down that reptilian brain of mine who is convinced that the plane is going to fall out of the sky. And then the third thing that I have found to be helpful with travel anxiety is to distract myself.

So while I'm feeling the emotion, I know it's there and I'm talking kindly to it, I also put on music, like crazy loud music in my ears. And I don't know why that works, but it's almost like it takes my mind off of any turbulence I may be experiencing for example.

So yeah, those are the three things that have really helped me; knowing the facts, allowing the anxiety, and then replacing it with positive words and images, and then also distracting myself with great music. Music is great for all the things, I believe.

Okay, so let's go to the next question. This is a really great one. Are you ever concerned about traveling to a different culture that is so different from your own? So I have to preface the answer with the fact that I haven't been to a lot of cultures that are so different than my own.

I mean, if you think about it, there are so many similarities between Europe and the States. We have a lot of the same value systems and ways of being that don't feel so different, other than there's the language barrier and different ways of doing certain things. But again, it's not that crazy different.

However, last year, I went to Morocco. And before I went, I had all of these people telling me how dangerous it was and reminding me of terrible things that have happened over there and how women are viewed. And I wasn't scared at all. I was so full of excitement and anticipation because I'd heard such amazing things about Morocco and the Moroccan people. And I was absolutely delighted; delighted with the culture. I was delighted with just how it expanded my own mind because here's the thing; there are so many fallacies out there about other cultures.

There are so many stereotypes. There's so much prejudice that I felt like I needed to in order to see it for myself, to experience it for myself. And I had

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already decided ahead of time that it was going to be an amazing experience, and therefore it was.

And so I found it so refreshing to sit down with people who are from a different culture and a different religion and to have conversations and to realize this; we are all human beings who have families that we love, who have communities that we're a part of that we want to see flourish, who want to be safe, who want to be able to live in a state of freedom, who want our children to be healthy and happy. And I feel like that's universal.

Now, are there outliers in every single culture? Of course, but I feel like that's one of the main reasons why we need to travel. It's what Mark Twain said when he said, "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness. And many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the Earth all of one's lifetime."

So for me, it's really strange. I have anxiety around an airplane, but I have so much trust in the humans and humanity. And so therefore I'm not afraid to travel to new cultures. In fact, I'm looking forward to exploring even more cultures that are very different from my own so that I can be a better human being, so I can have a bigger view of the world, so I can be open-minded, so that I can learn and really be a part of this amazing, amazing human experience, which I believe comes from being acquainted with other cultures and having compassion and kindness. So yeah, that is my A to that Q.

So here's another mindset question that I feel like so many of you can relate to, which is, "How can you travel peacefully? I feel so much pressure to do all the things." So I'm really curious where else that shows up in your life, right?

Like think about it, we typically have FOMO in everyday life. We can be sitting at home at a dinner party thinking, "Oh I should be downtown at that other party I heard about." And I find that this especially shows up in travel because we have this belief that this is our one shot. And when you're coming from scarcity and lack and fear that I may never come back to this place, of course, it's naturally going to evoke a sense of FOMO, fear of missing out. So then you're going to pressure yourself to do all the things.

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And then, you're going to be so tied to your agenda and running around like a crazy person all around the city or the countryside or wherever you are. And you're going to realize that you missed out on the serendipity of travel.

I love what Lau Tzu says. He says, "A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving." And then there's another great quote by Robert Louis Stevenson where he says, "I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move."

And so for me, I will tell you that my main objective in life in general is to focus on how I feel versus what is happening in the outside world. And so because of that, because I'm always checking in with how I feel, if I see myself pressuring myself, if I'm in that state of FOMO, I work on my mindset.

I'm like, "Hey, you didn't come here to be miserable and to pressure yourself. You came here to enjoy and to relax." And I get to create that experience within me and then trust that what I am meant to see, I will see. And my best experiences while traveling, by the way, has never been planned.

Really, it's been those serendipitous moments. It's been that chance meeting. It's been stumbling upon something that I couldn't have planned. And if I'd been so tied to my agenda, there would have been no space for that.

And so there were some other questions that came in, like how do you decide what to see and how do you fit in all the things. First of all, don't try to fit in all the things because that's going to be the antithesis of what travel is all about. And then the other thing is pick a few things that you really want to see and give yourself space within that agenda just to be, to wonder, to be curious and to be surprised.

You know, what's been a life-saver for me in general, not just with travel, but with life itself, is really training my brain as to what my soul already knows. And what my soul knows is that I'm always at the right place at the right time and then what is meant for me will not pass me. And so when it comes to travel, I can just relax and know that, in this moment, I am where I am supposed to be and just really soak it all in. and also, to know that what is meant for me will not pass me, and so

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therefore I don't have to pack everything in afraid that something is going to pass me.

I know the truth. And the truth will always set you free; always. And there is no freedom in the pressure and trying to see all of the things. There's so much freedom in just relaxing and enjoying this moment. And so I know that's sort of a woo-woo answer, but these are deep, deep issues. I know they seem very superficial of, like, "I don't want to miss out, I want to see all the things."

But I also know that when women ask me questions like that, it's showing up in their life. They want to do all of the things now and, as a result, they're doing very little and they're missing out because they're so full of anxiety and pressure that they can't see all that's happening around them right now.

So just relax, my friends. See a few things and then wander and really see the world with new eyes. That's what travel is all about.

Now, let's talk about some of the more logistical questions. So one of them was, "How do I deal with jetlag?" And I can tell you, not very well. I try to do all the things. I try to get on the time zone before I get there by going to bed earlier and getting up earlier and I do a little bit of melatonin on the plane and all the things they tell me to do, and still, I arrive and the first thing I want to do is go to bed. And I do not allow myself to do that.

Normally, I listen to my body, except when I arrive in a new country in a new time zone and my body is saying, "You need to rest." And I'm like, "No, body, we can't, because I have done that and my whole trip was messed up because of jetlag."

So I tend to just walk around and wait until I can check into the apartment and I force myself to stay up until like seven or eight o'clock. And then I tend to take about 48 hours to get adjusted, but it's rough for me. I'm still trying to figure that one out. I wish I had a better answer to that question, but the best advice I can give you is don't go to sleep when you arrive. Keep going until that night. That's the best way to get acclimated to the new time zone.

Okay, the next question is, how do you book plane tickets to Europe? So, I actually use a travel agent now. That's a new thing that I've done which has

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helped me so much. But before then, I always book on American. That is not the cheapest way to do it, by far, but because I have status with American Airlines, I go through American and that way I potentially get upgrades, I get the miles, and so I love staying loyal to one airline because of all of the perks that it gives me.

And my good friend who travels quite a bit, and because of how much he travels, he's always looking for the most economical tickets, he recommends a website called Skyscanner. He said he definitely gets some of his best prices on that particular website, so definitely check it out, [skyscanner.com](https://www.skyscanner.com).

Next question is, "Do you prefer renting an apartment or staying in a hotel?" And what I can say is that this really depends on the length of my stay. So when I'm in Europe, I'm typically going to different countries. And if I'm only going to be somewhere for, let's say, two nights, I will look for a hotel. But if I'm going to be somewhere for an extended amount of time, I will always, always choose an apartment because I really love the conveniences of having a kitchen and it feeling more like a home. And I also find it's a lot more economical to get an apartment on VRBO or Airbnb.

So for the most part, I will stay in an apartment, especially in Paris because I love going to the market and picking up my own food and cooking and so having that kitchen is a definite plus. And that leads me to the next question; how to eat well while traveling.

So let me speak to a few different parts of this. So the first part is while flying, because airline food is terrible. I don't know what happens when you eat it, but it does not agree with my body. And so I typically bring some food with me. I pack it in my carryon that I will eat on the airplane. And then I don't eat a lot while I'm flying, especially if I'm flying overnight.

I'm just like, "You know what, if I were at home, I would not be eating at two in the morning." So I just tend to not eat that much while I am flying. But I do pack a few things, just in case I get hungry.

Now, when I am at my destination, I have different perspectives on this. Number one, in Europe – I'm going to speak specifically towards Europe because that's where I spend most of my time – I find that the food is higher quality. It agrees

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with me. And so I don't really focus on the food. I just know that if I am going to the market and picking up great food, it's going to be good for my body.

The other thing is, I'm so enraptured by the experience, the food is just such a small part of it. And at the same time, as paradoxical as this may sound, I am a foodie. I really enjoy good high-quality food. So when I'm traveling, I'll check out a few restaurants that I've been wanting to experience. But for the most part, it's such a small part, for me, when it comes to travel.

The rest of the time, I will go to the market. I will pick up some fruit or some fresh vegetables or a cheese that I've been wanting to try or a baguette and I'll do a picnic or I'll cook something simple at the apartment, and then voila, that's how I eat well on the road. It's not that complicated.

Now, let's talk about money and travel. This is a big topic. I had a lot of questions that came in around this one. But I've narrowed them down to three questions that I hope will cover any question that you may have around money as it relates to travel.

So, the first question that really just touched my heart was actually from a woman named Rosanne. And she said, "Tonya, I dream of travel, but it seems so far out of reach. I don't have the money. Where do I even start?"

Rosanne, my friend, I can so relate to this question. In fact, I was thinking about it as I was preparing for this podcast. I remember thinking that travel was something that only really rich people did and that it would never be something that a girl like me could do. And now look at me. I'm traveling all of the time. It's now my new normal.

And I tell you that not to brag. I tell you that because if I can do it, you can do it. So I want to give you some things to think about. I think the very first thing that you have to do, if you really want to travel, is to decide that you're going to make it happen. Make it a, "I'm going to do this no matter what," because then your brain's going to start helping to figure out how to make it happen.

You know, I think about the story that Elizabeth Gilbert told at an Oprah event that she spoke at. She was telling the story of this woman who was a single mom. And I think she had three kids. I don't remember the exact details. But she had

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more than one child and she dreamed of travel, but her immediate reality didn't allow for it. She had to work. She had to raise the kids. She did not have a lot of money.

But what she started doing was putting change in a jar. And she did that year after year of raising her children. And when her kids were adults and out of the house, guess what she did – she traveled the world. She had saved up enough money to do that thing that she dreamed of doing.

And I think that's such a beautiful story because a lot of times, in the moment, it doesn't seem like we're doing a lot if we're just putting away 25 cents or a dollar. But over time, that adds up. And I think even more so, what is happening when you're doing those little acts is that you're reminding yourself of what your dream is and why it's important. And so do not give up on the dream. Decide that you're going to make it happen and start planning for it.

Another thing to think about in your everyday life, are you spending money on things that don't bring you value? And that's all going to depend on what your personal values are because that's money that you could take and set aside for your dream trip.

An example of this in my life is that I really don't value cars. I appreciate them. I think they're beautiful. But it's not something that I need. It's not even something that I think about. And so for that reason, I drive an old Jeep Cherokee. It's not too old, but it is paid off. And I carry my dogs around in it and it's just comfortable for me, considering especially that I live in the mountains of Colorado.

And so that is money that I can set aside for travel. It's money that I can spend according to my own personal value system. And are there certain things that you're spending money on that aren't really fulfilling you and that maybe you can take and allot for your dream trip?

Another tip that I have to save money and travel on a budget is to travel out of season. For example, if your dream trip is the south of France and you go in August, you're going to pay a lot more. And not only that, it's going to be so crowded. So when you travel out of season, you're going to find that things are cheaper, accommodations are less expensive, and there's not as many people, so

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you have more space to enjoy it. So think about that place that you're dreaming of going and look at the best times to travel out of seasons so you can get more bang for your buck.

Also, when it comes to accommodations, you can find some really good places to stay that don't cost an arm and a leg. Now, if you're staying in five-star hotels, it's going to cost you a lot of money, right? But I've been over to Europe when I didn't have a lot of money and I would find the cutest little places that would be like, \$80, \$90 a night.

So I know that there is a way. There's always a way, my friends. And when it comes to booking your flights, the earlier you book, the better rate you're going to get. And then typically, if you travel on a Tuesday, it's going to be less expensive. Midweek travel prices are lower because most people are flying on the weekend. So if you are flexible on when you can fly, always opt for the midweek flights if you want to save money.

And then also, one of the things that I've noticed in traveling throughout Europe and I get on some of these budget airlines, they charge you for everything. They charge you if you check a bag, they charge you if you have a carry on. So if you know that you're going to be on a budget, just plan to pack light. Try not to check luggage and you will definitely save some money that way as well.

Also, be creative. Did you know that you can go and work in other countries and get compensated, therefore paying for your travel? I've had friends that have gone over to teach skiing for a season or to teach a language and so I want you just all to think about whatever it is that you want, be open to all of the incredible ways that it could happen. Start allowing your mind to think about possible solutions that were not accessible to you when you didn't think it was a possibility.

And I've certainly been there. To me, travel was so far out of reach, it didn't even seem possible and when I went on my first international trip, I was like oh, this isn't as complicated as I thought it was. But my brain, because it was so unfamiliar, wanted to make it so much more complicated. So just make it happen, Rosanne. Decide where you want to go. Create a plan for it. Make it a non-

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negotiable and allow your brain to come up with all the creative ideas as to how to make it happen.

And one other tip that I want to give you around this is to look into credit cards where you can earn miles for your spending. Now, this is not a challenge to go into debt, my friends. I like to pay off my cards at the end of every month, but I do love getting points. I am a point hoarder. I even hate spending them once I've accrued them, which is crazy because that's what they're there for.

But right now, I use – I have the Amex platinum card for business and I've actually talked about that one in one of my J'adores, but if you go to frenchkisslife.com/amex you can learn about that card. But for my personal card, I have the American Airlines executive card. It's a black card. I think it's an executive card.

And so I earn a lot of miles with that. Every time I spend anything personally, I attempt to put it on my card and then I pay it off at the end of every month. And the bonuses, I'm earning airline miles as a result. And so Rosanne, maybe that's another option for you to help with the air fare is to start using a card that you can accrue points and then you can hopefully fly for free using your points.

Another great question was when to splurge and when to save. I love this one. And what I can tell you is this is such an individual answer. It really depends on what is important to you. Are you more of a doer? You want to go out there and experience things, you want to go to the museums, you want to take the tours. Or are you more of a buyer? You want to go out and buy the things. Or are you more of you just want to be in beautiful environments? You really crave aesthetics.

Or maybe for you, what really feeds you quite literally is food. You love going to the three-star or two-star Michelin restaurants. You really enjoy that experience. So I think what you need to ask yourself is what is really valuable for you and to you.

For me personally, my top priority now when I travel is accommodations. I love staying in beautiful places. Beautiful apartments or hotels. And so if I have to decide between accommodations or eating at really expensive restaurants or shopping or having Ubers, I will always choose the accommodations. I will cut

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back on my food budget, I will cut back and take public transportation and I'll go without the handbags because that's what means the most to me.

And so my splurge is on accommodations but again, that doesn't mean it's going to be yours. It all depends on what you find value in, and there's nothing wrong with whatever your answer is. If you're like Tonya, I love having all the handbags and all the shoes and that's why I'm going to Italy, then own that. Honor it. I love shoes and handbags too. I just prefer beautiful hotels over those two things.

So that is my A to that Q. Now let's talk about packing. I had the most questions about packing and what I know from running retreats in Paris is that this is like, the number one anxiety-producing experience for a lot of women when they go on a trip, and so let's talk about it.

The first question was how do you not let packing stress you out? I just choose not to be stressed out about it. It really is that simple. In my mind, I'm like the worst thing that can happen is that I forget something. And guess what, wherever I'm going, they will most likely have it and if I need it bad enough, I can buy it.

Literally, that is the worst thing that can happen. Yet we stress ourselves out so much. So first of all, I just don't want to be stressed about packing. And so I choose not to be. But I will say, having my 72-hour packing rule as I was saying earlier, it just gives me the space so that I don't create more pressure on myself.

And then above and beyond that, I find that having good luggage and a good system also helps to take the pressure off. So that leads to the next question. Someone asked me about my favorite luggage and how I organize my packing. So I've talked about it in a previous podcast, in one of the J'adores, but I am in love with Away luggage.

In fact, you can go to frenchkisslife.com/away to see the brand that I'm talking about, but I like it because it's well made and it doesn't cost a fortune. In fact, I just invested in a new piece from them. I got the medium size luggage because I'm about to go over for not only vacation but also work, so part of my time in Europe is going to be hosting my Paris retreat.

And because of that, I have to take more than I would normally take on a trip but the medium size I'm going to take with me after and leave my large one in Paris

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so that I can travel a little bit lighter. But other than my Away luggage, I love my makeup organizer and I talked about that last week. You can go to frenchkisslife.com/makeuporganizer to see the one that I'm talking about. It's brilliant.

And then packing cubes. I love my packing cubes. And this was like, a new discovery for me. I actually talked about it in a previous podcast about my packing struggles and someone said hey, why don't you get some packing cubes? And I immediately went out and got some and what a brilliant concept, my friends.

Just to keep everything organized. And so I have my packing cubes and then I also have my toiletry bag that hangs up and that's been a game-changer as well. So instead of having everything in Ziploc bags, it's just I put everything in that toiletry bag, I unzip it, I hang it up wherever I am. All my stuff is right there super organized.

And so I find that the more organized I am, the less stressed I am about travel. And if you travel a lot, I highly recommend that you get duplicates of everything so that when it's time to go on a trip, you don't have to transfer things over. You just grab your other travel case and off you go.

Next question was how do you look chic on a plane and still be comfortable? I love this question. So to look chic and to be comfortable on a plane, there's two color combinations that you can never go wrong with and that is black and grey, or black and camel.

And so for me, I always wear pants on a plane. Never jeans, never a skirt, never shorts. I always wear pants because airplanes typically tend to be cold, especially on long flights. But I also want comfortable pants. And so I have this really cute pair of – I guess they're called jeggings. They're like leggings but they look like jeans, but they're a really soft material.

And so I will travel with those and I'll do like a really soft tee with a really comfortable sweater, like a camel sweater. I'll wear either sneakers or flats and I always bring a big wrap in case I get cold on the plane. I have an extra layer. And so that is just a very minimalist, chic approach to dressing for a flight.

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I also just bought some cashmere joggers that are super cute, they're super soft, and I'm excited to be wearing them especially in the fall and winter season because they'll keep me warm. But they're very chic. They don't look like regular jogging pants. They're well made, they're really beautiful, and so I'm probably going to wear those on my upcoming flight with just a white t-shirt and then probably my camel sweater. That way, if I get hot, I can take the sweater off. If I get cold, I have my wrap that I can wrap around me as well.

Another question that many of you asked was around shoes. What shoes to bring. And that's really going to depend on where you're going and the season. So I'm going to speak to this question from my upcoming trip and what I typically pack for Paris and for Europe in the fall and the winter.

So of all the things, shoes take up the most space, so I think we need to give the most thought to what shoes we take. Not to mention that shoes are the most important thing because you're going to be walking around and you want to be comfortable.

And so when I'm packing my shoes, I'm always trying to figure out what are the most neutral and the most comfortable shoes that I have, and then I build my wardrobes around that. And the cool thing is you can get really good at mixing casual with fancy. I've been known to wear a really beautiful dress and throw on my Sam Smith Adidas tennis shoes and walk around Paris because it's actually very chic to do that.

Also, I love my Stuart Weitzman boots. I have the 5050s that come up to my knees. I actually have some ankle boots, and I just find that Stuart Weitzman shoes for the most part work really well on my feet. And I'm all about comfort, especially if you're going to be walking around all day. You don't want to be miserable. You don't have blisters.

So yeah, black boots, tennis shoes, and then a really great heel. It can be a nude heel that will go with everything, or it may be a black heel. It's really going to depend on what your clothing selection is. But for the most part, we don't need more than four pairs of shoes when we travel.

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And with that said, it's okay if you bring all the shoes. Again, this is what feels good for you. I have been known to bring like, six, seven pairs of shoes and I learned from that experience. I realized wow, I didn't need to have all of these shoes. But if you're someone who loves having all of your shoes with you, you can do that. Just know it's going to take up a lot of space and that is space that you may want to save for something else.

And that's a great segue into the next question. Do you go for a minimalist wardrobe or do you just bring a big suitcase? Me personally, I just bring a big suitcase. I like having a varied selection and I also really enjoy clothes. And so for me, that's just how I like to travel. It's not to say that that's the right way or the wrong way.

I think what you all are hearing in this overall theme is you've got to do you. You've got to do what feels good for you and to know whatever your choice is that there are going to be some trade-offs for it. So I know that by bringing a big suitcase, it's going to be a little bit more difficult like, at the train station or whatever and I work around that. But I like having my stuff.

And so I bring a big suitcase but I do like to pack in a way that I can put together many different outfits with less things. And I also love to have extra space in case I buy anything that I'll have a place to put it. And so my wardrobe isn't minimalist, but I make sure it works together.

So for example, I'll have one pair of jeans and then I'll have many different ways that I can style that pair of jeans so I can get different looks. So maybe I bring a blazer, a blazer that also works with another pair of pants or a dress or a skirt, it also works with the jeans. Or I'll have a sweater that I can pair with the jeans, but I can also pair it with the skirt.

So whatever I pack, I can get many different looks out of it, but I do like having the option of the big suitcase. Again, so if I want to purchase anything, I have place to put it. And this time around, because I am traveling after the retreat, I'm bringing the medium size Away luggage that I just bought to take for the rest of the trip because it is less huge and it'll be easier to travel with, and then I'll leave my big bag in Paris.

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So yeah, I think you just have to figure out what works for you. I have some women who are like, I only like to travel with a carry on and I think that's great. What's important is that it fits your style, it fits how you like to travel. There is no right or wrong way to any of this. I think sometimes it's like tell me how you do it because that's the right way.

My way of traveling may be terrible for you. You may be like no Tonya, I don't want to carry all that stuff around. I don't care about where I stay. I'm more into this, I'm more into traveling lighter. And so again, you just have to check in with you and what feels right and true for you. That is the lesson, my friends.

So the last question was around working while traveling. So Jessica wrote in and she says, "I never feel like I can turn off while I travel. How do you do it?" So like you, Jessica, my travel usually includes work. Because I travel so much, if I didn't work while I traveled, I wouldn't produce anything. And I love that I have that flexibility and that freedom, and I also know when I travel, I want to have my down time.

And what that requires is planning. Planning ahead of time. And so I'm very clear on what needs to be done while I'm gone, I schedule it in my calendar, and then I schedule my down time in the calendar. And if I follow my calendar, everything works out. It really is that simple.

So for example, I'm going to be in the south of France before Paris and that is definitely going to be a working vacation. I've got some initiatives I'm working on over there, some projects that I'm super excited about, and I have planned them in my calendar. So there will be chunks during the day that I'm going to be working, but then when I'm not working, it's play time. I turn my brain off and I go out there and enjoy wherever I am.

And that's the hardest part I think especially for entrepreneurs is turning your brain off and letting go and enjoying yourselves, but it's so important. We need space to live, we need to enjoy our travels, we need to enjoy our life and that doesn't apply just while we're traveling. It also applies when we're at home.

At a certain point, you just have to turn it off and enjoy the life you have around you right now. And I just find by scheduling and planning, I'm able to do that, and

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I feel like I'm doing a better and better job every single year. Then after Paris, I'm going to take some time off. I'm going to enjoy my travels with my girlfriends.

I have a couple of calls planned that I'm super excited about and I have a couple of things that I'm going to be filming, but other than that, that's my vacation time. And so you know, it all bleeds in together for me because so much of what I do is my life and my life is my business, but it's about finding the balance that works for you.

And again, schedule, schedule, schedule. Plan ahead of time. Look at what doesn't need to be done immediately and put that on the agenda for when you return because you're traveling. Give yourself space to enjoy it.

It is time for J'adore. The part of the show where I get to share something that I love with you. And since we're talking about travel, I have to share with you my favorite carryon bag. And you won't be surprised to know that it's from Away. I know, I really do love this company, which is why I keep talking about it.

But the bag that I'm referring to is their Everywhere bag and it fits right over your carry on. It has a little sleeve. It has a pocket for your laptop, it has an umbrella compartment. You can even fit a pair of shoes in there, and it has a lot of space and a lot of pockets.

And so I just find that for travel, it just makes it so much easier. You can just slide it on your carry on and ease through the airport with so much grace, versus all those years where I had bags on my shoulder and backpacks and I had just the jankiest carry on. It's just made travel so much easier for me to focus on the things that I travel with and making sure they're high quality and they're functional and they're efficient.

So if you're looking for a really great travel bag, make sure to go to frenchkisslife.com/away and check out the Everywhere bag. So that is a wrap, my friends. Thank so much for all the questions that you sent in. I'm sorry I wasn't able to get to all of them. I think I only got to like, 10%.

But the big theme here is if you dream of travel, make it a reality. As Helen Keller said, life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all. Let's make it an adventure,

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my friends. Have a beautiful week. Bon voyage, and I will see you in the next episode.

If you enjoyed this episode and you want to dive even deeper into the French Kiss lifestyle, let's start with a makeover; a mindset makeover. You can download my free training, The 3 Mindset Makeovers Every Woman Needs by visiting FrenchKissLife.com/mindset – because after all, mindset is the new black.