

Carrentals.co.uk Family Travel Tips

No.3 – Getting the Right Hire Car

Hiring a car gives you far more flexibility on holiday and helps you explore the best of a country, but getting the right hire car at the right price, with the right extras and avoiding additional charges is all about planning. Here online car rental specialist Carrentals.co.uk offers some tips on getting the right hire car...

- 1) **Book early** - Booking early will help ensure the right size and style of car is reserved for you. The larger your group, the more space you will need, but larger people carriers or mini vans can be limited in number compared to small economy vehicles. Similarly, special vehicles such as 4x4s, diesels or cabriolets tend to be available in smaller numbers. If you know you want, or need, a specific type of vehicle; book early.
- 2) **Book extras at the start** - Items such as child seats or snow chains in winter can book up fast. The best option is to consider what items you need when you make the original booking and include everything on the reservation. You can add extras to the booking later, but doing this may mean you miss out.
- 3) **Read the documentation before you travel** - Once the booking is made confirmation details will be sent to you by e-mail, post or even text. Read these carefully and contact the company you have booked with as soon as possible about any changes or queries you may have.
- 4) **Take your Car Hire details with you** - Remember to always take the details of your car hire reservation with you. That way, once you arrive to collect your vehicle, you have everything to hand in case of any queries.
- 5) **Check for bumps or scratches** - Once the keys have been collected, check around the vehicle for any bumps or scratches, ensure you highlight these to the staff at the collection point and have them documented. Failing to do this may result in you being charged for damage not caused by you, so take time to have a thorough check of the vehicle.

- 6) **Check the fuel level** - Switch on the ignition and check the fuel level whilst on level ground before you set off. It is usually cheaper to agree to bring the car back with a full tank, but make sure you start with a full tank first!
- 7) **Check emergency numbers and kit** - It's also worth checking you have details of the local emergency numbers and roadside assistance or your car hire company, plus check the emergency kit included with the car, which may include a reflective triangle or jacket. This way, if the worst happens you will be more prepared.
- 8) **Take Time and Allow Time** - Driving a strange car in a strange country needs far more concentration. To get your journey off to the right start, take the time to get to grips with the car – check where indicators and lights are, check the mirrors and position of your seat, and tune in the radio to a suitable station before you set off. Also allow yourself an extra half hour to hand back the car at the end of your stay. The paperwork is minimal but there may be a queue.
- 9) **Plan your route** - Many accidents are caused by drivers concentrating on finding the right way, rather than on their driving technique and other traffic. To minimise the risk of accident, or getting lost, plan your route before you set off - the journey will be safer and more enjoyable.
- 10) **Fill up with fuel before you return the car** - Most of us have been stung at some time by the cost of petrol at many airports. To avoid having to fill up in a last minute rush near the car hire returns area, fill up shortly before you arrive at the airport and you'll find prices more reasonable. It's also worth noting that unmanned petrol stations may not take international credit cards, especially if you don't know your PIN code. Try locating a suitable petrol station on the way out so there are no surprises on the way back.

Disclaimer - These tips are not exhaustive and are for information only. Carrentals.co.uk can not be held responsible for any losses incurred as a result of acting on any information contained herein. We hope you find these tips useful.