



Traveling with a Young Child: Why Slow Travel Makes All the Difference

By Floriane

Slow travel isn't new to us. We started embracing slow travel during our [round-the-world trip](#), long before we had our daughter. Since we work while we travel, we quickly realized that it was impossible to rush through everything without ending up exhausted.

The arrival of our daughter has further reinforced this approach. We now plan more relaxed days, with more breaks, fewer trips, and time to truly enjoy each stop along the way. In this article, we share our tips for successfully combining travel, work, and family life without feeling like we're constantly rushing.

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Travel slower to enjoy it more

Before we had a child, we were able to fit in several visits in a single day. We'd leave early in the morning and sometimes finish late, with the satisfaction of having checked off everything on our itinerary.

Today, our organization is completely different.

We continue to plan our trips with just as much enthusiasm, but we now know that it's pointless to try to see everything. With a young child, every day brings its share of surprises: a nap that lasts longer than expected, a playground that turns out to be more interesting than a landmark, or simply the desire to enjoy a beautiful spot in nature.

Instead of resenting these changes to our plans, we've learned to appreciate them. We now prefer to explore a destination at a more leisurely pace rather than rushing from one tourist site to the next. In the end, it's often the simplest, least planned moments that become our fondest memories.

On [our motorhome trips through Europe](#), we often end up staying longer than planned in a place we like. A beautiful view, a space where our daughter can play, or a pleasant spot for lunch is sometimes enough to completely change our plans for the day. We'll then skip a sightseeing stop without feeling like we're missing out on anything.

Above all, this way of traveling requires you to reevaluate your priorities.

We usually choose **one main activity for the day**, and then we leave the rest of the time free.

If everything goes as planned, that's great. If not, it's no big deal. We'll always have a good reason to come back.

This philosophy takes a lot of the pressure off. We no longer try to make the most of every minute of our vacation. We simply enjoy the moment, and so does our

daughter.

Why We Love Trips Where We Stay in the Same Accommodation

Ever since we started traveling with our daughter, we've particularly enjoyed trips where we stay at the same place for several nights. That's one of the great advantages of traveling in a motorhome, but also of traveling by water.

□ [Choosing a luxury cruise on the Rhine](#), for example, allows you to explore several destinations without changing rooms, without having to repack your bags every morning, and without forcing the kids to adjust to a new environment every night.

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We've already been on several cruises with our children, and we do find some of the same benefits that we love so much about our RV trips. Our living space travels with us, our belongings stay organized in one place, and every evening we return to a familiar environment.

No more repacking your bags every day

When you change hotels regularly, a good portion of your time is spent packing, making sure you haven't forgotten anything, loading your belongings, traveling to your next accommodation, and unpacking everything in a new room.

With a young child, all this planning quickly becomes exhausting. You have to remember to pack a change of clothes, a comfort blanket, toys, toiletries, and all those little items that end up taking up a lot of space.

Children maintain their sense of orientation

We've noticed that children adapt more easily when they return to a familiar environment every evening.

The same bed, the same stuffed animal, the same toys, and the same bedtime routines make a real difference. Even though their surroundings change every day, their little world stays the same.

Here, our evening routine is pretty much the same as the one we have at home. After dinner, we try to set aside some quiet time before bedtime. Our daughter gathers her things and quickly knows where she'll be sleeping.

Staying at the same place makes planning much easier. The children get their bearings right from the first few days and generally seem less tired than they would on an itinerary with frequent hotel changes.

The journeys are part of the trip

That's definitely one of our favorite things about it.

When we travel in a motorhome, the drives themselves are a big part of the adventure. This was especially true during [our road trip through Scandinavia](#), where every road offered its own share of breathtaking scenery and unexpected stops. We

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take the time to admire the scenery, stop whenever a place catches our eye, or have lunch while taking in a beautiful view.

On a cruise, the feeling is quite similar. As the ship follows its itinerary, we can enjoy the scenery, play with the kids, read, or simply relax. Travel is no longer just a necessary step between two destinations—it becomes a true highlight of the trip.

It's possible to fall asleep in one city and wake up the next day to a new landscape, without having to spend several hours in a car, on a train, or on a plane. With young children, this convenience is far from insignificant.

A routine that puts the whole family at ease

As we travel, we've come to realize that a routine doesn't get in the way of adventure at all. On the contrary, it allows everyone to enjoy their vacation even more.

Whether at home or traveling, young children need a sense of routine. Our schedules aren't necessarily the same every day, but we try to maintain a fairly consistent rhythm. In the morning, we take the time to enjoy a leisurely breakfast before heading out to explore the area. We also avoid planning too much so we can stay flexible.

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Naptime has long been an important part of the day. Even when it's no longer a daily routine, we try to set aside some quiet time after lunch. If our daughter is tired, we simply adjust our plans.

Sometimes we decide to skip a sightseeing trip or postpone it until the next day, without feeling like we're wasting our vacation. We quickly realize that a well-rested child is more engaged, more curious, and gets more out of the experience. And so do we.

Trips where accommodations are always readily available make this routine much easier.

Our Tips for Stress-Free Travel with a Young Child

Every family gradually finds its own rhythm. As for us, certain habits have become second nature over the course of our travels.

Plan fewer visits

When we plan an itinerary, we pick **a few must-see attractions**, but we now avoid packing our days completely full and leave some days free to deal with the

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unexpected (illness, delays, etc.).

Just one major attraction is often more than enough. The rest of the time is spent strolling, enjoying culinary breaks, visiting playgrounds, or simply savoring the pleasure of staying a little longer in a place we like.

We'd rather come home wanting to return than feeling like we were constantly rushing around the whole time we were there.

Leave room for the unexpected

This is probably the tip that changes the way we travel the most.

The most memorable moments aren't always the ones we planned. A beach discovered by chance, a small market, an impromptu stroll, or a few hours spent in a park can sometimes leave a more lasting impression than a must-see attraction.

With a child, these moments happen often. So we've learned to stop seeing changes of plan as constraints, but rather as an integral part of the trip.

Find child-friendly spaces

Before visiting a city, we try to find a few **parks, gardens, or playgrounds**. After a cultural tour or a long walk, our daughter needs to be able to run and play freely.

These breaks are just as enjoyable for us. They give us a chance to sit down for a few minutes, have a cup of coffee, or simply watch the local goings-on.

Keep meals simple

We love trying local specialties, but not every meal has to be a gourmet experience. With a young child, **a picnic or a simple meal** can be much more relaxing than a long lunch at a restaurant.

We always bring water, a few snacks, and something to keep us occupied in case of a delay. These are small details, but they help avoid a lot of complicated situations.

Be willing to slow down

It takes us a little while to realize that traveling more slowly doesn't mean seeing

less.

By spending more time in one place, we take the time to notice the details, explore a neighborhood at a more leisurely pace, or return to a place we enjoyed. We may see fewer sights in a day, but we often feel like we understand the destination better.

Check your documents before departure

Before traveling abroad, we always check the France Diplomatie website to see what [documents are required to travel with a child](#). Depending on the destination, our daughter may need an ID card, a passport, or may have to complete additional formalities. We prefer to check this several weeks before departure so that we have time to renew any documents if necessary.

By taking the time to truly experience a destination rather than just passing through it, we often create memories that are simpler, yet more meaningful. And ultimately, that's probably what we're looking for most when we travel as a family.

Feel free to leave us a **quick note** or **5 stars** below, to tell us if you're planning this trip, to ask any questions you may have, here or on [Instagram](#), we'll get back to you with great pleasure.

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