

Mind+Body

Holiday 2015

Exit the Holiday Excess Game

From finances to food to time, strive to bring balance to the 'too much' season.

THE BUDDY SYSTEM

Tips on keeping a relationship intact when getting out of town.

GRIN AND BEARD IT

M+B recruited 4 men to try the hottest trend in beard maintenance — beard oil.

HAIR FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Gracefully transition from work to the holiday party with these gorgeous styles.

BRANNON HUGHES

The 17-year-old dancer in Canyon Concert Ballet's upcoming 'Nutcracker' is a strong character on and off the stage.

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The buddy system

Hitting the road with a significant other can be a transformative experience, bringing couples closer together or tearing them apart. So we asked women who know how to travel — in fact, it's their job to write about it — for their best tips on keeping a relationship intact when getting out of town.

Balance each other out.

It's rare that both partners will share a travel style, so take advantage of your — likely complementary — strengths. Do you over-plan while your significant other just goes with the flow? Divvy up the tasks accordingly: You handle the logistics and ahead-of-time research while he keeps things calm on the ground.

Tackle things as a team.

Working together will keep things calmer and everybody happier. It ensures you're both on board and may even bring you closer together when things don't go well.

"It rarely works if one person does all the planning," says Johanna Reed, travel writer and photographer. "If something goes wrong, the nonplanning partner will blame the planner in some fashion. Decisions need to be made together — before and during the trip."

Be kind.

Even the most laid-back of travelers can crumble under the stress of jet lag or get overwhelmed by a new locale. When this happens, remember to be there for each other.

"Being mean, sulking, having protracted arguments or blaming each other for things that go wrong are just pointless" journalist Paula Dear says of van life on the road with her husband. "We try to tackle things together, and when one of us is down or frustrated, the other tries to balance it out."

Ditch the perfection narrative.

Things go wrong. Let go of the idea that this adventure, or your responses to it, need to be camera-ready.

"We've both been violently ill while traveling (my partner got dysentery, I got norovirus). Once, a hotel worker watched us in the throes of romance through a crack in the door," says travel writer Carolyne Whelan.

"These are things that can become an issue and potentially cause tension. But, it's a lot easier to take a moment to not make it an issue and enjoy the rest of the trip. Life might be short, it might be long, so why waste any of it being annoyed or embarrassed over something out of your control?"

Remember to relax together.

It's easy to get caught up running from museum to monument, but take a moment to enjoy being on the trip together. Sip local wine at a sidewalk cafe or linger over your morning coffee before taking to the day's sightseeing itinerary.

It's OK to have different agendas. Travel writer Mary Luz Mejia suggests agreeing ahead of time about things you want to do together.

"And then give each other the breathing room to do some things solo if the other person isn't as interested in what you want to see/do. My jam isn't always his and vice versa, but we can agree to an itinerary that meets us both in the middle where we both feel we got what we wanted out of our adventure."

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