

# Prepare for take-off

Sky TV's 24/7 Travel Channel launches on May 1. We asked some of the presenters for their best travel tips and favourite destinations.

Don't plan your trip from your armchair, leaving no room to be flexible. Great things happen when you actually get on the ground.



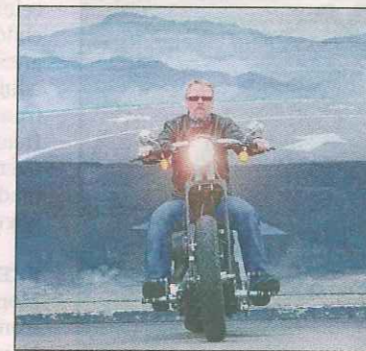
**GARETH DAVIES**  
Travel Today

**Favourite destination and why?**  
At the bottom of Florida, as the States dips its toe into the Caribbean, is my little piece of heaven. Key West is the one place I can unwind and leave the stress of London behind. This is a community where folks walk past one another on the street and say "Hi". I love the old Southern houses smothered in bougainvillea, and the glorious year-round heat. There's nothing like spending Christmas by the pool.

**Worst destination and why?**  
I'm not keen on South-East Asia. OK, to be honest, I've only been once. I visited Malaysia where the constant humidity absolutely floored me. Others sat by the pool while I sat in my bedroom watching CNN. I'm a dry-heat guy.

**Best travel tip**  
Always use your ATM card. I never bother with changing currency. You'll always get the best rate using your card in an ATM.

**Essential travel accessory**  
Eye drops, the sort that lubricate your eyes. I wear lenses and my eyes really dry out in-flight. Using eye drops helps me feel fresher and stay awake at my destination.



**HENRY COLE** World's Greatest Motorcycle Rides

**Favourite destination and why?**  
Has to be Route 66. I have ridden it three times and am returning this summer for a Travel Channel two-part special. There is no other route in the world that has the history, the culture, the roads, the landscape and the musical iconography like "The Boulevard of Dreams". If you're a biker and haven't done it, you simply have to. It will ingrain itself on your soul, all 2700 miles of it!

**Worst destination and why?**  
America again, specifically New York. Never ride a ludicrous American chopper through New York. The potholes are notorious, the traffic is horrendous and aggressive - no New York driver seems to have ever seen a bike. Couple that with riding it at night, in rush hour, in a thunderstorm and I'm lucky to be alive!

**Best travel tip**  
Don't plan your trip from your armchair, leaving no room to be flexible. There's nothing worse than having no spare time when travelling because you've made a tight itinerary. Great things happen when you actually get on the ground. Allow time to enjoy them.

**Essential travel accessory**  
My producer Hamish. Without him I can't find the way to my own front door!



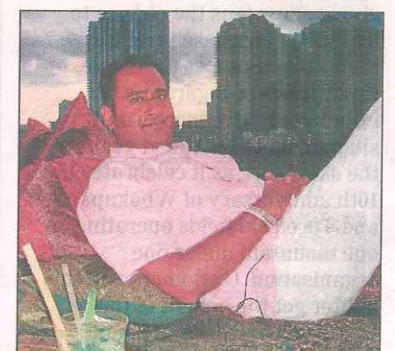
**GEORGE KOUROUNIS**  
Angry Planet

**Favourite destination and why?**  
I love New Zealand and Iceland because of the diverse geography and friendly people. You can go to waterfalls, volcanoes, geysers, glaciers and more, all within a few hours of each other. Since I document extreme forces of nature, these two spots are high on my list.

**Worst destination and why?**  
Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This city has been the epicentre of so many terrible things: years of civil war, refugees from the Rwanda genocide and in 2002 the Nyiragongo volcano erupted and poured a river of lava through the city cutting it in two. When we climbed the volcano, we had to have armed security guards with us.

**Best travel tip**  
Enjoy the ride. Travel is great but the actual travelling part of getting from point A to point B can be a real chore. I typically spend about 200 days per year travelling and if you can find ways to make airports fun, you'll be able to keep yourself amused... and sane.

**Essential travel accessory?**  
I never leave home without my universal power adapter kit, ear plugs, an eye mask (because you never know when you'll find a place to sleep) and my laptop. A camera is rarely out of arm's reach as well.



**VARUN SHARMA**  
Inside Luxury Travel

**Favourite destination and why?**  
That's a bit like asking me which is my favourite pet (I have one pup, two kittens and two lambs) - I don't actually have just one! However, The Sonora Resort in Vancouver, The Four Seasons Tented Camp in the Golden Triangle (Thailand) and The Royal Malewane in South Africa spring to mind. They offer total escapism, amazing vistas, stunning flora and fauna, peace, tranquility... and the greatest night-sky spectaculars in the world. I would happily breathe my last in these places.

**Worst destination and why?**  
Home in London - because I am not abroad, exploring.

**Best travel tip?**  
After a long flight, *always* have a massage, it works wonders with jet-lag, releases the "flight tension", makes your first night's sleep wonderful and sets you up for your trip in the right state of mind.

**Essential travel accessory?**  
I have two - sachets of Heinz Ketchup that make the worst food (including anything I cook) taste acceptable and a personal deioniser for commercial flights. This gadget keeps the air around your head clean - helps fight colds, with sleep and jet-lag too.

★ The Travel Channel launches May 1 on Sky channel 77, [www.travelchanneltv.co.nz](http://www.travelchanneltv.co.nz)