

Minisode: All of My Secret Travel Trips + Some Updates

Ologies Podcast

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Oh heeey, it's a dog in a Baby Bjorn, Alie Ward, back with a little, tiny, mini episode of *Ologies*.

Okay, listen. Many of you on Patreon were like, "Dad, take a week off for the sake of all that is disheveled and smelly." And if you are on [Patreon.com/Ologies](https://www.patreon.com/Ologies), you've seen like, I think, 11 posts this week titled, "Call for questions," in which I ask you to submit questions for the guests. Because I've been in the Midwest seeing Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa. I saw both Dakotas, and one Minnesota, and a Wisconsin. I've been doing interviews with ologists who've been on my lists for like, literal years. I finally, finally made the trek out. So many interviews in a week that I've literally lost my voice.

So, with so many miles, and a bunch of delayed flights, and an April snowstorm, I was just going to take a week off since I'm harvesting so many future episodes for all of our brain areas and I've had no time not being on the road or doing interviews. But then I thought, "Spring's here. Summer's coming. I travel so very much. Perhaps I should go into my rental car parked here on a side street of metropolitan Minneapolis and just record a quick episode, like a weirdo talking into a microphone in full daylight – [*whispers*] So far no one's looking at me. – to record a quick episode of travel tips from someone who cannot remember what the inside of her own house looks like.

So here, behold, some tips for your next business trip. Perhaps you have a well-deserved vacation coming. Or maybe you're just on the lam, and you wanna make the most of the space in your duffel bag before you're apprehended.

And as long as I've got you here, in this rental car in Minneapolis, I wanted to tell you some updates. So, you know that part of my New Year's resolution was to donate to some foundations and some causes and some organizations, and also to make the podcast more accessible with bleeped versions and with transcripts. I'm really, really happy to announce that this past week, some transcripts and some bleeped episodes started rolling out.

I wanna tell you about some of the transcripts that are available. Oh. This is so rad! If you want transcripts of volcanology, evolutionary biology, selachimorphology (sharks!), entomology, primatology, functional morphology, eschatology, lepidopterology, radiology, teuthology, cosmology part one and two, zymology, gelotology, conservation technology, surgical oncology, cynology, herpetology, psephology, aestaology, personality psychology, felinology, microbiology, and selenology are all up right now.

These transcripts were lovingly transcribed by the Facebook Ologies Transcribers group. This is headed by captain, queen of my heart, Emily White, who is a professional transcriber who headed up a group of volunteers. She's amazing. If you need a transcriber for anything, hire Emily White at Gmail. [HireEmilyWhite@gmail](mailto:HireEmilyWhite@gmail.com) is her Gmail. She's so fantastic and I really want to thank each and every person who sat there and listened at a slow speed and transcribed every sound effect, every word, every DJ airhorn, [*DJ airhorn*] so that these episodes are available to folks who need them.

Special, special thanks to some superstars Rosie Thomas, Kris Noble, Wendy Fick, Asriel King, Stewart Caswell, Mike Melchior, Jude Kenny. Y'all have done so much. And each and every one of you who have helped out. At the bottom of the transcripts you can see exactly who did it, and a tagline of, "Heeey," who they are.

Every single person who's made these available, I cannot thank you enough. This is a dream to have them up. Thank you, Emily White, for heading this whole project. Thank you to each and every person. The Ologies Transcribers Facebook group is one of the most cherished corners of the Internet and I love every single person in there doing this work.

So if you need a transcript of any of those episodes, more are rolling out soon. Kelly Dwyer, who's my website designer, put buttons where you can click and a PDF of the transcript comes up. There's also some bleeped episodes that are going up right now. Thank you, Jarrett Sleeper and Caleb Patton for bleeping all those. Those are starting to roll out. So, bleeped episodes, transcripts are coming. I'll let you know as soon as we're all caught up, but you can kinda poke around and see what's up already at AlieWard.com/Ologies. So that's a huge, huge update.

So, travel tips for you coming from your dear old DadWard who travels way too much, who has a sore throat from interviewing ologists this week, and just wants to leave you with something this week that might help you in some way. So go, use a restroom before we hit the road, kiddos. Let's go. Counting to three, and then I'm leaving without you. [*as if through an intercom*] Here we go.

Okay. First up. Packing. Everyone hates packing. I hate packing. You hate packing. Your mom hates packing. [*"I hate it. I fucking hate it."*] So, the day before I leave, I start just amassing this huge tangle of stuff that has to go with me in a pile by the door. I'm not packing and trying to remember everything, I just walk by it and go, "Mmp. I gotta bring this," and I just chuck it toward the pile. Then the next day when I pack, I've seen all the things around my apartment that I know have to go in my suitcase. So just start amassing a big tangle. It's sometimes less stressful than just all at once giving yourself 15 minutes to remember everything.

Also, I would be lost without huge Ziploc bags. I love these 2-gallon zippy-close ones. (This is not an ad for Ziploc.) Depending on how long I'm gone, I'll have one bag for shirts and underpants, and one for socks and pants. So then I roll everything up, and I stack 'em, in each bag, kinda like a bunch of hot dog buns. And then I press the whole bag flat and squeeze out the air as I zip it closed. It makes it super compact and vacuum packed. You can fit so much more stuff in your luggage and nothing comes tumbling out. And then you can see what's in each bag. Sometimes also, when you close the bag and you're putting your whole weight on it, it's cathartic, and it makes a whistling or a farting noise. And that's fun.

Also, if you put tops in one bag and bottoms in the other, you always know where to find everything. And I also usually take one empty zip-lock with me too, and I put dirty socks and undies in that one so they're separated out, and then you don't have to worry about your dirty socks and undies just falling anywhere. So remember, two-gallon with the zip lock. You just put your stuff in it, roll it up, squeeze it flat.

Also, I just heard from a future ologist. I recorded an episode on toads. Her name is Priya. You will love her. She was telling me that if you have a business suit, keep it in the dry-cleaning bag, and then roll the bag and that shit will not wrinkle. So there you go.

Also, pack flipper-floppers. It's always nice to have a pair of flip-flops in your luggage because you may be at a hotel that has a sauna and you're like, "Awh. Wouldn't that be great to go in there?" Or maybe you end up at a disgusting hotel and you don't want your feet to touch the shower. But flip-flops don't take up a lot of room and it's nice to have just in case there's something more splishy-splashy than you anticipated. [*"The floor's wet, ma'am."*]

Also, in terms of toiletries, I'm going to tell you a secret right now. No one at the TSA really makes you take your toiletries out and put them in a clear, zip-lock bag. They say they do that. [*whispers*] It

never happens. And pro tip: get duplicates of all your toiletries and just always keep them packed and refilled so that the morning you have to catch a flight or go on a trip, all your toiletries are in there. You're not packing and putting them into smaller containers, you just have, like, a bug-out bag, like an apocalypse bag full of contact-lens solution and an extra contacts case and a tiny toothpaste. All of that. Always stocked.

You never know. You might have to go on a last-minute business trip, or maybe you'll get extradited, or someone could invite you on a sexy weekend getaway. And you're like, "Hold on. Let me fill my conditioner bottle first," and then that really disrupts the mood. Just keep it packed. Also, those little, tiny, single-serving, glass jam jars from fancy restaurants are awesome. So eat the jam with your fingers, and then rinse it out, and you can put all kinds of goopy stuff in it. [*squishy splat*]

Okay, so when your parking, let's say you go to the airport, take a photo of the parking garage so that when you're off the plane, after you land after your trip, and you're tired and your jet-lagged and you can't remember what day it is, you at least know where you parked. I've wandered so many parking garages in airports, just no idea where my car is. Once, I cried.

If you're flying, no liquids over three ounces. This includes liquidy stuff like peanut butter or a clay mask. Back in the days when I used to eat desserts for a living, I had several pints of vegan cookie dough in my purse because I had to eat it and take notes on it. And I had to debate which phase state it was until the TSA agreed that it had more solid than liquid properties. I was like, "C'mon. Look at how it doesn't conform to the container if you were to take a scoop out unless it's very warm." [*whispers*] I got through TSA. And then I ate it on a plane.

Also, did you know that you can take ice with you? If you have a thermos and it's filled with ice, the TSA's fine with it. Filled with water? No deal. So you can take ice with you. I don't know why they let you do that.

Also, you might have to present your ID wherever you're going. Let's say that you're catching a flight. I know it's so easy to present your ID and then shove it in a pocket and you're like, "I'll put this back in my wallet later." Never do that. Your ID will be like, "Ooh! This is the thing I've been waiting for to make a break and disappear forever." So always put it back in your wallet before you put your stuff on the x-ray belt, [*whispers*] otherwise you're never going to see it again.

If you're flying and you have to put your stuff on the x-ray belt, always put your shoes first. That way they come out first so that you have a chance to put 'em back on while they're looking through your suitcase for weird stuff. Otherwise, you're holding your backpack, you're grabbing your luggage, waiting for your shoes to come out. You're like, "C'monn." Like waiting for a pop tart to come out of the toaster and you have to carry them and hobble to a bench. So shoes go on first.

Also, if you don't want to do the full-body x-ray you can always ask for the metal detector and a pat-down. Sometimes if you're lonely that feels comforting to have someone touch the insides of your thighs.

If you have a boarding pass, I like to pick a pocket on me that the boarding pass will live in. I just say to the boarding pass, "Guess what? Upper left, jean jacket pocket. That's where I put you." Because sometimes it can be easy to shove it in a different pocket each time because you're like, "What gate is it?" Which can be stressful if you're looking for it in a pinch. [*whispers*] I've done it so many times. So just put it in one pocket and say, "Guess what? You live here now." [*clip from Mötley Crüe song: "Home sweet home."*]

Now, if you're in an airport, bring a thermos or an insulated water bottle because nowadays, near the bathrooms or water fountains in airports, you can just fill 'em up with these really great, clean, filtered-water dispenser spigots, and they're right near the gross, slurpy-slurp fountains. They're

kinda hard to spot if you don't know what to look for. I'll sometimes see frustrated people trying to fill up a thermos on the slurpy-slurp fountain not realizing that the clean, bottle spigot is like a foot above it.

Also, Starbucks has filtered water because they don't make their coffee with unfiltered water. So sometimes if you hand them your thermos without the lid, they'll just fill it up with water for you. This is going to save plastic, you'll have nice cold water with you, and then you can save money and spend it on stupid stuff like a magazine that you wouldn't otherwise buy.

Now, if you're about to get on a flight and there might be upgrades, I've heard that if you look and smell nice, they're more likely to upgrade you. But I've never experienced this firsthand. There's probably a reason for that.

Always bring earplugs with you when you travel. It's a great way to tune out chatty people in a café, or business travelers who've had too many margaritas in the terminal and they can't stop talking on a flight, or the engines, which are so loud. And sometimes you might get in a hotel that has, like, a fighting couple next door and you're like, "Ugh. I'm so glad I have earplugs."

I also take vitamin C powder with me on trips. I drink it in the morning because the extra B vitamins can help perk you up if you slept weird, or not enough, or you're jetlagged. Also, travel is dehydrating, so at the very least, it just reminds you to drink water in the morning.

And if you're in an airport, let families go in front of you. They're so stressed out. Trying to travel with children looks so hard. And if babies cry on an airplane, don't get mad at 'em. They're babies. Also, planes can get freezing. I don't know why. But it helps to have a scarf on in case you're cold, or you can use it as a pillow, or you can breathe through it in case anyone smells bad. Once I spilled a full cup of sparkling water on my crotch and it was nice to have a scarf as kind of an emergency towel to mop things up. So always travel with a scarf even if it's a lightweight, summa scarf. Also if you have a scarf you can tie it to the headrest behind you and you can just use it as a face hammock.

And let's talk about the elephant in the room. Flying is a huge, enormous, terrible, carbon suck. It accounts for approximately 5% of global emissions. So, travel, tourism: significant contributor to climate change which is something that none of us like to talk about. I read that a round trip flight from New York to London produces 2.5 tons of carbon emissions.

So how can you reduce this if you have a business trip or if you have a vacation coming up? Airlines with newer planes can have reduced carbon emissions. Also sitting in coach and traveling lighter can help. So if you're like, "Yeah I'm sitting in first class," [*I only fly first class.*] congratulations. You're using up more carbon. Oy.

You can also look into different airlines that have lower carbon emissions. For some reason, Alaska has the lowest carbon emissions of domestic airline carriers, partly because they cram people in tighter. Which, ya know, economical. Direct flights produce less carbon than ones with more layovers, so if you want to spend a little extra money and a little bit less time just think, "It's a little better for the planet."

Also if you want to offset the carbon emissions from your travel, you can go to websites like CarbonFund.org, (they'll be getting a donation from this episode) and you can look for different carbon offset programs. But make sure it's a legit one. It's a donation, but it might help your conscience a little bit. And of course, that donation wouldn't be possible without sponsors of the show. So here I'm going to tell you about a couple. Is that cool? [*intercom*] Okay, cool.

[*Ad Break*]

Okay, back to a couple more travel tips.

Some budgetary-friendly pointers. Most of the traveling I do, I have to do for work, but if I ever take any kind of vacationy thing or I have to go see family, I do sometimes use points. There are some airlines that are very annoying to use points with. One of them that is not annoying, I do use American, sometimes they are really great at doing last-minute trips. This is 0% sponsored.

I also use sites like Kayak or CheapTickets. Priceline is good if you can be a little bit flexible with your dates. If you are a freelancer and you can afford to take time off during the week, a lot of things will be cheaper. Also check on off-season prices. Way cheaper. Mid-week, off-season, way good bargains. I also use things like Hotel Tonight. If you decide to just take a last-minute trip out of town and want to see what's cheap, that can be great. Camping, very cheap. Sleeping in the backyard in a sleeping bag, very inexpensive. So those are all some tricks to shave a little cash off the bottom line.

Now if you're staying in a hotel, this is just a personal pet peeve, and you're only going to be there for a few days, maybe bring your own soap, or at least, just use one of the bars of soap. You can transfer it from the sink to the shower when you need it. You don't need to open every single soap package and then use them for a day. The Earth is dying.

Also, leave a tip for the hotel staff in your room. A dollar or two a day can really make a difference in how much money they take home and could really buoy their spirits. I always try to leave a couple bucks behind. Once, I hid a few dollars in the bed with a note that said, "Thanks!" because I thought it would be fun to find it there cleaning the room. When I went to go leave it, I found my glasses in the covers! I would've left them if I hadn't left a tip! [*"It is fate."*]

Another great thing to bring with you is wooden chopsticks and a spoon. I always have them in my bag because a lot of times you'll go to eat something and they'll give you a plastic fork and you're like, "Why am I using this fork once and throwing it into the garbage?!" But if you have some wooden chopsticks and a spoon, you'll always have utensils with you and you'll feel better about not using single-use plastic.

If you want to get some audiobooks, Libby is a great app where you can check out audiobooks from the library. Also maybe read up on some local customs. Try to figure out the cultural etiquette of the place you're visiting before you go there.

So that is my travel tips for you, recorded in a rental car in Minneapolis on my way to Wisconsin.

And another thing, you don't have to travel far in order to give your brain a break. You can always just go camping not too far away. Or take a train to a few cities over and see a museum. Uh... some guys just saw me recording this. For a second I was like, "Why is this guy looking at me?" then I realized, "Oh. I'm talking into a microphone in a rental car." [*laughs*]

Anyway, I hope some of these travel tips help. I'm sorry I'm losing my voice. I've got a couple more interviews.

And of course, thank you Hannah Lipow and Erin Talbert for adminning the [Ologies Facebook group](#). Thank you to Boni Dutch for helping manage all of the merch at [OlogiesMerch.com](#). [*singing*] Happy birthday to Shannon Feltus, one of the merch queens. Thank you so much for all of the work you do to make *Ologies* merch available. Happy, happy, happy birthday!

Thank you to interns Caleb Patton and Haeri Kim, and to Jarrett Sleeper, and editor Steven Ray Morris. Always have a Steven Ray Morris handy to bop into your carry-on. Theme song, of course, by Nick Thorburn of the band Islands.

Next week we'll be back with a brand-new episode. And in terms of a secret, I was recording an interview with a cabinologist and I was so excited to talk to him, he's been on my list for years. I got there a few minutes late and then I had problems with the memory card I was using. Anyway, it ended up going fine, but I left, and I walked down the stairs to the street level and I looked down and my fly was just as open as it could be. I'm just killing it this morning. Anyway back next week with a brand-new episode.

Berbye.

Transcribed by Deb Ward

A donation went to: CarbonFund.org

For comments and inquiries on this or other transcripts, please contact OlogiteEmily@gmail.com