

CHICAGO BRIDE

Laugh Your Angst Off: *Tips For Healthy Travel From Funny Women On The Road*

When the stress and strain of travel is intensified by unforeseen hassles, delays, and aggravations, the chance of getting sick – not just of the travel itself but in the medical sense due to a weakened immune system – is significantly increased. Terrorism fears and gas shortages have made travel a little less fun than it used to be. The public is more anxious about safety and less satisfied with customer service while in transit.

Seasoned travelers understand the importance of traveling light, but also say it helps if we can lighten-up a little bit while traveling, and healthcare experts agree. While on the road, a positive outlook and a good sense of humor can be just as important as sufficient rest and a balanced diet.

Modern clinical studies show that laughter helps to lower blood pressure and stress and fortifies our health. By encouraging the body to produce disease-fighting cells and proteins, along with pleasure inducing and painkilling endorphins, good humor provides preventive medicine. To address this phenomenon, award-winning author Jennifer Leo has published just what the doctor ordered, three informative and hilarious anthologies of real-life travel mishaps by women.

Her funny “Leo Trio” began with the two bestsellers *Sand In My Bra* and *Whose Panties Are These?*. Now a third release entitled *The Thong Also Rises* is available, and includes more real life misadventures, or as she likes to call them, Ms-adventures.

Those who contributed stories include luminaries such as writer Susan Orlean, whose book *The Orchid Thief* was the basis for the blockbuster movie *Adaptation*; and novelist Jill Conner Browne, who wrote *Sweet Potato Queens*. Along with numerous other wild women, they tell their hysterical true stories in candid detail. One writer explains why she intentionally walked stark naked into a crowded beach bar to buy her husband a beer. Another forgot her fashion sense and rode a camel across the desert in a sand-filled thong; and yet another found herself at a taxidermy convention discussing glass eyes with really weird guys.

Although written exclusively by women, the books are equally popular with both sexes, as evidenced by the feedback on Jen Leo’s websites and blogs. They are so popular in fact, that Leo plans a fourth volume *What Color is Your Jockstrap?*, a “coed” version of her other humor books.

Leo’s books provide laughter, but also an important lesson for both travelers and non-travelers alike. By laughing at our mishaps and mistakes, we are better equipped to put negative experiences into perspective. And even if we don’t encounter any problems along the way, a lighthearted book makes the ideal travel companion.

Sometimes we just need to hide our nose in a book to get away from less than ideal seatmates.

And although laughter may not cure nausea on a cruise ship or malaria during a trek into the rain forest, it is still the best – and the cheapest – form of medicine.