



Travel tips and advice- Simon Calder

If you're planning some adventurous travel, of course you could just grab a guidebook, go online and start organising trains, boats and planes yourself. There's a lot to be said for this approach - it could save you money, and means you get a holiday that's tailor-made just for you. But often I will ask a travel professional to put the trip together - to get the benefit of their expertise, and also to gain the protection that comes with a proper package holiday - i.e. where you buy air travel and accommodation together. That helps you to deal with these common problems that Rip-Off Britain viewers have experienced:

*** One of the travel elements goes awry**

You have a domestic flight booked, but when you turn up to board you find that the departure's been cancelled. It's sometimes easiest to sort out on the spot, but if you encounter any difficulty - or the prospect of extra expense - then you should let your travel provider know and ask them to sort it out for you.

*** The hotel is half-built/overbooked/has burned down**

Again, there may be an acceptable alternative agreeable locally - such as a "sister hotel" of the same quality - but if you encounter any problems or the replacement is inferior, again your travel provider is obliged to sort it out.

*** Facilities are not as advertised**

People who book direct with properties outside the EU but find, for example, that the hotel or the promised sporting facilities aren't up to scratch, may find it tricky to get recompense.

If you have booked a package through a UK provider, they are legally responsible for providing what you have paid for.

*** After an incident, the Foreign Office advises against travel to your location**

The travel provider must make arrangements to get you home with due haste. For information visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.