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When you think of international travel, are you fearful of getting lost or are you one of the adventure seekers who prefers to get out there and experience the country like the locals do? This is an important decision to make when planning your travel but first you have to be sure each member of your family has a passport so if you have a child, be sure to check into getting a [kid's passport](#).

On the most basic level, a guided tour is just a vacation that is pre-planned. A tour guide generally accompanies you as you explore your destination, and an itinerary is usually either selected from a travel company or created by the vacationers. Sometimes, meals, hotel accommodations, and transportation are included in the base price of these itineraries. These itineraries just outline what you and your family will be participating in during your stay. This outline can include visits to famous landmarks, natural sites, or other locations.

If you chose to travel independently, it will be necessary for you to make all the arrangements for travel and accommodations yourself. It is a lot easier than it used to be to plan an international trip yourself because no matter what information you need, it is all as close as your computer. International travel also requires a passport and online passport agencies have made getting quick passports just a click away.

Let's talk about some of the pros and cons of taking a guided tour. Some of the problems can involve inflexibility of travel dates. Large tour companies select time periods that accommodate the majority of travelers but if you prefer to travel on the off season, you will have greater flexibility if you make the reservations yourself. Once you arrive at your vacation destination, a guided tour provides a strict timetable for site-seeing and if too much has been scheduled, you may find yourself exhausted rather than refreshed after your vacation. The positive reasons to use a guided tour company are numerous. Frequent visits to the same areas create an expertise that one visit independently simply can't provide. Guess work concerning accommodations and dining is totally removed and a tour company's experience will insure trouble free vacationing. Some also provide time periods for independent exploration or multiple choices for excursions.

Traveling without the aide of a tour group has its ups and down also. If you go it alone, you are responsible for all your own reservations including travel and accommodations. If you are traveling to a foreign country where you don't know the language, getting around is further complicated. One thing that independent travel provides is flexibility and freedom. If you happen upon a museum or location that is fascinating to you, you can linger as long as you like. If you had planned to go to a certain city but then discovered someplace else you think you would rather visit, you certainly have the freedom to do so although all the arrangements are totally your own responsibility.

The decision to travel independently or utilizing a guided tour company is your decision but a passport is not optional when traveling internationally. No matter your age, from the oldest to the youngest, a passport is required so if you have a newborn, be sure to get a [child's passport](#) for your child and this can be done quickly and easily. Getting a [quick United States passport](#) is no problem with the online passport agencies available. Someone else can plan your trip but you have to apply for your own passport so get start right away. Travel dates have a way of sneaking up on you. Go it alone or go with a group, the memories are yours alone not matter the decision.

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