

Patricia Ho Douven Talks Travel



Singaporean designer Patricia Ho Douven describes herself as a bibliophile and a curious, passionate traveler — two traits that inform the roster of hospitality projects her Singapore- and Bangkok-based multidisciplinary design studios White Jacket and Wonder by WJ are working on at any given time. While travel has been restricted for much of the last two years, we're optimistic that it will begin to return to normal soon, so with that in mind we asked the designer to share her travel essentials.

What are your essential travel accessories?

I always bring along my toiletry organizer (I avoid using hotel toiletries, to reduce waste), a travel adapter and various cables, and a travel wallet to hold multiple currencies.

What are your favorite travel resources for planning a trip?

For hotels and restaurants, I get great tips from the source since I'm in the industry. For other travel tips, I like keeping interesting articles from the inflight magazines of select airlines like Singapore Airlines, Air France, ANA, and Qatar Airways. These magazines offer a wide range of stories and locations, and are always up to date. Lastly, the best resource is always the locals — make friends with them!

On a flight, do you read, watch movies, listen to music, work, or all of the above?

I actually love to meditate on flights. Usually, I'll meditate for about 15 to 30 minutes during takeoff, and after that I'll do all of the above, though I do try to avoid working — I think of a flight as "me time."

What's the first thing you do when you check in to a new hotel room?

Take pictures! I inspect every inch of the room, including testing the light switches and all the bathroom fittings. This inspection can take up to half an hour before I even unpack my suitcase.

What's your favorite welcome drink?

A glass of chilled champagne.

Your best jet lag remedy?

A good run outdoors. Being outdoors has always been invigorating for me.

What are some of your favorite hotels?

Some of my favorites are the Pulitzer Amsterdam, the Gulde Schoen in Antwerp, The Oberoi Udaivilas in Udaipur, the Rosewood London, and a 300-year-old private ryokan in Kyoto.

As soon as travel resumes, what's your next holiday destination?

My choice will depend on the season when we're finally allowed to travel. If it's the first half of the year, then it'll be climbing Mount Kilimanjaro or kitesurfing in Sri Lanka. And if it's later in the year, then a liveboard scuba diving trip in Raja Ampat or snowboarding in Japan. These trips were all already planned for 2020.

What's the best part about coming home?

Being close to my loved ones and my dog Snoop.

What are the top five travel items you can't live without?

My pencil case and notebook, phone, laptop, headphones, and photographs of my loved ones.