HOW TO AFFORD FULL-TIME TRAVEL

Tips, Strategies And Formulas To Create A Budget And Get Going

HEATHER MARKEL

The Travel Life!

This guide will help you plan your budget to follow your dream of traveling the world full time.

This book and its contents is written by Heather Markel and subject to copyright laws. No part of this book may be copied, sold, shared or distributed without express written consent from heather@heathermarkel.com

Heather Markel,
copyright 2021
All Rights Reserved

HEY THERE, I'M HEATHER!

This eBook is designed to help you begin the journey of making full-term travel affordable. It will give you the thinking points and guidelines from which to plan the type of travel you want, and figure out costs, and how long you can travel for.

As a nomad for almost 4 years, I've learned a lot about affording full-time travel, and am delighted to share it with you.

Get ready to live more freely!

Heather Markel
traveler | speaker | author | photographer | strategist

contents

Introduction

A FEW THINGS I'VE LEARNED

It took me years to have the courage to quit my corporate job to travel full time. One of the core reasons for that was the belief that I wouldn't be able to afford my life without a corporate job.

Unexpectedly, I learned it's a hell of a lot cheaper to travel full-time than to live in New York City! In fact, full-time travel, along with a complete shifting of my belief system around money and work, have enabled me to travel full time for almost three years, and understand I can continue doing it as long as I want to. (Interested in learning how to shift your belief system to travel full time? Check out this great resource!)

You should also know that while full time travel is filled with some of the most amazing experiences you will ever have, there are also inconveniences, such as:

- constant packing and unpacking
- figuring out where to go and how to get there
- sticking to a budget
- changing currencies and recalibrating all the time
- meeting wonderful people and saying goodbye
- plans not going as planned

I've learned to appreciate the inconveniences as part of fulfilling my dream. But, for some, the inconveniences may outweigh the experiences. This is for you to decide. If you're used to 9-5 life, then an unstructured life that relies on you creating each day will be an adjustment. I love it because it allows me to understand I create the things I love, and have the ability to do more of those things, and less of the things I don't love.

One of the things I've found interesting is how many people think they can't afford full time travel, either due to time or responsibilities. In the end, you do have to give up many things to make the travel life possible.

So, more than money, the real question is, ***are you willing to give up what stands in your way? Are you willing to change your life for something amazing? Are you willing to be without the things society tells you are part of proving you are happy and wealthy so you can truly be happy and wealthy?*** If you are, then this eBook will be the start of your journey. Welcome!

I'm going to share with you the tips and insights I believe are critical to building the future life you want. While you can jump in, find your way, and go back and forth between corporate work and travel, if you prefer to pave the way to continue traveling, and know how long you can afford it, the strategies I share with you in this eBook will be critical.

section 1

SO YOU WANT TO TRAVEL FULL TIME

creating the path

If you're like those of us that travel full-time, you no doubt love experiencing new places, new cultures and new people.

One of the surprising facts about full-time-travel is that it's a lot cheaper than a fixed life with rent, utilities, and other costs.

However, in order to be able to afford the full-time-travel lifestyle, you need to do some planning.

This guide will help you lay the foundation to figuring out the budget you need to travel full time, and help you look at the experience from a practical angle. The primary focus of this guide is the *money* piece, which is what makes it possible for you to make this dream a reality.

section 2

YOUR TRAVEL & MONEY STYLES

it starts with what you want

While traveling the world full time may conjure up many fantasies, running away from misery to find endless joy, etc. you need to carefully plan for the experience.

The key to making the travel life possible is understanding ***how*** you want to travel. This will determine what kind of monthly budget you need. From there you can decide if you're financially ready to go now, or if you need to generate more income before going. Another option is that you might be able to work while you travel, in which case you could already have the budget now!

Make sure you're honest with ***yourself*** on the next pages. It'll be the difference between enjoying your travels, or being frustrated by them.

your travel style

The first thing you need to sort out to figure out your travel budget is your travel style. Here's how this breaks down.

CHEAP/BACKPACKER

You'll be camping, staying in hostels, and using shared accomodation or staying with friends and family. You'll cook most of your own meals or buy cheap food in grocery stores. You'll do a minimum of tours, and may hitchhike.

BUDGET

You'll stay in inexpensive, no-name hotels, hostels (possibly in your own room) or AirBnB. When you eat out it will be in no frills restaurants where locals tend to go or street food, possibly splurging once in a while. You'll take some cheap tours or group tours to see certain places.

MODERATE

You prefer brand name hotels, and to eat out most of the time in moderately priced restaurants and enjoy wine or liquor several times a week

LUXURY

You only stay at the finest 5-star hotels and expect meals cooked for you and a travel agent to book all your travel which is mostly in first class.

ACTION: On the following page, select your travel style and write down any details that are important to you such as cleanliness, privacy and safety, etc.

your travel style - definition

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO PICK YOUR STYLE AND MAKE NOTES ON WHY & WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT

CHEAP Why do you want/need to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

BUDGET Why do you want to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

MODERATE Why do you want to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

LUXURY Why do you want to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

your money style

Then consider how you want to handle your money flow. This is essential for figuring out the travel budget you'll need and where the money will come from.

NO WORK

You want to travel without having to work. This means all your travel money will come from the money you have now, or that you will save up for your journey. This also means you'll want to consider having funds for the journey, as well as for when you return.

SOME WORK

You want to combine existing income with working from the road. This can be project-based work, part-time work, freelance work, remote work, etc.

FULL TIME WORK

You plan to work full time while traveling and have this cover the costs. This means you either don't need to build up savings in advance, or, you need a much smaller amount than you would if you wanted to avoid working.

Now we can start looking at how to create a budget, and then run through some hypothetical examples so you understand how to do your own calculations.

Budget Planning

Work and money

Use this page to think about work as it relates to your travel experience.

#1 **What skills or interests do you have that you could potentially use to make money while you travel?**

#2 **If you don't work while you travel, do you feel you have enough money set aside that you could either retire or have some padding for a job search?**

#3 **Is your travel goal to be in the moment and live the experience, or something else? Write down what's most important for you to see and do and be during your travels.**

#4 **Are you comfortable earning money sporadically instead of a consistent amount every month? What's your relationship with money like?**

Largest travel expense categories

How To Allocate Money

Here are some of the categories, that, in my experience, take up the most of your travel budget. As you think about fixed and future costs, consider these:

ACCOMMODATION
Hotels, hostels, AirBnB, etc.

RENT / STORAGE
Maintenance/rent or storage fees can be high. If you're able to rent your place out while you're gone, could be helpful.

FOOD
What you eat and where can make or break this category

TRAVEL INSURANCE
Separate from health - this is for theft, travel plan changes, etc.

ENTERTAINMENT
Going out, having fun, drinking, etc.

TRANSPORTATION
Flights, trains, buses, taxis, subways, etc - all this adds up! Traveling economy will save you a lot, as will a rewards credit card with miles.

TOURS
If you plan to sightsee, group tours are much cheaper than private ones. Google "free walking tours" for a great resource!

CELL PHONE / INTERNET
If you're not 100% reliant on WiFi this will be an important expense to stay in touch, and for travel safety.

HEALTH INSURANCE
Monthly payments need to be included in your budget calculation.

MEDICAL
Medicines, vaccinations, travel doctors, etc can be another large cost.

Budget Planning

Plans into action

#1 **Total Money Available:** write the full sum of money available to you right now. (If you don't know, consider consulting with a financial planner to get your full financial picture.)

#2 **Number of Months You'll Travel:** write down the number of months you plan to, or would like to, travel.

#3 **Deductions:** Subtract monthly subscriptions e.g. cell phone, insurance, etc.

#4 **Monthly Budget:** Divide your total money available number, minus deductions, by the months you will travel. This gives you what you could spend now, per month, if you left today.

#5 **Per Diem Budget:** Divide your monthly budget by 30 or 31.

Now that you know your current travel budget, if it fits your desired travel style, you're ready to go! If not, then you either have to lower your travel style or delay your departure. We'll look at this more in depth in the next chapter.

section 3

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Now you can start playing with numbers. *Depending where in the world you travel,* here are some rough travel cost estimates. These do NOT include flights/travel or your monthly base costs like cell phone, rent at home or storage, etc. They include your daily food, accomodation and basic needs.

A **cheap** travel style may run you roughly **$1,500/month**

A **budget** travel style will be roughly **$3,500/month**

A **moderate** travel style will cost roughly **$5,000/month**

Luxury travel could be roughly **$10,000/month** *(or more)*

You might want to use an app like Booking.com to look up hotel prices in the areas you plan to visit, to see if your travel budget gets you the accomodation type you want, to start.

If you're short on money, then you can map out how much you need, and, based on your current earnings and savings plan, how much longer it will take you to create that savings plan.

Remember that as you calculate you need to factor in those other costs like rent, cell phone, health care, etc.

Budget Planning

Running the numbers

Let's put everything together with some hypothetical numbers.

AVAILABLE FUNDS
You have **$60,000** you can spend and you'd like to travel for a year.

FIXED MONTHLY COSTS
You have $500 in fixed monthly costs (cell phone, storage, etc.)
$500 x 12 months = **$6000**
Then you want to leave $1,000/month available for travel costs.
$1,000 x 12 months = **$12,000**

$12,000 + $6,000 = **$18,000**, the amount to set aside and deduct/subtract from your ***available funds***.

$60,000 - $18,000 = **$42,000** (your actual money available.)

MONTHLY AND PER DIEM BUDGETS
$42,000 / 12 = **$3,500**. monthly budget

$3,500 / 31 = **$112**. Per Diem budget

If you wanted to travel cheap, or budget, depending where you plan to go, this would be enough money! If, however, you wanted to travel in a more luxorious style, or, you plan to travel without working and have no other savings available, you'll need to calculate how much more money you need, and work until you create that padding. On the following page, you'll see this calculated as a worksheet.

Budget Planning Worksheet

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Available Funds

$60,000

Fixed Monthly Costs

$500 (existing)
$500 x 12 months = $6,000

$1,000/month (future needs).
$1,000 x 12 months = $12,000

$6,000 + $12,000 = $18,000

Adjusted Available

$60,000 - $18,000 = $42,000

Monthly & Per Diem

Monthly: **$42,000 / 12 = $3,500**

Per Diem: **$3,500 / 31 = $112**

On the next pages are blank worksheets for you to run your own numbers based on your available funds.

Fixed Costs Calculator

Existing	Amount

Future	Amount

TOTAL -----> ____________________

Budget Planning Worksheet

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Available Funds

Total Amount

Fixed Monthly Costs

Existing

Future needs

Total

Adjusted Available

Available - Fixed

Monthly & Per Diem

Monthly: **Adjusted / Months you'll travel**

Per Diem: **Monthly / 31**

Budgeting tips

Run your numbers a few different ways. Make sure you adjust for both your fixed monthly costs and potential monthly costs like travel and tours.

You should also consider income - will you use that money to extend the time you travel, or, will you use it to travel in a higher class of service?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

when to quit

Putting it all together

Now you can figure out if you're ready to go now, if not when, and make some excellent calculations.

This section will give you tips and formulas to determine how much money you need, and how much you need to save, and how long it will take you.

Travel tips

If you're traveling with the Dollar or Euro as your base currency, your money will go a lot farther than other ones. Here are a few places in the world which tend to have lower daily living costs:

Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Panama, Nicaragua

Determining if it's now or later

Taking the calculations to the next level.

Once you decide the travel style you want to have, and determine your monthly and per diem budget, and meet with your financial planner, you can figure out when you're ready to go. That could be now, a matter of months, or years, depending on your financial situation. What's empowering is that you get to decide all that.

If you absolutely can't wait, and your budget doesn't match your travel style, then ask yourself if you can lower your travel style, or if you can work while you travel to make up the difference. Another potential help if you are short on money is to choose destinations that are cheap for your currency. If you're on the dollar or the euro, traveling to, for example, Vietnam instead of Scotland, will make your money go further.

If you refuse to change styles, work on the road, or choose cheaper destinations, then you have to save up more money and wait until you have that.

On the following page, work out your departure plan.

Timing your escape

Plans into action

#1 **Per Diems:** Write down the CURRENT monthly and per diem budgets you calculated previously - if you left today, how much can you comfortably spend?

#2 **Is It Enough:** Considering your desired travel style (see page...) do you have enough to afford it now? If not, are you willing to go down a level? Why or why not?

#3 **Where to Travel:** Where in the world do you want to travel? Does your current budget allow for it?.

#4 **Monthly Budget:** Divide your total money available number, minus deductions, by the months you will travel. This gives you what you could spend now, per month, if you left today.

#5 **Per Diem Budget:** Divide your monthly budget by 30 or 31.

Now that you know your current travel budget, if it fits your desired travel style, you're ready to go! If not, then you either have to lower your travel style or delay your departure.

Timing your escape

Running the numbers

If you're short on funding, let's look at how you'd calculate your readiness date. All numbers are hypothetical, you can plug in your own on the following page.

DESIRED TRAVEL STYLE *(see page 15 for numbers)*
Moderate --> You need **$5,000/month** for a **$161 per diem**

ACTUAL FINANCIAL PICTURE
If you left today, you have **$3,500/month** for a **$96 per diem.** You are unwilling to change travely style, so you have to save more.

THE GAP
You need another **$1,500 per month**, which is **$18,000** in a year.

CURRENT MONTHLY SAVINGS
You currently set aside **$150/month** into your savings account. At that rate, you'll save **$1,800 per year** and would need **10 more years** to reach your goal. But....in 10 years, prices will change, so you probably want to change something so you can leave sooner!

ANNUAL CALCULATION FORMULA
Take the number of years in which you want to leave, and multiply that by 12. Then divide your GAP amount by the resulting number to determine how much you need to save per month to be ready in the timeframe you want.

So, if you want to leave in 5 years:
5x12 = 60. Now take your GAP amount ($18,000) and divide it by 60, and you need $300/month

Budget Planning Worksheet

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Let's look at this sample a little more clearly:.

Desired Travel Style

Moderate, Requires $5,000/month
$161/per diem

My Current Budget

$3,500/month $112/per diem

Financial Gap

$1,500 per month **/ $18,000 year**

Current Savings

Monthly: **$150**
Annual: **$1,800 per year**

Desired Departure

In 5 Years

Update Savings Plan

5 x 12 **= 60**
$18,000 / 60 = $300 per month.
You'll need to save double your current amount.

Work & Travel

If you're working while traveling, update your numbers.
For example, if you will earn $500/month while traveling, in this example, you only need $4,500/month to attain your desired travel style of $5,000.
Recalculating, your gap is now only $1,000/month / $12,000/year.
Your updated savings plan is $12,000/60 = $200

OR you can keep the original numbers and use your travel money to increase your time traveling.

Budget Planning Worksheet

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Plugin your actual nunbers below:

Desired Travel Style

My Current Budget

Financial Gap

Current Savings

Monthly:
Annual:

Desired Departure

Update Savings Plan

x 12 =
/ 60 = **per month.**

Work & Travel

MAKE THE WORLD YOUR OYSTER!

transformation

Suggestions on cutting back to move forward

Get rid of "home".
This could be one of the toughest things you do, but giving up monthly rent or mortgage costs is a HUGE savings. If you own your place and can AirBnB, great. Otherwise, research storage unit prices, see who might buy stuff you no longer need (and what they're willing to pay) and think about how much cash that will free up for you.

Re-assess what you need.
Thinking forward, as you are tempted to buy "things"/"stuff" do you really need it? If it's not coming with you, why do you want to purchase it? Think about your relationship with stuff and the value that your belongings really have. Sell as much as you can, and stop buying more.

See a financial planner.
Invest in an overall understanding of ALL your assets. Create the empowerment to see everything you own and your money "buckets" - money you can use immediately, and money you can tap into as a backup should you need it.

Travel saver tips

If you don't already have them, and if you have zero credit card debt, apply immediately for at least two travel credit cards - one that gets you **airline miles**, a second that gets you **hotel points**. To choose which ones, I encourage you to research the international partner airlines that best match your desired destinations, and select the carrier with the best coverage, for you. Then consider hotel chains located where you want to travel .

I use a Delta Skymiles credit card which has gotten me free and low flee flights around the world. I use a Marriott Rewards card for my hotel points. One thing I like is they have lower cost value chains around the world which means my points go even further.

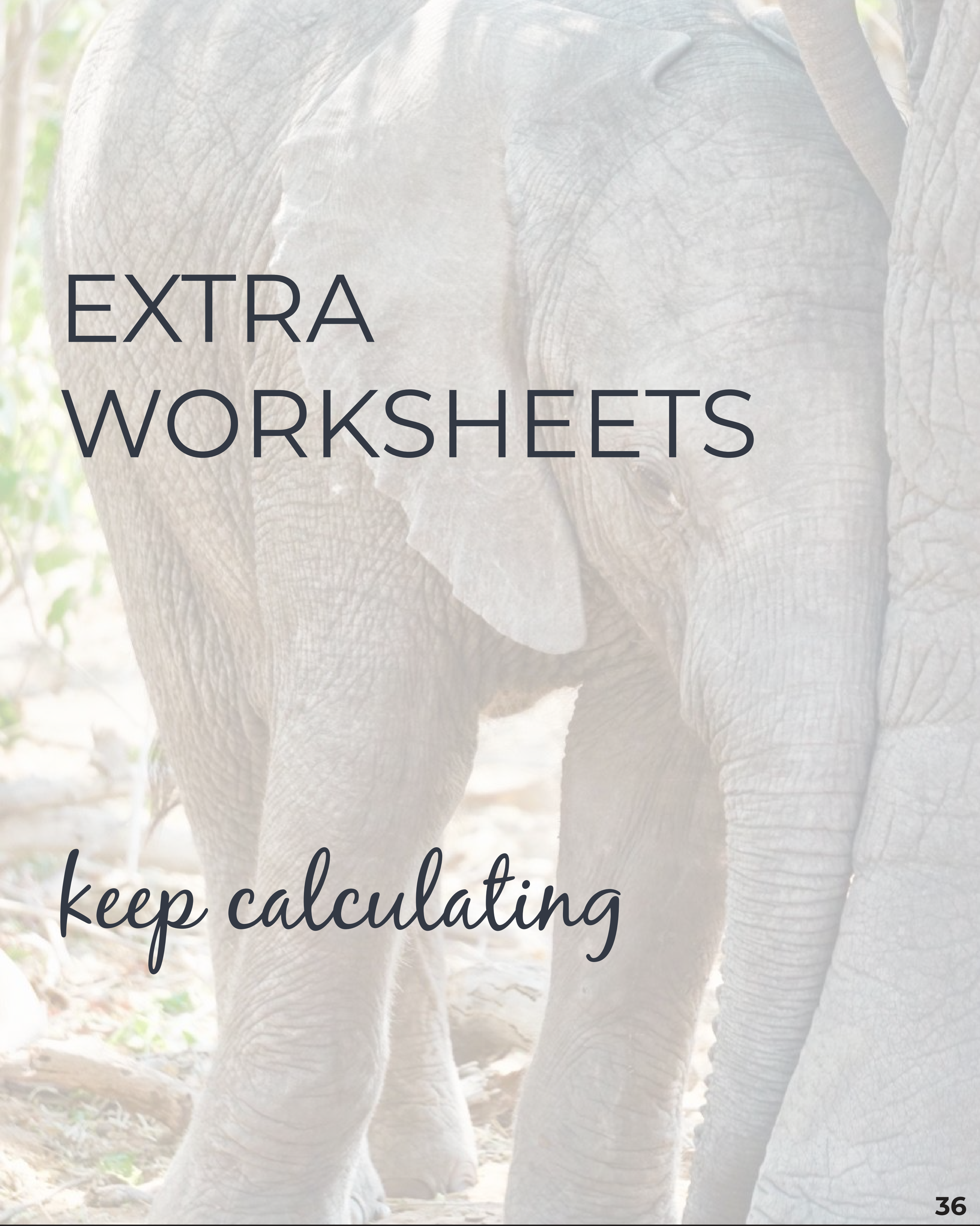
Caution - some countries do not accept American Express due to the higher fees.

May you create the life you dream of!

If you have questions, drop me an email at heather@heathermarkel.com Follow along as I travel the world at www.HeatherBegins.com

XOXO,
Heather

CLICK FOR PLANNING HELP



EXTRA WORKSHEETS

keep calculating

your travel style - definition

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO PICK YOUR STYLE AND MAKE NOTES ON WHY & WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT

CHEAP Why do you want/need to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

BUDGET Why do you want to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

MODERATE Why do you want to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

LUXURY Why do you want to travel this way, and what aspects (safety, facilities, food type, etc) are most important to you?

Budget Planning

Work and money

Use this page to think about work as it relates to your travel experience.

#1 **What skills or interests do you have that you could potentially use to make money while you travel?**

#2 **If you don't work while you travel, do you feel you have enough money set aside that you could either retire or have some padding for a job search?**

#3 **Is your travel goal to be in the moment and live the experience, or something else? Write down what's most important for you to see and do and be during your travels.**

#4 **Are you comfortable earning money sporadically instead of a consistent amount every month? What's your relationship with money like?**

Budget Planning

Plans into action

#1 **Total Money Available:** write the full sum of money available to you right now. (If you don't know, consider consulting with a financial planner to get your full financial picture.)

#2 **Number of Months You'll Travel:** write down the number of months you plan to, or would like to, travel.

#3 **Deductions:** Subtract monthly subscriptions e.g. cell phone, insurance, etc.

#4 **Monthly Budget:** Divide your total money available number, minus deductions, by the months you will travel. This gives you what you could spend now, per month, if you left today.

#5 **Per Diem Budget:** Divide your monthly budget by 30 or 31.

Now that you know your current travel budget, if it fits your desired travel style, you're ready to go! If not, then you either have to lower your travel style or delay your departure. We'll look at this more in depth in the next chapter.

Fixed Costs Calculator

Existing	Amount

Future	Amount

TOTAL -----> ______________

Budget Planning Worksheet

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Available Funds

Total Amount

Fixed Monthly Costs

Existing

Future needs

Total

Adjusted Available

Available - Fixed

Monthly & Per Diem

Monthly: **Adjusted / Months you'll travel**

Per Diem: **Monthly / 31**

Timing your escape

Plans into action

#1 **Per Diems:** Write down the CURRENT monthly and per diem budgets you calculated previously - if you left today, how much can you comfortably spend?

#2 **Is It Enough:** Considering your desired travel style (see page...) do you have enough to afford it now? If not, are you willing to go down a level? Why or why not?

#3 **Where to Travel:** Where in the world do you want to travel? Does your current budget allow for it?.

#4 **Monthly Budget:** Divide your total money available number, minus deductions, by the months you will travel. This gives you what you could spend now, per month, if you left today.

#5 **Per Diem Budget:** Divide your monthly budget by 30 or 31.

Now that you know your current travel budget, if it fits your desired travel style, you're ready to go! If not, then you either have to lower your travel style or delay your departure.

Budget Planning Worksheet

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Plugin your actual nunbers below:

Desired Travel Style

My Current Budget

Financial Gap

Current Savings

Monthly:
Annual:

Desired Departure

Update Savings Plan

x 12 =
/ 60 = per month.

Work & Travel

Some examples

Running the numbers

If you're short on funding, let's look at how you'd calculate your readiness date. All numbers are hypothetical, you can plug in your own on the following page.

DESIRED TRAVEL STYLE *(see page 15 for numbers)*
Moderate --> You need **$5,000/month** for a **$161 per diem**

ACTUAL FINANCIAL PICTURE
If you left today, you have **$3,500/month** for a **$96 per diem.** You are unwilling to change travely style, so you have to save more.

THE GAP
You need another **$1,500 per month**, which is **$18,000** in a year.

CURRENT MONTHLY SAVINGS
You currently set aside **$150/month** into your savings account. At that rate, you'll save **$1,800 per year** and would need **10 more years** to reach your goal. But....in 10 years, prices will change, so you probably want to change something so you can leave sooner!

ANNUAL CALCULATION FORMULA
Take the number of years in which you want to leave, and multiply that by 12. Then divide your GAP amount by the resulting number to determine how much you need to save per month to be ready in the timeframe you want.

So, if you want to leave in 5 years:
5x12 = 60. Now take your GAP amount ($18,000) and divide it by 60, and you need $300/month

Take What You Learned To The Next Level

LEARN MORE

Learn how to make money without a stable job and how to sustain your travels for as long as you want!