

Life

How to save a girls' trip where everything goes wrong

Hi, it's your drama/disaster survival guide!

By ASHLEY MATEO

is there anything better than a great vacay with all your BFFs? Obvious answer: No, there is not. Especially when it includes wine. And gorgeous scenery. And all that bonding time you miss out on during real life. Also: group pics. Alllll the group pics.

Still, let's be real—shit's gonna go down. It always does. But making sure your friends don't kill each other might be easier than it seems.

The faces you make when Melissa puts on her annoying drunk voice.

SITCH 1



Your friends are all fighting like assholes

When you throw together long flights, different time zones, and weird sleeping arrangements, it's hardly surprising that your crew can go from as tight as Betty and Veronica to... as tight as Betty and Veronica. **"Confront drama early—**just not in front of everyone else," says Kelly Lewis, founder of Go! Girl Guides. Bring your most pissed-off pal to the side and ask her WTF is up. Is she whining because she really wants to go paddleboarding, but everyone else is still dealing with the aftermath of last night's bar crawl? Play camp counselor and build a few hours of free time into your schedule every day moving forward. That way, she can have an actual adventure while the hungover crew has some Netflix time. But if one gal really just isn't a good traveler—and you're only learning this now, fun!—don't be a dick about it. Ask what she needs to feel more comfortable. (See: that Netflix time.) And if she starts to drive everyone else crazy, suggest you all take a breather...alone.



May you at least encounter a tourist willing to take your 4,000 pics.

SITCH 2



The hotel catfished you

That adorable motel covered in fairy lights on Insta? IRL, it's more like a horror house. If you legit don't feel safe sleeping there, don't, says Lewis. Search the HotelTonight app for discounted **last-minute situations.** If you already shelled out for the whole trip and the place lied to you but isn't dangerous, suck it up (sorry, it's true!). But def spend time at the front desk asking for extras like a few drinks on the house, says travel influencer Alyssa Ramos (@MyLifesATravelMovie).

SITCH 3



Your luggage is g-o-n-e

Nobody wants to show up in paradise without their #OOTDs, so **tell your squad to stuff basics into their carry-ons:** "A change of clothes, some toiletries," suggests Julie Falconer, who blogs about travel at Alady inLondon.com. If your suitcase goes MIA, don't throw a tantrum in baggage claim (this will accomplish exactly nada). Instead, do a little local shopping, says Ramos. "You should have some budget set aside for souvenirs and emergency funds, and technically, this qualifies."

The crier, the suitcase, the better, the vacay.



SITCH 4



The forecast calls for rain... for the next five days

You thought you'd be on the beach taking selfies. Instead, you're at the bar with everyone else and their moms. Guys, it's gonna be okay: **Google "rainy day activities + [location]"** and look for URLs that take you to niche travel blogs, like ones run by influencers or locals. (They actually know what's up.) "I've found indoor flea markets, underground libraries, and local beer tastings to make up for being rained out," says Ramos.

SITCH 5



Your budgets are all out of whack

To avoid on-vacay drama, **pose this to the group a few weeks beforehand:** "Setting my vacay budget and would love to get a sense of what we want to do! Is putting \$X aside for the trip realistic?" If some people want to ball out, that's fine. Just say you'll probably skip the more extra activities. Chances are, someone else will pick the free walking tour over a \$250-per-hour boat ride too.

SITCH 6



All the most 'grammable restos are full

Don't let a two-hour wait stop you. **"Try bypassing the reservation list by eating at the bar,"** says Ramos, "or get a drink to see inside, then eat your mains and desserts somewhere else." Still starving with no options? "Post an Insta Story asking your followers for alternative ideas," says Falconer. "A lot of people have favorite spots or know hidden gems." Low-key, grabbing dessert at that hole-in-the-wall chocolate shop might be more drool-worthy than squeezing into the doughnut chain with a million tagged pics but no place to sit.