

## Driving Through The Night: Travel Tips

by Michelle Kosloff, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Some people take long distance car trips for sheer enjoyment. We however, often do it out of necessity. Well, not quite necessity. But we want to take trips to far away places and can't afford to fly our whole family. So the best option? Driving. When you do the math, even considering wear and tear on the car, for four people, driving often comes out to be the less expensive option. Then again, if there could be a price tag put on sanity ...

Now we could take our time, drive only so many hours per day, and relax and enjoy the scenery. But we would rather get there and enjoy our time at our destination. So we are 'drive through the night' sort of people. My husband and I take turns driving (we are both comfortable driving long distances) while the other plops in the back and sleeps, ready to take over in a few hours. One of the non-drivers (older kids) gets to try to sleep in the uncomfortable front seat. (It's far more important that the person who will be driving be well rested, so resist the urge to sacrifice for your kids in this particular instance.)

We've taken many car trips at this point, most of them in the winter. (What better way to get away from our wonderful Canadian weather?) So here is my list of through-the-night, long distance trip tips. Some are humorous, some are serious, but all are ripped from real life experience.

\* If your transmission blows, try to go to a transmission shop, not just any side-of-the-road garage. Going to a no-name garage will likely result in you ending up at a real transmission shop a few more hours down the road.

\* If your tire blows, go to a tire shop. \* If your muffler blows, go to a muffler shop ... you get the idea!

\* Pack a winter survival kit -- ice melt, windshield scraper, etc. Chances are you won't use it but the peace of mind is worth it.

\* Pack snowsuits, boots, hats, and mittens, just in case. You probably won't use them, but knowing they are there practically guarantees you won't need them. \* Pack lots of food. Yes, some of it will go uneaten as the pull of the drive-through window grows with each passing mile, but you will feel like you are saving money anyway.

\* Caffeine is your friend! \* If you almost hit a deer at 2:00 in the morning, screaming will only disturb your sleeping passengers. They'll just grumble, "We didn't hit it, there was no reason to wake us up!"

\* Diaper changes are optional, but the diaper rash that follows isn't!

\* There are truck stops with showers. This makes an excellent pick me up after a night of driving and will wake you up for the next day of driving. \* GPS units are the through-the-night driver's saving grace. No navigator with maps required.

\* Keep the passenger compartments of your car as empty as possible (a cargo pod for the roof of the car is very useful). You'll need the extra space so you can stretch out and sleep.

\* Books on tape (or CD) make the time pass faster and help the driver stay alert as he/she stares at the endless horizon. Check out your local library for tapes/CDs you can borrow. Our library now offers downloadable books for free! This is also a great boon for families with car-sick prone children who can't read or watch DVDs without getting nauseous.

\* Anti-motion sickness pills are also great if your children are prone to car-sickness. (Be sure to test for potential side effects BEFORE your trip!) A nice side-effect of this medication is that it can make the user drowsy and everyone knows that the time passes more quickly when you are sleeping ...

\* A bucket doubles as a garbage bucket and a bucket for holding other messes (when the anti-motion sick pills don't work).

\* When someone in our family says "I'm not feeling well, can you pull over?" you pull over -- right away! Saves a lot of messy clean up time.

\* Once you get to your destination, stop by a car wash. You will feel much more comfortable in your car when it is clean and vacuumed. Remember -- you still need to drive home!

*About The Author: Michelle Kosloff has previously contributed articles on [Prince Edward Island](#) and [Niagara Falls](#) to PassPorter News. She is a Computer Programmer from Woodstock, Ontario, Canada and is married with two children.*

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