

DIASPORA & JOURNEYS

TRAVEL • EST. SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

The Complete Traveler's Companion

from home to homeland & back



Your friendly, step-by-step guide to passports, visas, booking & changing flights, moving through the airport with confidence, requesting the help you need, and everything else it takes to travel well — whether it is your first trip or your fiftieth.

Happiest Honor to Serve You

DIASPORAJOURNEYS.US

Welcome, and safe travels ahead

For many of us, a journey is never only a trip. It is a wedding we have waited years to attend, a parent we are aching to hold again, a homeland we left but never forgot — and, one day, a return.

We built Diaspora Journeys to serve our communities across Minnesota and more than a dozen states — Karen, Bamar, Shan, Chin, Kachin, Mon, Rakhine, Kayah, and every neighbor who travels alongside us. We have watched first-time flyers worry at the check-in counter, elders unsure how to ask for a wheelchair, and families unsure whether their passport was ready in time. None of that worry is necessary. Travel has rules and rhythms, and once you know them, the airport becomes a doorway rather than a wall.

This guide gathers what we wish every traveler knew before their first flight: how to get your documents, how to book and change a ticket without paying more than you should, how to walk from the front door of the airport all the way to your seat, and how to ask for help in a way that gets you help. Keep it on your phone. Print it for a loved one. Share it with your circle.

And when you are ready to travel — for a homeland visit, a pilgrimage, a family reunion, or a first adventure — we would be honored to plan it with you.

Maung H. Naing

Founder & CEO, Diaspora Journeys Travel LLC · Saint Paul, Minnesota

HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

The prices, wait times, and entry rules in this guide are accurate as of **mid-2026**, but governments change them often. Always confirm the current details before you pay or pack — or simply ask us, and we will confirm them for you. This guide is general education, not personal legal or immigration advice.

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01

Before You Go — Your Travel Documents

Nothing stops a trip faster than a document problem. Start here, and start early — most delays happen because people wait too long. This part covers your U.S. passport, entering Thailand, the new REAL ID rule for flying inside the U.S., and important guidance for travelers who are not yet citizens.

How to Get a U.S. Passport

Your passport is the single most important document for international travel. Plan for it to take up to two months, and never book non-refundable travel until it is in your hand.

A U.S. passport is available to **U.S. citizens and nationals**. There are two paths: a **first-time application** (form **DS-11**, done in person) and a **renewal** (form **DS-82**, which many adults can now do by mail or online).

FIRST-TIME APPLICANTS — STEP BY STEP

- 1 Complete Form DS-11.** Fill it out online and print it, but *do not sign it* — you will sign in front of an acceptance agent.
- 2 Gather proof of citizenship.** An original U.S. birth certificate (with raised or official seal) or a Certificate of Naturalization / Citizenship. Bring a photocopy too.
- 3 Bring photo ID.** A valid driver's license, state ID, or Certificate of Naturalization — plus a photocopy of the front and back.
- 4 Get a passport photo.** 2×2 inches, color, plain white background, no glasses. Most pharmacies and shipping stores take these.
- 5 Book an appointment at an acceptance facility.** A post office, public library, or county clerk's office. First-time applicants must apply in person.
- 6 Pay the fees** (see below). The application fee goes to the State Department; the execution fee goes to the facility. Bring the right payment types — a check or money order for the application fee, as cards are often not accepted for it.
- 7 Track and wait.** You will receive a tracking option online. Your passport and returned documents usually arrive in separate mailings.

WHAT IT COSTS IN 2026

Passport	Application fee	Execution fee	Typical total
Adult book — first time (16+)	\$130	\$35	\$165
Adult book — renewal by mail/online	\$130	none	\$130
Child book (under 16)	\$100	\$35	\$135
Passport card (adult, add-on)	\$30	\$35 if first time	\$30–\$65

Optional: **Expedited processing** adds **\$60**. **1–3 day return delivery** adds about **\$23.36**. Fees are non-refundable, even if an application is denied.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

ROUTINE SERVICE

6 to 8 weeks to process, plus mailing time on each end. Give yourself the full window.

EXPEDITED SERVICE (+\$60)

2 to 3 weeks to process. For true emergencies with travel inside 14 days, a passport agency appointment may be possible.

△ THE MISTAKES THAT CAUSE DELAYS

- ◆ A photo that breaks the rules (glasses, shadows, wrong size, smiling too much).
- ◆ Signing DS-11 early, or leaving it unsigned when a signature is required.
- ◆ Sending a birth certificate copy instead of the original, or one without an official seal.
- ◆ Paying with the wrong method — the application fee usually needs a check or money order.

◆ DIASPORA JOURNEYS TIP – THE SIX-MONTH RULE

Most countries, **including Thailand**, require your passport to be valid for at least **six months beyond your entry date**. Check the expiry the day you start planning — not the week you fly. If it expires within a year, renew before you book.

Adults' passport books are valid 10 years; children's are valid 5 years. Renew a few months before expiry so you are never caught short during travel season.

Entering Thailand — Visa & the TDAC

For a homeland visit, a pilgrimage, or a family gathering, Thailand is one of the easiest countries to enter — if you complete one free online form before you fly. Here is exactly how, for U.S. passport holders in 2026.

THE GOOD NEWS FOR U.S. CITIZENS

U.S. passport holders traveling for tourism do **not need a visa in advance**. You receive a **visa exemption stamp on arrival, valid for up to 60 days**. What you *do* need is your passport, an onward or return ticket, and — this is the part that catches people — the **Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC)**.

YOUR THAILAND ENTRY, STEP BY STEP

- 1 Check your passport.** It must be valid for at least **6 months** beyond your date of entry.
- 2 Have proof of onward travel.** Immigration or your airline may ask to see a return or onward ticket within your 60 days. Carry a printed copy.
- 3 File the TDAC online.** Within **72 hours before arrival**, complete the free form at the *official* Thai Immigration site (tdac.immigration.go.th). It replaced the old paper card and is **mandatory since May 2025**.
- 4 Save your QR code.** After submitting, you receive a QR code. Save it to your phone and print a copy — airlines increasingly check for it at boarding.
- 5 Arrive and get your stamp.** Present your passport and QR code at immigration. You receive your 60-day visa-exemption stamp. Keep the stamp date in mind.
- 6 Need more time?** Extend once for an extra **30 days** at a Thai immigration office for about **฿1,900**, or apply for a 60-day Tourist Visa at a Royal Thai Embassy *before* you travel.

⚠️ AVOID THE TDAC SCAM SITES

The TDAC is **free** and only official on the Thai government website. Many look-alike websites charge a "processing fee" for it — they are not official. Never pay a third party for the TDAC, and never enter your passport details on a site you reached through an ad. When in doubt, let us file it with you.

⚠️ RULES ARE CHANGING — CONFIRM BEFORE YOU FLY

Thailand has debated reducing the visa-exemption stay from 60 to 30 days, and other details shift with each season. As of mid-2026 the 60-day exemption remains in force, but always reconfirm the current rule close to your travel date. We monitor these changes for our travelers.

◆ **IMPORTANT – THIS SECTION IS FOR U.S. PASSPORT HOLDERS**

If you travel on a **Myanmar passport** or any passport other than a U.S. one, your visa rules for Thailand are **completely different** — and if your journey continues on to **Myanmar**, that is a separate visa process with its own requirements and current safety considerations.

Please do not assume the rules above apply to you. Tell us which passport you hold and where you are headed, and we will map out the exact documents you need.

Flying Inside the U.S. — REAL ID

Even for a domestic flight with no passport needed, your ID now has to meet a federal standard.

To board a flight *within* the United States, adults now need a **REAL ID-compliant** driver's license or state ID — the kind with a **star in the top corner** — or an acceptable alternative such as a **valid passport** or passport card. This requirement is now in full enforcement.

- ◆ **Check your license for the star.** No star means it is not REAL ID-compliant. Visit your state DMV to upgrade — bring proof of identity, Social Security, and two proofs of address.
- ◆ **A passport always works** as an alternative, for both domestic and international flights.
- ◆ **No compliant ID at the checkpoint?** You may be charged a fee (about **\$45**) to verify your identity another way, valid for a short window — but this causes delays and is not guaranteed. Do not rely on it.

◆ **DIASPORA JOURNEYS TIP**

If your household has upcoming travel, make a family "document day": check every passport expiry date and every license for the star, all at once. It is far less stressful than discovering a problem at the airport.

02

Booking Your Flight

A ticket is more than a price. The *type* of fare you buy decides whether you can change your date, choose your seat, or bring a bag. This part shows you how to book wisely — and how to avoid the traps that turn a "cheap" ticket into an expensive one.

How to Book a Flight

You can book directly with an airline, through a booking site, or — our favorite — through a travel advisor who catches the details for you. Whichever you choose, the steps are the same.

- 1 Search your route and dates.** Enter your home airport, destination, and flexible dates if you have them. Mid-week departures are often cheaper than weekends.
- 2 Compare non-stop vs. connecting.** Non-stop is simpler and safer for first-time flyers. If you connect, leave **at least 2 hours** between flights domestically and **3 hours** internationally.
- 3 Read the fare type before you click.** The lowest price is often **Basic Economy** — cheap, but usually no seat choice, no changes, and limited baggage. A standard "Main" fare costs a little more and gives you flexibility.
- 4 Enter names exactly as on your passport or ID.** Even a small spelling difference can cause problems at check-in. Double-check before paying.
- 5 Choose your seat.** Aisle for easy movement, window for rest, front rows for a quicker exit. Traveling with family or an elder? Book seats together.
- 6 Add baggage now if you need it.** Bags added at booking are cheaper than bags added at the airport.
- 7 Pay and save your confirmation.** You will receive a **6-character confirmation code** (your PNR) and an e-ticket. Save both to your phone and email.

UNDERSTANDING FARE TYPES

Fare type	Seat choice	Changes	Baggage
Basic Economy	Usually no	Usually not allowed	Carry-on may be limited
Main / Standard Economy	Yes	Often allowed (fare difference applies)	Carry-on included; checked bag extra
Premium / Business	Yes, best seats	Most flexible	Generous allowance

GOOD TO KNOW — WHEN TO BOOK

For domestic trips, booking **1–3 months ahead** is often a sweet spot; for international, **2–6 months**. Prices rise as seats fill, and holiday and homeland-visit seasons (Thingyan, year-end, wedding season) sell out early. Book those far in advance.

◆ WHY BOOK WITH AN ADVISOR

When you book through Diaspora Journeys, we read the fine print for you, hold seats together for families, watch for schedule changes, and help you rebook if something goes wrong — in your language, with a real person to call. That safety net costs you nothing extra on most bookings.

03

Changing Your Plans

Life happens. A visa comes late, a family need arises, a date shifts. Knowing the rules for changing and cancelling can save you hundreds of dollars — and a great deal of worry.

How to Change Your Departure Date

Most standard tickets can be changed. The cost is usually not a "change fee" anymore — it is the difference in fare between your old flight and the new one.

- 1 **Find your confirmation code (PNR)** and pull up "My Trips" on the airline's website or app, or call us.
- 2 **Select "Change flight"** and choose your new date. The system shows you the **fare difference** — you pay more if the new flight costs more, and may receive credit if it costs less.
- 3 **Check for a change fee first.** Many major U.S. airlines have **removed change fees on standard fares**, but **Basic Economy is usually not changeable at all**. Know your fare type before you try.
- 4 **Confirm the new flight and save the updated ticket.** Re-check your seat selection — it may not carry over automatically.

GOOD TO KNOW — THE 24-HOUR RULE WORKS IN YOUR FAVOR

If you booked directly with a U.S. airline and your flight is at least 7 days away, you can **change or cancel free within 24 hours of booking**. If you spot a mistake right after buying — a wrong date, a misspelled name — fix it immediately, within that first day.

How to Cancel a Flight

What you get back depends on your fare and on who cancelled — you, or the airline.

IF YOU CANCEL

- 1 **Act within 24 hours if you can.** Booked directly and at least 7 days before departure? Cancel within 24 hours for a **full refund**.
- 2 **After 24 hours, check your fare.** A **refundable** ticket returns your money. A **non-refundable** ticket usually becomes a **travel credit** for future use (minus any rules). Basic Economy may forfeit the value entirely.
- 3 **Cancel before departure, never after.** If you simply do not show up ("no-show"), you often lose the ticket's value. Always cancel in advance to protect any credit.
- 4 **Save the cancellation confirmation** and note the expiry date on any travel credit.

IF THE AIRLINE CANCELS OR GREATLY CHANGES YOUR FLIGHT

◆ YOU ARE OWED A REFUND – IN MONEY

Under U.S. rules, if the **airline** cancels your flight or changes it significantly and you choose not to travel, you are entitled to a **cash refund to your original payment method** – not just a voucher. You do not have to accept a credit. Ask for the refund clearly, and keep records.

Refunds to your card typically take up to about 7 business days; other methods can take longer.

◆ WHEN PLANS WOBBLE, CALL US FIRST

Before you cancel anything yourself, reach out. Sometimes a date can be moved for less than the cost of cancelling, sometimes a credit can be protected that would otherwise be lost, and sometimes the airline owes you more than it first offers. A two-minute call can save real money.

04

At the Airport, Step by Step

This is where first-time travelers feel most unsure — and where it turns out there is nothing to fear. From the front door to your seat, here is every step in order, with the timing that keeps you calm and unhurried.

Arrival & Check-In

GOOD TO KNOW — HOW EARLY TO ARRIVE

Arrive at least **2 hours before a domestic flight** and **3 hours before an international flight**. Add extra time during holidays, or if you need special assistance, are checking bags, or are new to the airport.

- 1 Check in online first.** Most airlines open check-in **24 hours before** departure. Do it from home to get your boarding pass on your phone and confirm your seat.
- 2 Find your airline's counter or kiosk.** Airport signs are organized by airline. Look for your airline's name and logo.
- 3 Drop your checked bags.** If you are checking luggage, go to "Bag Drop." Have your ID and boarding pass ready. Know each airline's **weight limit** (often around 50 lb per checked bag) to avoid overweight fees.
- 4 Keep essentials in your carry-on.** Medications, documents, phone, chargers, a change of clothes, and anything valuable stay *with you* — never in a checked bag.
- 5 Have your ID and boarding pass in hand** as you head to security.

Getting Through Security

Security feels intimidating the first time. In truth it is a short, orderly line with a few simple rules — and in 2026 several of those rules have become easier.

- 1 Show your ID and boarding pass** to the officer. Remember: a **REAL ID** (star on your license) or a **passport** is required.
- 2 Empty your pockets** into a bin — phone, keys, coins, wallet. Place bags flat on the belt.
- 3 Follow the liquids rule (3-1-1).** Carry-on liquids, gels, and creams must be in containers of **3.4 oz (100 ml)** or less, all fitting in **one quart-size clear bag, one bag per person**.
- 4 Laptops:** take them out of your bag into a separate bin — unless the airport has newer **CT scanners**, where they can stay in your bag. Follow the signs and the officer.
- 5 Shoes usually stay on.** Since 2025 most travelers no longer remove shoes, though an officer may still ask if the scanner alarms or you are selected for extra screening.
- 6 Walk through the scanner** when waved forward, then collect all your items. Double-check you have your phone, ID, and boarding pass before leaving.

GOOD TO KNOW – MEDICATION & ESSENTIALS ARE EXEMPT

Prescription and essential **medications, baby formula, and breast milk** are allowed in larger quantities than the 3-1-1 limit. Simply tell the officer and keep them separate for screening. Keep pills in labeled containers when you can. **Spare lithium batteries and power banks must go in your carry-on**, never in checked bags.

◆ DIASPORA JOURNEYS TIP – SKIP THE LONG LINE

If you fly a few times a year, **TSA PreCheck** (domestic) and **Global Entry** (which includes PreCheck and speeds your return to the U.S. from abroad) are worth the modest fee. They mean shorter lines and less unpacking. Ask us whether it fits your travel.

How to Find Your Departure Gate

Once past security, you are in the "gate area." Finding your gate is simply a matter of reading two things: your boarding pass, and the overhead screens.

READ YOUR BOARDING PASS

Your boarding pass tells you everything you need in a few short lines:

On your pass	What it means
Gate	The doorway you board from (e.g., "C12"). Gates can change — always reconfirm on the screens.
Terminal / Concourse	The building or wing your gate is in. Large airports have several; follow the letter/number signs.
Boarding time	When boarding <i>begins</i> — earlier than the departure time. Be at the gate before this.
Group / Zone	The order you board in. You wait until your group is called.
Seat	Your place on the plane (e.g., "24A" — row 24, seat A).

FIND YOUR WAY THERE

- 1 **Look for the overhead "Departures" screens** (Flight Information Display). Find your flight number and it shows your gate and status — "On Time," "Boarding," or "Delayed."
- 2 **Follow the signs to your gate letter and number.** Signs point the way; gates run in order along each concourse.
- 3 **Watch for a train or shuttle.** Big airports connect terminals with a tram — signs will tell you if you need it.
- 4 **Arrive at the gate early** and confirm the flight number on the desk screen matches yours. Sit nearby and listen for announcements.
- 5 **Recheck the screen if you leave** to use a restroom or buy food. Gates occasionally change at the last minute.

△ DON'T WANDER TOO FAR

It is fine to get food or coffee, but stay within hearing distance of your gate once boarding time approaches. If you cannot understand an announcement, show your boarding pass to any airline staff member and ask, "Is my flight boarding?" — they are there to help.

BOARDING

- ◆ Passengers needing extra time or using a wheelchair, and often families with small children, board **first**.
- ◆ Then boarding proceeds by **group or zone number**. Wait for yours; there is no advantage to crowding early.
- ◆ Have your **boarding pass ready to scan** and your ID handy. Find your seat, stow your bag in the overhead bin or under the seat in front, and settle in.

05

Asking for Help — Special Assistance

Needing help is never something to be shy about. Airlines are *required* to provide it, free of charge. This part is especially for our elders and for anyone traveling with a family member who needs extra care — so that no one is ever left struggling at the airport.

How to Request a Wheelchair

*Wheelchair assistance at the airport is **free** and is your **right** under U.S. law (the Air Carrier Access Act). You do not need to own a wheelchair to use this service — it is for anyone who cannot comfortably walk the long airport distances.*

REQUEST IT IN ADVANCE — THE EASY WAY

- 1 **Ask when you book.** Tell us, or tell the airline, that you need wheelchair assistance. It is added to your reservation as "special assistance."
- 2 **Reconfirm 48 hours before.** A quick call to the airline confirms the wheelchair will be waiting. Airlines appreciate advance notice, ideally at least 48 hours.
- 3 **Arrive earlier than usual.** Give yourself extra time so assistance is never rushed — add 30–60 minutes to the normal arrival window.

REQUEST IT AT THE AIRPORT

- 1 **Ask at curbside or the check-in counter.** Say clearly, "We need wheelchair assistance, please." A wheelchair and an attendant will be arranged.
- 2 **An attendant escorts you** from check-in, through security, and all the way to your gate — and will help you board.
- 3 **If you use your own wheelchair,** you can bring it to the gate and **gate-check it for free**; it is returned to you at the aircraft door on arrival.
- 4 **On arrival,** a wheelchair meets you at the plane and takes you to baggage claim and onward — arrange this in advance so it is waiting.

GOOD TO KNOW — WHAT "ASSISTANCE" INCLUDES

The attendant helps with the long walk, security, boarding, connecting between flights, and reaching baggage claim. On the plane, an **aisle chair** can help a traveler reach their seat. A tip is appreciated but never required for this service.

Other Help You Can Ask For

Wheelchairs are only one kind of support. Airlines and airports can accommodate many needs — you only have to ask, ideally in advance.

- ◆ **Traveling with medication.** Keep it in your carry-on, in labeled containers, with a copy of the prescription. Liquid medications are allowed beyond the 3-1-1 limit — just declare them at security.
- ◆ **Dietary or religious meal needs.** On longer flights you can request meals in advance — vegetarian, halal, and others — through the airline or your advisor.

- ◆ **Language assistance.** If English is difficult, airport and airline staff can help; tell us your preferred language and we note it. Carry a card with your key details written down.
- ◆ **Hearing or vision assistance.** Staff can provide help boarding, reading announcements, and navigating — request it in advance.
- ◆ **Traveling with an elder or child who needs supervision.** Ask about escort and "meet-and-assist" services so a family member is guided every step.
- ◆ **A companion or escort pass.** In some cases a family member without a ticket can get a gate pass to help a traveler to or from the gate — ask the airline.

◆ **WE ARRANGE ALL OF THIS FOR YOU**

For our senior community especially, we handle special-assistance requests, meal preferences, and language needs as part of planning your trip — so a parent or grandparent travels with dignity and ease, and the family travels with peace of mind. Just tell us what is needed.

06

Domestic vs. International Travel

A flight across the country and a flight across the world share the same airport steps — but the paperwork, timing, and arrival experience differ. Here is what changes when you cross a border, and what to expect when you come home.

What Changes When You Fly Internationally

	Domestic (within U.S.)	International
ID / documents	REAL ID or passport	Passport (valid 6+ months); visa or entry card if required
Arrive before flight	~2 hours	~3 hours
Entry paperwork	None	Arrival card (e.g., Thailand's TDAC), customs form
On arrival	Walk out to baggage claim	Immigration → baggage → customs
Coming home to U.S.	—	U.S. Customs & Border Protection; declare goods
Money	U.S. dollars	Local currency; tell your bank you're traveling
Phone	Works as usual	eSIM, local SIM, or an international plan

ARRIVING IN ANOTHER COUNTRY

- 1 Immigration first.** Have your passport, entry stamp/visa, and arrival card (TDAC QR code for Thailand) ready. Answer simply: where you're staying, and how long.
- 2 Collect your bags** at baggage claim, matching the screen to your flight.
- 3 Customs.** Follow "nothing to declare" or "goods to declare." Gifts, large amounts of cash (declare over the local limit), and certain foods have rules — when unsure, declare.

COMING HOME TO THE UNITED STATES

- 1 U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP).** Present your passport; a returning citizen or resident is asked about your trip and what you're bringing back.
- 2 Declare what you bought abroad,** including gifts. Honesty is always the right choice — penalties for not declaring far exceed any duty.
- 3 Mind agricultural rules.** Many foods, plants, and seeds cannot enter the U.S. If you're bringing traditional foods or medicinal plants home, ask us first — some are fine, some are not, and the fines are steep.

◆ DIASPORA JOURNEYS TIP – CONNECTING FLIGHTS

On international trips you often connect through a hub. Leave **at least 3 hours** for an international connection, more if you must clear immigration and recheck bags. If a delay threatens your connection, tell airline staff *immediately* – they can often rebook you on the spot.

07

A Traveler's Wisdom

The practical habits that make every journey smoother and safer — and a word about what travel means for those of us who carry a homeland in our hearts.

Small Habits, Smoother Journeys

Pack with intention

- ◆ **Carry-on the essentials:** passport, medications, chargers, one change of clothes, valuables. If a checked bag is delayed, you are still fine.
- ◆ **Photograph your documents** — passport, visa, tickets — and email them to yourself. A lost passport is far easier to replace with a copy in hand.
- ◆ **Weigh your bag at home** to avoid overweight surprises. Leave room for gifts and the things you'll carry back.

Money & connectivity

- ◆ **Tell your bank** the countries and dates you'll travel, so your card isn't frozen abroad.
- ◆ **Carry two forms of payment** kept in separate places, plus a little local cash for arrival.
- ◆ **Sort out your phone** before you fly — an eSIM or international plan keeps you reachable and lets you use maps and translation.

Health & safety

- ◆ **Consider travel insurance**, especially for international trips and elders — it can cover medical needs, cancellations, and lost bags. Ask us for options.
- ◆ **Check health requirements** for your destination well ahead — some vaccinations must be given weeks before travel.
- ◆ **Keep a written list** of your medications, allergies, and an emergency contact, in English and your own language.
- ◆ **Move and hydrate** on long flights; stand and stretch to keep your legs healthy.

⚠️ PROTECT YOURSELF FROM TRAVEL SCAMS

Only use official government sites for visas and entry cards (they are free or low-cost). Be wary of anyone promising jobs, cheap "guaranteed" visas, or overseas work that requires paying money up front — these are common ways our community is targeted. When something feels off, pause and ask us. It costs nothing to check.

The Spirit of the Journey

For those of us in the diaspora, travel is rarely ordinary. It is memory and hope moving together.

Every trip we plan carries something more than luggage. It carries a daughter meeting her grandmother for the first time. A son standing where his father once stood. Communities keeping their culture alive across oceans.

When you step onto that plane, you are not only crossing distance — you are weaving a thread between where you are and where you are from.

So travel with confidence. Learn the steps in this guide until they feel ordinary, because they will. Ask for help freely — it is a strength, not a weakness. Be kind to the strangers who help you along the way, and let yourself feel the wonder of arrival. The rules and forms are simply the doorway. What waits on the other side is the reason you go.

*"A journey home is never just a journey.
It is a homecoming for the heart."*

Your Pre-Departure Checklist

Follow this before every trip. Print it, or check it off on your phone.

2-3 MONTHS BEFORE

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Passport valid 6+ months beyond your return date | ☐ Seats & baggage chosen; family seated together |
| ☐ Visa / entry rules checked for your destination & passport | ☐ Special assistance requested if needed (wheelchair, meals) |
| ☐ Flights booked ; names match your ID exactly | ☐ Health & vaccines checked for your destination |

1-2 WEEKS BEFORE

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Travel insurance in place (recommended) | ☐ Copies made of passport, visa & tickets (emailed to self) |
| ☐ Bank notified of travel dates & countries | ☐ REAL ID confirmed for domestic legs (star on license) |
| ☐ Phone plan / eSIM arranged | ☐ Medication list written in English & your language |

72 HOURS & DAY OF TRAVEL

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ TDAC filed for Thailand (within 72 hrs) — QR saved & printed | Bags weighed ; essentials & meds in carry-on |
| ☐ Checked in online (24 hrs before); boarding pass on phone | ☐ Liquids in 3-1-1 quart bag; power banks in carry-on |
| ☐ | ☐ Arrive early — 2 hrs domestic, 3 hrs international |
| | ☐ ID & boarding pass in hand for security |

◆ ONE NUMBER TO REMEMBER

When anything feels uncertain — a document question, a delay, a change of plans — reach your Diaspora Journeys advisor. We would rather answer ten small questions than have you worry over one. That is the whole reason we exist.

DIASPORA JOURNEYS TRAVEL

Let us plan your next journey home

From homeland visits and pilgrimages to family reunions and first adventures — we plan travel with care, in your language, for your community. Documents, flights, assistance, and every detail in between, handled with heart.



Happiest Honor to Serve You

Diaspora Journeys Travel LLC · Saint Paul, Minnesota

Serving Minnesota's Myanmar diaspora & communities across 12+ states

diasporajourneys.us

This guide is provided for general educational purposes and reflects rules current as of mid-2026. Requirements change frequently — always confirm current passport, visa, and airline rules before you travel. © 2026 Diaspora Journeys Travel LLC.