

Bed bugs don't make good souvenirs to bring home to your family after traveling out of town.

Many people have asked me if I have some tips for travelers to help them avoid bringing home these biting bugs. Here's your checklist for traveling out of town:

1. **Check the hotel beds for bed bugs** – take the bed apart! Check mattresses and box springs thoroughly – inspect every seam, crack and crevice, void, etc. Set the mattress and box spring on end and thoroughly check every nook and cranny. Check behind, under and around the head boards, foot boards, and bed frame. Look for small 1/8 inch and smaller bugs. They are reddish-brown and look similar to a small, flat tick. Also look for multiple, tiny, dark pin-head sized dots. These may be excretion marks from bed bugs.
2. **Inspect other areas** – every crack and crevice, just like you inspected the bed. If your hotel has a sofa, love seat, desk, or other chairs, check those areas thoroughly as well. Take a flashlight with you, checking every crack and crevice, with emphasis on the beds and other furniture.
3. **Keep your clothes inside your luggage if at all possible.** Bag your luggage in large trash bags, securely tied. Open it only when you need to take something out of your luggage.
4. **When returning home, inspect your luggage thoroughly** – again, every crack and crevice. Take your clothes (both worn and unworn) directly to your washer machine, and wash and dry your clothes.
5. Should you find bed bugs when inspecting your luggage, **leave it outside and call a professional pest control operator** to make sure the bed bugs are eradicated before taking your luggage inside. If your luggage is old and you don't mind being without it, it can be tossed in the trash outside.

These steps should be more than adequate in keeping the bed bugs from hitching a ride back to your home. Note: should you find bed bugs in your hotel room, immediately (and quietly) inform the front desk / manager and request a room that is not adjacent to the infested room. Then, of course, inspect that room thoroughly.

Any other questions? Visit Redwine Pest Control's web site at www.RedwinePest.com. There, you will find useful information concerning bed bugs, as well as a preparation checklist for those who are having their home or apartment treated.

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