



## HONING

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*See “Timing and Location are Important” in the Cathleen’s Odyssey blog post, [Thematic Travel: The Ultimate Guide](#) for help with this step.*

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- Put a star by one to three of the activities in #1 that you think would make a good theme for traveling. List each one on an “Activity:” line below. Under each activity, list the countries where you would likely find people who also participate in the activity.

Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible destinations for this activity:

Is there a seasonal limitation?

Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible destinations for this activity:

Is there a seasonal limitation?

Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Possible destinations for this activity:

Is there a seasonal limitation?

## DREAMING

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*See “Timing and Location are Important” in the Cathleen’s Odyssey blog post, [Thematic Travel: The Ultimate Guide](#) for help with this step.*

*This is a good place to use mind-mapping. If you are not familiar with that technique, you can read more at this [lifehacker.com](#) page.*

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4. Choose one of the above activity/destination combinations above and write a paragraph or more about how you envision engaging with people who enjoy the same activity. Don’t hold back. Record even your wildest fantasies. You never know...
  
5. STOP! Wait a day or a week before continuing this worksheet. During this time, do some daydreaming about what it would be like to travel with this theme.

Of course, I can never resist going straight to Google and getting lost in some searches to see what’s “out there.” But this is not the time to get too bogged down in planning details. Just browse through the sites. If you see some that look worth returning to, start a tentative list of the best sites using your favorite notetaking app.

So, go ahead: Check the internet or your library for blogs, videos, books, and magazine articles. But try not to get too carried away with the media. You want to take time to think about how YOU would experience this trip. Jot down the ideas you come up with.

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*I get the best ideas for my thematic trips while actually doing something else—driving, standing in line, eating dinner.*

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REPEAT STEPS 4 AND 5 UNTIL YOU HAVE DECIDED ON YOUR THEME AND THE PLACES TO WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO TRAVEL.

## LEARNING MORE

6. Once you have chosen a country (countries) and a theme, it is time to start synthesizing your plans. At first, I enjoy collecting various types of information, even if the organization is haphazard at first.

Reread the blog post, [Thematic Travel: The Ultimate Guide](#), and use the ideas there to start listing such things as:

- Books, blogs, and articles to read.
- Useful websites
- Facebook, Meetup.com, and other social media groups
- Events, classes, demonstrations, attractions (including museums)
- Groups, shops to contact/visit
- People to contact personally

## THEME PROJECT

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*In [Thematic Travel: the Ultimate Guide](#), reread the section, “Create a Thematic Travel Project” for more information about creating travel activities related to your theme.*

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7. What are some ideas for creative projects I can work on which will enhance my enjoyment of this trip as well as interest locals and other travelers in networking with me.

## THE NITTY GRITTY

8. What are the tools and supplies I use in my activity?

Would they be portable enough for me to carry them while traveling?

If not, are there smaller/more compact versions of them? Or can they be purchased or rented for a reasonable price at my destination? Borrowed?

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*Do you love your fishing equipment so much that you can't consider fishing without it? Then you will figure out a way to bring it along. But stay open and imagine ways to ways to travel light, if possible.*

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9. It is almost impossible to do any kind of travel without bringing home souvenirs. Acquiring unique materials to use once you return home can extend the memories of your trip.

What tools and supplies related to my theme should I be sure to look for while traveling. And, for which I need to budget—both money and luggage space?

## PLANNING

Now is the time to start thinking about things like budgets, dates, and itineraries. Travel planning is outside the scope of this worksheet, but here is a warning: Don't try to plan each day and every minute of your trip in advance. It is important to stay very flexible in this type of travel. You never know when a special opportunity may present itself.

10. Once you have a tentative itinerary, make an initial outreach to some key people who you found in Step 6. (See "Introduce Yourself in Advance" in the Cathleen's Odyssey blog post, [Thematic Travel: The Ultimate Guide](#) for help with this step.)

Use some kind of recording system to keep track of who you have contacted, their email address and other pertinent information.

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*I use a word processing file or MS OneNote with a section for each destination I plan to travel to. Then it is easy to cut and paste information as I accumulate it under the name of the group, shop, or person.*

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I hope you have found this worksheet to be a useful planning tool. Feel free to share it with friends and invite them to visit Cathleen's Odyssey to learn more about solo, independent and frugal travel possibilities.

*My mother always said that planning a trip is as much fun as the trip itself. Over the years I have discovered that this is so true. Even when I did not end up going on a planned journey, I have never felt like I wasted time in the dreaming and planning. That was fun too!*