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[In For The Long-Haul: How To Avoid Jet-Lag And Arrive Energised](#)



BY [Roel Van Kuijk](#)

There's nothing worse than heading off for a holiday somewhere far-flung and fantastic and then being wiped out for the first few days (or more!) with jet-lag. And, it's a problem which doesn't discriminate, a lot of our clients from the international jet-set arrive in the south of France frazzled and step off their private jets and come straight to us for [energizing anti jet-lag massage](#) treatments before they head off on their yachts.

But there are ways to help minimize the onset of jet-lag and saunter out of the plane at your destination raring to go, instead of tired and in need of a four-day nap.

Hydrate. It's so tempting to help yourself to the duty-free drinks trolley every time it passes you in the aisle in mid-air. While one red wine is fine, if you can resist the urge to drink booze the entire way across the Atlantic, your body will thank you for it after you land. Planes dehydrate you anyway, so your hangover will be at least twice as bad if you drink whilst flying and your best bet is to sip bottled water as you fly. As a rule of thumb, for every five hours in the air, drinking one liter of water is a good idea. If you really must drink alcohol, perhaps try a vodka with a soda water, at least that way you're rehydrating as you dehydrate (and it's George Clooney's favorite in-flight tippie). And, yes, coffee and tea might seem like easy pick me ups, but it's best to stay away from caffeine when you're flying too. It's a stimulant, which means you're going to crash and feel tired after the initial buzz, which is what we want to avoid. Perhaps take herbal teabags with you in your bag if you want a hot drink, you can ask for sliced fresh lemon and have that with hot water before you land to kick start your system, and during the flight consider sipping chamomile tea so you relax.

Plain food, not plane food. Those trays that airlines hand out with pre-packaged frozen and then reheated meals are packed with all kinds of preservatives, salt, starchy heavy carbs and refined sugar. There are very little nutrients. You're allowed to take any food on the plane, just no liquids or pastes. It's very easy to make a packed lunch to take with you, just make extra helpings for each person travelling with you when you're making dinner the night before you travel, pop them in a container and you're good to go. Check out [this beauty from Hemsley & Hemsley](#): Sauteed onion and peppers, grated courgette, gem lettuce and poached wild salmon. Topped with a lemon and mustard seed dressing, plus fresh cherries for dessert, it's guaranteed to perk up anyone on a long trip.



You can also pack dried goji berries, dried strawberries or date and oat bars to snack on for a slow energy boost so you're not tempted to tuck in to whatever the airline is serving up.

Relax before you fly. Too many people get anxious about flying and work themselves up into such a state before they've even printed out their boarding card, that of course they'll be laid out with nervous exhaustion once they've arrived. If this is you, don't drink the night before you leave as alcohol is a depressant that increases anxiety levels the next day. Instead, download [a meditation app](#) or do [some yoga](#). (The meditation app will be helpful to listen to when you want to rest and relax on the flight too). Drink the biggest, healthiest smoothie you can get your hands on before you leave so you're bursting with nutrients and feeling happy and calm when you're walking to the gate. One A-list singer (Madonna) used to have two wheatgrass shots before flying, but anything that's got lots of good, fresh vitamins in it will keep you fueled throughout the flight. Oh, and leave an hour earlier than you need if you can so any unforeseen travel delays or long queues don't stress you out on the way to the airport either.

Essential oils. Pack a silk scarf in your hand-luggage with some drops of either mandarin orange or lemon essential oil on it. One hour before you land, put it around your neck and breathe deeply inhaling the invigorating scents – which will give you an instant boost. You can also put your favorite calming essential oil on your neck pillow to help you relax if you want to sleep during the flight.

Yoga. It's a great idea to go for a walk around the plane every so often, take some deep breaths (the easy thing to remember is the 'four' rule, which is breathe in and count to four, hold it and count to four, breathe out and count to four), and really stre-e-e-e-e-tch your arms and legs. Whilst no-one expects you to bust out a downward dog (which is the name of a yoga position in case you are wondering!) on the floor of the aisle, but you can roll your shoulders and make sure you get that blood circulating.

Massage. You can do this on the plane, fifty minutes before landing. It will fight fatigue and stress plus it will help hugely to stop jet-lag kicking in after you land.

Keep your back straight in your seat. Close your eyes and relax your shoulders. Take a few deep breaths through the nose – breathe in the lovely refreshing citrus essential oils on your scarf.

1. With your right hand massage the opposite shoulder using the palm of your hand. Gently squeeze from the top of the arm all the way to the base of the neck. Repeat on the other side.

2. Very slowly and gently rotate your head from one side to another. Do not force and overstretch the muscle. Keep your neck relaxed and only stretch as far as feels comfortable.

3. Place both hands behind your neck and with your fingers pull the neck muscle away from the spine so starting at the base of the head and work your way towards the lower neck.

4. Place your hands on the back of your head. Your thumbs are placed at the line between the head and the neck. Press softly and rotate the thumbs following the base of the skull from the center towards the ears.

5. Place your 10 fingers on your head. Make slow rotation movements with all fingers simultaneous. Massage the upper skin by pressing firmly your fingertips in the skin

6. Massage your temples by placing your 3 middle fingers on each side of the head between your eyes and ears. Rotate your fingers slowly with little pressure.

Also, try this reflexology technique on your feet:

Sit down in your airplane seat with one ankle on your other knee so you can reach your foot. Make a fist with your hand and rub with your knuckles over the sole of your foot for about 1 minute.

Apply lots of pressure and move your knuckles in all directions.

Alternate between slow and fast movements.

It can slightly hurt but keep going! Repeat the rubbing on the other foot.

During and after the massage your feet will get warmer due to the increased blood circulation. Pain, tension and stiffness will be immediately reduced. It's an easy and efficient technique. Try it! Your feet will love it!

Once you reach your destination, book in for a massage and have a healthy meal after a workout at the end of the first afternoon which will help you sleep well that evening even though it's not your usual bedtime. You don't have to exhaust yourself but a sweat session will get rid of plane toxins and going for a swim no matter how tired you are will work wonders to give you some endorphins to power you through the first evening.

You'll arrive feeling fresh instead of frazzled and be on local time before you know it, we promise!

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Meet the Expert

Roel Van Kuijk

Roel and Joel created Blue Tree Massage in 2012 and the duo have grown in popularity to become the go-to for stressed-out CEOs, partied-out jet set, relaxing yacht owners (and their hard working crew) as well as the international celebrities who flock to the glitz and glamour of the French Riviera every year. International party people and locals alike have come to appreciate the outstanding skills of the Blue Tree experts who combine massage traditions from the Orient and the Occident. (Californian, Swedish, Deep tissue, Shiatsu, Foot reflexology, Korean Relaxation, anti-cellulite and many more) to ease aching bodies and frazzled minds. Roel explains that in today's life, stress, insomnia, muscular problems, low energy and nervous tension upset our balance and sense of wellbeing. Touching is a natural human reaction to pain and stress and so throughout the world people have instinctually and independently developed a wide range of techniques using touch, leading to the many different massage techniques that Blue Tree travel the world to learn and share. Massage creates inner calm and relaxation, better stress management, decreased blood pressure and muscle release, so Blue Tree advice we would all benefit from incorporating massage into our self-care routine. <http://www.bluetree-massage.com>

Posts by this Contributor



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