

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER



BERTRAND GUAY/GETTY

JetBlue won't reimburse for lost wedding dress

By Christopher Elliott
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Q. JetBlue lost my all-important bag for 43 days as I left on my 50th anniversary trip to Greece with my children and grandchildren. The bag contained necessary medications for our 30-day stay, along with my hearing aids, clothes, my wedding dress for my vow renewal, and heirloom items for the ceremony.

The loss of this bag caused extreme stress and ruined what was supposed to be an epic trip of a lifetime. My husband called almost every day and sent 26 emails through their message board. JetBlue has offered \$181, and this doesn't even cover the clothes and medications (not all were able to be filled) that we had to scramble to find before our cruise. Can you please help?

JEAN MICHIELLI-PENDL,
Dunkirk, N.Y.

A. JetBlue should have found your lost luggage quickly and returned it. Why didn't it? I can see that you had a busy itinerary in Greece. Based on your correspondence with JetBlue, it looks like the airline had a hard time coordinating a delivery.

Still, JetBlue offered you only \$181, which did not even cover the costs of the clothes and medications that you had to purchase while you were in Greece. It should have done better.

Your right to a refund is outlined in the Montreal Convention, an international treaty that established rules and limits regarding airline liability for baggage. When dealing with a loss on an international flight, you'll want to refer directly to the convention text if you think your airline isn't compensating you appropriately.

Article 22 of the convention sets the liability limit at about \$1,700 for damages that are associated with delayed passenger baggage. JetBlue's offer was well below this.

You say that the loss of the bag caused extreme stress and ruined your trip — and that you are seeking reimbursement for the \$2,445 you spent trying to survive in Greece for a month. You provided a detailed timeline of your communications with JetBlue, which included requests for the bag to be delivered to your hotel in Athens, then later to your home.

JetBlue asked you to submit receipts for your out-of-pocket expenses, and you also provided a list of the contents of the bag. So, what went wrong?

You've repeatedly mentioned that losing the bag caused you distress. Unfortunately, there's no provision in the Montreal Convention for pain and suffering. You also mentioned that you lost an heirloom — your wedding dress. Airlines often exclude items like heirlooms from their liability, which may have caused some confusion during your claims process.

And never ever check essential medications or hearing aids. Always put these in your carry-on luggage. I have more on luggage reimbursement in my free guide to finding your lost luggage.

You might have appealed this to one of the executive contacts at JetBlue. I publish the names, numbers, and email addresses of the JetBlue customer service managers on my consumer advocacy site, Elliott.org.

I contacted JetBlue on your behalf. The airline agreed to review your claim and revised its offer. It offered you an additional \$900 with a \$400 JetBlue credit.

Christopher Elliott is the founder of Elliott Advocacy (elliottadvocacy.org), a nonprofit organization that helps consumers solve their problems. Email him at chris@elliott.org or get help by contacting him at elliottadvocacy.org/help/.

THE V.I.P. LOUNGE

Revolution player Ilay Feingold on Messi, Cape Cod chips, and unplugging on vacation

He's just 20 years old, but New England Revolution player Ilay Feingold has already been to 20 countries. The 5-foot, 10-inch starting left back defender, who previously played for the Israeli Premier League club Maccabi Haifa and for the Israel national team, said he enjoys traveling — especially going home to Israel in the offseason to see his family, friends, and girlfriend. And while the Major League Soccer player said he does “miss home,” his loved ones from Israel also visit him in Massachusetts. “It's nice, because it helps me to not feel lonely,” Feingold said. “And my teammates, the coaching staff ... everyone in the club helps me with that.” The starting defender said he is “enjoying every moment” with his team — this is his first season with the Revs — but admitted that “we can do better” in the standings. He called Boston a “wonderful city” and said he enjoys exploring it in his downtime. We caught up with the Netanya, Israel, native, who lives in Boston's Seaport district, to talk about all things travel.

If you could travel anywhere right now, where would you go? Thailand, because I vacationed there when I was 13 years old, and it was a wonderful experience. The beaches were wonderful, the food, the atmosphere, the weather, the people ... a really nice experience.

Do you prefer booking trips through a travel agent or on your own? I prefer to book travel on my own. When I book trips by myself, I have control of everything, like what flights I want to take and things like that.

Thoughts on an “unplugged” vacation? This is something that I did when I recently visited Miami for the first time. Now, I do this on all vacations, always.

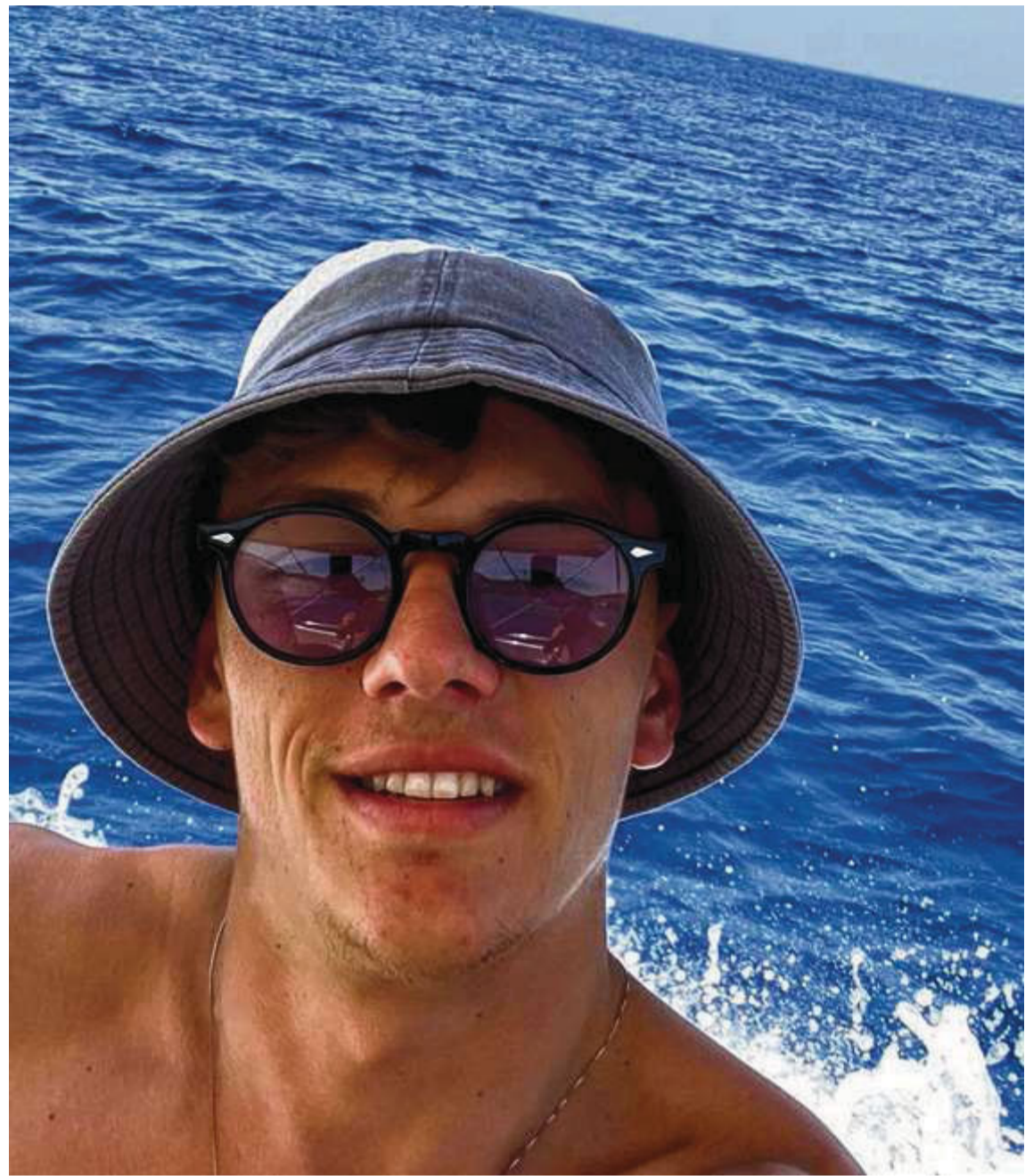
What has been your worst vacation experience? Thankfully, all my vacations have been great. I don't think I have a “worst vacation” experience.

What is your favorite childhood travel memory? My bar mitzvah vacation when I was 13 years old. I went skiing in Andorra, and then I saw two soccer matches at Camp Nou in Barcelona, Spain, with my father and family friends. It was fun and unbelievable.

Do you vacation to relax, to learn, or for the adventure of it all? I like to do a little of everything, but I would say when I'm on vacation, I like to relax the most.

What book do you plan on bringing with you to read on your next vacation? My grandmother gifted me a few books, and I like to bring those with me. One, that was translated to Hebrew, is called “Secrets of the Millionaire Mind” by T. Harv Eker.

If you could travel with one famous person/celebrity, who would it be? Lionel Messi [the Argentine superstar, who plays for MLS's Inter Miami], be-



Ilay Feingold off the coast of Crete in Greece.

cause he's my idol.

What is the best gift to give a traveler? A good book for the flight.

What is your go-to snack for a flight or a road trip? Something salty. I enjoy salty snacks. Here in the US, I like Cape Cod potato chips — but only eat them like once in two months because I have to eat healthy most of the time.

What is the coolest souvenir you've picked up on a vacation? Probably clothes, I like to shop for clothes on vacation to look sharp.

What is your favorite app/website for travel? I usually don't use any particular websites or apps.

What has travel taught you? Travel has taught me to be more mature and manage on my own.

What is your best travel tip? To enjoy every moment, get the most out of vacation experiences, and enjoy them as much as possible.

JULIET PENNINGTON

Juliet Pennington can be reached at writetonjuliet@comcast.net.



HERE

GRAND KENNEBUNKPORT INN RE-OPENING

Say goodbye to the old and hello to the sparkling, renovated, and newly re-opened Breakwater Inn. Located at the point where the Kennebunk River feeds into the Atlantic Ocean, the 35-room boutique hotel blends its historic 1880s cottage architecture with modern creature comforts. Enjoy harbor or river views in the Harbor Building or original Inn Building where guest rooms are outfitted with contemporary furnishings in soothing color palettes and classically styled fabrics. Each private bath includes Bethel white stone vanities, silk and terry spa-style robes, and bath amenities by Gilchrist and Soames. Those looking for even more luxury may consider the spacious River Top Cottage with a deep soaking whirlpool and panoramic water views. Hungry? The Port Fish and Chophouse, a popular waterfront happy hour spot, showcases local seafood as well as fine cuts of meat for dinner, while Mabel's Pantry offers breakfast favorites such as eggs Benedict, avocado toast, and buttermilk pancakes. Settle into one of the Adirondack chairs on the lawn overlooking the cove from sunrise to sunset, or take a 20-minute stroll along Ocean

Avenue to downtown Kennebunkport to explore the cafés, art galleries, and upscale boutiques of Dock Square. The inn is also a sought-after destination for weddings and special events on the Maine coast. Summer rates from \$319 per night. 207-967-5333, <https://breakwaterinnmaine.com/>

THERE

TRANSFORMED CASA IN CARTEGENA

Step into a world of 16th-century elegance at Casa Carolina, a luxury wellness retreat housed in a fully restored colonial mansion in the heart of Cartagena, Colombia's historic Walled City. Formerly the site of the city's first cathedral presbytery and the legendary Café de la Nueva Granada, the 55-room and suite boutique property blends history and contemporary design with a focus on holistic well-being. Key architectural features include original Coralina stone, hand-painted frescoes, high ceilings, balconies, and artisanal finishes in rooms and public spaces. For wellness amenities, guests can access the spa with Ayurvedic treatments that combine ancient and modern techniques; and Yoga Shala, a space dedicated to practicing meditation, breathing exercises, and various types of yoga classes. Breakfast and flavorful afternoon bites can be had at Just B, a quiet space overlooking an



interior courtyard serving a plant-forward, organic menu free from gluten, dairy, additives, and GMOs. Or head to the Rooftop Gastro Bar for a dip in the pool — with city views — and craft signature cocktails, shareable dishes, salads, sandwiches, and main dishes that focus on authentic flavors of the Caribbean. Those venturing into the Walled City will find cobblestone streets, and colorful buildings and squares. Offshore islands with white sands and palm trees are reachable by boat. Summer rates from \$300. +57-605-654-3330, www.casacarolinahotel.com

EVERYWHERE

METAL-FREE BELTS BREEZE THROUGH TSA SCREENINGS

The TSA recently updated its policies and is no longer requiring passengers to remove their shoes at airport screening checkpoints. However, the new changes do not apply to belts, which still have to be removed and put in a bin, a procedure that causes an awkward scrambling to put your belt back on while gathering your remaining items. Now you can simplify the screening process with Arcadia's stylish Atlas belts, performance stretch belts with a metal-free, contoured, low-profile A2 buckle, which breezes through TSA screening without setting off alarms. More precise than holes, the micro-adjustable buckle offers an exact fit that follows the curve of your form for maximum comfort. Each buckle is molded with durable and lightweight high-density plastic designed to endure tough outdoor adventures. Webbing is made of 85 percent post-consumer recycled polyester (using repurposing post-consumer plastic bottles) and 15 percent rubber. Machine washable and dryable. Available in 13 colors in standard and slim widths. \$39.95. <https://arcadebelts.com/>

NECEE REGIS

