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## Trump's America is great for holidays – if you enjoy vigorous frisking by men in uniform

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Trump may be a global brand but he hasn't been very good for the United States' international image. Research suggests that his presidency has already hurt the country's travel industry and made it a less desirable tourist destination. A study by Hopper, a market research firm, found there has been a 17% decrease in flight searches from international origins to the US since Trump became president. In the UK, Kayak reports a 58% decline in searches for flights to Tampa and Orlando. This "Trump slump" is not very surprising: his primary focus since taking office has been on kicking people out of the US and keeping them out. Walls, travel bans and extreme vetting don't exactly send the message that the US is a warm and inviting country to foreigners, whether you're on the banned list or not. (Unless you're Russian, it seems; there has been an 88% increase in searches for flights to the US there.

The downturn in US tourism isn't surprising but it is a little sad. The country may be undergoing some serious renovations, but it's still a wonderful place for a holiday; particularly if you enjoy vigorous frisking by men in uniform. Even so, it's always worth doing your homework before visiting a developing country and getting to know the local customs before you travel. So here are a few tips for those planning a trip to Trump's America.

Harvard, Stanford, Yale, JFK's Terminal 3 ... some of the world's most prestigious educational institutes are in the US. And, as some travellers are discovering, the country's pedagogical passion is evident the moment you land on US soil. David Thornton, a (white) Australian software engineer, was given a computer science test when he landed in Newark in February. And Celestine Omin, a Nigerian software engineer, claimed that he was asked to balance a binary search tree by immigration officials at New York's JFK airport. Yeah, I have no idea what that means but it's nice to see border agents taking the Stem subjects seriously.

### Delete dodgy photos from your phone

Let's say, purely hypothetically, that your phone contains racy pictures of you and your partner balancing a binary search tree in the buff: you should probably delete these. Federal agents at the US border are given wide-ranging powers and can ask for your phone and social-media passwords. Shortly after Trump enacted his travel ban, Sidd Bikkannavar, a Nasa engineer (and

natural-born US citizen), had his work phone and passcode seized at Houston airport (it was handed back to him without a reason for the search). So you don't have to be a rocket scientist to realise a quick cleanup of your digital baggage is probably a good idea before heading stateside.

### **Steer clear of radicalised lawnmowers**

The media don't like to mention it, but some parts of the US have become no-go areas due to murderous lawnmowers. According to a study by the Cato Institute, you are far more likely to die on US soil at the hands of a homegrown lawnmower than a foreign-born terrorist. The situation is so bad that, in some places, local gardening enthusiasts live in a state of constant terror. So stay very vigilant when visiting the suburbs, please.

### **Don't get ill or injured**

If you are unlucky enough to be attacked by a rogue lawnmower while visiting the US then I'm afraid hospital treatment will be very expensive. I can't tell you how expensive, exactly, because healthcare there is an enigma, particularly now that Obamacare is being replaced. As Trump has said: "Nobody knew that healthcare could be so complicated." The one thing I can tell you with certainty is that, should you require medical care, death will definitely be the cheapest option.

### **Don't go to Kansas if you're Indian**

Two Indian men were shot (one fatally) in Kansas last week by a white man who reportedly yelled "get out of my country". According to one witness, he thought they were Iranian and so was perhaps just taking Trump's travel ban into his own hands.

### **Always travel with a man**

Travelling with a man is generally a good idea wherever you go. Otherwise, who is going to carry the luggage, help with directions and keep you safe from radicalised lawnmowers? And while male chaperones are not yet mandatory in Trump's America, they are becoming increasingly advisable. This is particularly true in Oklahoma, which recently proposed a bill that would require women getting abortions in the state to have written consent from the man involved. State representative Justin Humphrey, who masterminded this idea, said that, while he can understand that women "feel like that is their body" in question, in actuality they are more of a "host". When it comes to women's – sorry I mean hosts' – rights, the US seems intent on becoming the Saudi Arabia of the west. No doubt it won't be long before women require permission slips from their menfolk before doing other things. You won't be able to visit a public bathroom, for example, without a man first assessing whether you really need to urinate and whether you have picked a suitable place to do so. And, of course, all of this will be for your own good. What if you go to a public bathroom and bump into a transgender person, for example? It doesn't bear thinking about. So please don't travel solo, ladies!