

To travel or not to travel? The answer is now

Strength of the U.S. dollar make this the perfect time to plan a trip

by **Radosav Babic**
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Someone's suggestion that this would be a good time to cross the Pacific or Atlantic Ocean may sound foolish to many; however, there is a good reason for it. The value of U.S. dollar hasn't been as strong as it is now in decades.

There are two main reasons that could explain the instability of the strength of U.S. dollar. Firstly, due to the difference between the interests rates in America and other central banks around the globe, and due to the fact that central banks around the world diversified their holdings away from dollars to euros, Japanese yen, British pounds and so on, which ultimately increases the amount of dollars available in currency markers to be purchased. Therefore, as the quantity of dollars increases, the value of it decreases, and vice versa. Don't spend too much time asking yourself WHY, because the explanation of the sudden and unexpected boost in the value of U.S. dollar is often difficult for many economists to explain; however, what you can do is take advantage of it.

HOW? Take a week or two and travel abroad and get the most out of each dollar spent. The dollar has substantially increased in comparison to many currencies. It was just a few years ago when you would receive only half of the euro for each dollar converted; however, now you would receive 0.8 euros or even higher. European dream vacations can much easier become the reality. Venice, Athens, Valencia, Lon-

don, and Paris don't seem to be too far away any more. Airfare is also more affordable due to the decrease in price of oil.

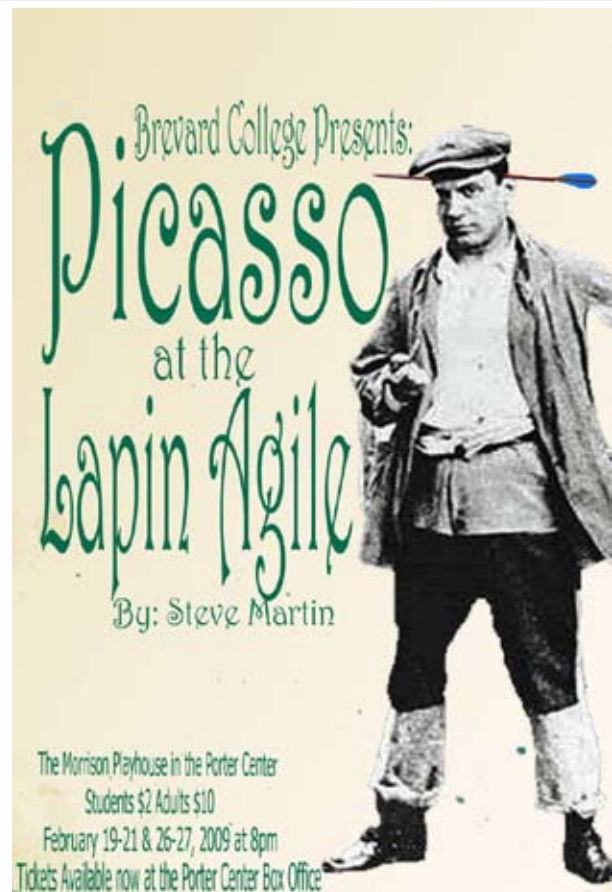
If you wish to travel even further away, Australia would be another great destination. The value of Aussie dollar last year was almost equal to the value of U.S. dollar, while today a U.S. dollar buys 1.5 Aussie dollars, which makes it 40-50% more affordable for American tourists.

If you are on a tighter budget, you can simply cross the border and visit sunny Mexico, as the value of your currency considerably increased in comparison to the value of Mexican pesos. Visiting Toronto

and experiencing the "typical American city with a French touch," as I like to call it, wouldn't be bad choice either. Better do it now then wait until, again surprisingly, Canadian dollar "jumps up" again.

The list could go on and on, continuing with Thailand, Egypt, Rio de Janeiro and many other attractive destinations, depending on your choice. Not only will this unique, traveling experience benefit your personal growth, but you will finally be able to locate some well-known destinations on the world's map, as well, since your Geography teacher might have skipped that lesson years ago.

Poster contest winner named



Christina Nelson won the Brevard College poster contest with the poster shown above. The contest was open to all students, asking them to come up with the best possible poster for the upcoming campus production of "Picasso at the Lapin Agile." Nelson will receive a \$30 gift certificate to Square Root and be given two tickets to the play, which opens Feb. 19 at the Morrison Playhouse in the Porter Center.

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