

## Interview auf Englisch (Original): Travel Hacking with Chris Guillebeau

### Enter Chris Guillebeau

A few years ago I stumbled across Chris Guillebeau's blog [The Art of Non-Conformity](#). I was fascinated by the beauty and clarity of his blog posts. His manifesto [279 Days to Overnight Success](#) even inspired me to create my own blog. I started helping people to gain more time, success, and fun in their private and professional live ... By the way, you are reading this blog right now.

So, who is this mysterious guy? ... In short ... Chris Guillebeau is a fighter of the status quo, a New York Times best-selling author, and an expert in travel hacking.

Chris is the host of the [World Domination Summit](#) ... an international gathering of remarkable people who are interested in pursuing big goals while changing the world.

His latest New York Times and Washington Post best-selling book is [The \\$100 Startup](#) ... which was also [launched in German language](#) one month ago. Definitely worth reading, if you want to learn how to start your own business and live on your own terms without an MBA and huge investments.

And before Chris, a.k.a. travel ninja, turned 35 on April 7, 2013, he managed to visit every country in the world ... According to the United Nations, there are 193 official member states.

How many countries did you visit so far? ... I think I did only about 25.

### Travel Hacking adventures

I was quite curious about Chris' latest achievement. So I invited him to interview him about his adventures in travel hacking. Despite being chronically busy, Chris took a lot of time and passion to answer my questions (I provide additional explanations in brackets).

Many thanks for your valuable insights in advance, Chris!

And now ... enjoy the interview!

#### **07. What is travel hacking? Who is qualified for it? Who not?**

Travel hacking is the art of seeing the world on a budget, thanks to Frequent Flyer Miles and other creative strategies that lower the cost. Over the past few years I've earned more than one million miles per year, and these miles have allowed me to see the world without breaking the bank. Everyone is qualified! I suppose if you don't care about travel, or if you don't mind paying full price, travel hacking might not be for you.

[ALEXANDER: In order to earn "Frequent Flyer Miles" you should consider to join a frequent flyer program like [Miles and More](#) which is Lufthansa's incentive program to reward customers for their continued loyalty.]

#### **06. Where did you learn the art of travel hacking?**

I learned my first big travel hacking lesson almost ten years ago while living in Benin, West Africa. My wife and I were going home to the U.S. for Christmas. Economy tickets were about \$1,500, but I discovered I could buy Frequent Flyer Miles on eBay. I was able to

purchase enough miles to fly Business Class both ways ... for only \$1,200! After that, I was hooked.

[ALEXANDER: In 2002, Chris moved together with his wife to West Africa, where he served four years as a volunteer for a medical charity.]

#### **05. Who are your personal role models in travel hacking?**

These days I am mostly inspired by my readers, who are traveling all over the world even more than me. We just had a party in Norway for the end of the world (my final country) and 120 of them traveled in from 18 countries, many of them coming for free or almost free thanks to travel hacking.

[ALEXANDER: Chris' blog [The Art of Non-Conformity](#) has more than 80,000 regular readers.]

#### **04. What are the biggest myths and mistakes about travel hacking?**

The biggest myths are that it's too difficult, or inaccessible to the average person, or not worth it. All of these things are untrue! If you can spend at least 30 minutes a month working the system, you'll be able to earn at least 100,000 miles a year, no matter where you live. These miles can then be exchanged for at least four short-haul tickets, or one or two long-haul tickets.

As for mistakes, well, I've made a lot of them myself ... a few include failing to register for a Frequent Flyer program before taking a flight, paying too much for tickets, double-booking myself on a ticket, overvaluing (or undervaluing) miles, and so on.

[ALEXANDER: By the way, you can earn frequent flyer miles even without flying.]

#### **03. What are your favorite books, websites or other resources regarding travel hacking? If people had to teach themselves, what would you suggest them to use?**

I have a few paid products that can help you get started right away, but there are also a lot of free blogs and forums you can use if you have more time. One of them I always recommend is Gary Leff's [View from the Wing](#). If you have more time, head over to [MilePoint](#), a new forum of global travel hackers.

I'm not sure if there are German-centric sites or not ... perhaps one of your readers needs to start one. :)

[ALEXANDER: Chris is the creator of the popular [Frequent Flyer Master](#) program. There are also some German-centric sites like [Vielfliegerforum](#) or [Meilensammeln](#) in place.]

#### **02. What are the most useful travel hacks you can recommend to German travelers?**

With the one main exception of U.S. credit card bonuses, most travel hacking strategies are fully applicable worldwide. If you live in Germany, or elsewhere in Europe, you needn't miss out. You can still participate in most promotions, and you can maintain U.S. mileage accounts (which are usually much more generous than the Miles and More program by Lufthansa) no matter where you live. When it comes time to redeem your miles, you can use them for global carriers all over the world.

If you're looking for low-cost lodging, you can stay for free all over the world thanks to [Couchsurfing](#) or in a nice apartment for less than a hotel thanks to [AirBnB](#).

[ALEXANDER: For more creative low-cost lodging possibilities check out the blog post [Auf Reisen wie die Queen übernachten und dafür fast nichts bezahlen!](#)]

### **01. After visiting every country in the world, what will be your next big goal in life?**

Good question. Well, I plan to keep writing and traveling, since that's what I've done full-time for the past five years. I'm working on a new book about quests and meeting readers in many different countries. I'll also be announcing a new goal at some point ... but not just yet. For now I want to enjoy the feeling of having gone to all 193 countries for a while.

[ALEXANDER: n/a]

### **Your travel hacks?**

What are your best travel hacks? Any questions you want to ask Chris? Feel free to [comment below](#).