



Guest Senior Correspondent LVG, Louisville KY: While jogging at dawn in a German town recently, I encountered a local policeman. “Guten tag!” I called out like a local citizen. The answer was in perfect English, “And good morning to you, too, sir!”

He knew I was an American tourist, and I’m sure he was amused by my attempt to speak German. We appreciate visitors to our country who speak English, so people of other lands have more respect for American tourists when we communicate in their language. A simple thanks, a smile and a compliment can go a long way.

Before you begin your foreign travels, the internet can help you put together some ways to communicate. For instance, here are just ten phrases in Spanish that may get you attention and respect in the many countries of the world.

1. Hello (Hola)
2. Please! (Por favor!)
3. Thank you! (Gracias!)
4. Where’s the bathroom? (Donde esta el bano?)
5. Can you help me? (Me puede ayudar?)
6. Do you speak English? (Hablas ingles?)
7. I need a doctor (Necesito un medico)
8. I don’t speak Spanish (No hablo Espanol)
9. How much does it cost? (Cuanto es?)
10. Happy to meet you! (Encantado de conocerle!)

Of course, those few basic words are just a hint of what senior travelers can do to educate themselves. The age of carrying little phrase books is long past. Today, you can add to your Smartphone or take little electronic translators that carry entire languages in them, complete with illustrations and talking teachers.

A hit on the keyboard can bring instant translations, pronunciations, explanations, complete sentences and much more in languages from any part of the world. Some translators are voice-activated, and new developments in hand-held ones are happening all the time. They once sold for several hundred dollars, but now simple mini, light-weight versions cost as little as \$20.

If you intend to spend some extra time in a country, do much more than just memorize a few words and phrases. Sign up for lessons at a local night school, enroll in an online language course or otherwise get yourself familiar with the language. Once you break the language barrier, you'll be surprised and delighted about how much you'll surprise and delight people in many lands around the world.