

Packing for Peace

The Art of Solo Slow Stitch

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In a world that moves at lightning speed, there's something deeply grounding about the slow rhythm of a needle passing through cloth. For many of us who quilt, stitch, or create with our hands, there's a quiet kind of joy that comes from being alone with your stitching - it's a meditation, a return to ourselves.

When I lead Quilt & Textile Tours across the world, I often notice a quiet shift that happens among travellers. One moment we're buzzing with inspiration after a day at a quilt festival or textile museum, the next, we're yearning for a few minutes of calm. Perhaps while sitting in a cozy Paris café, journaling about a day at the European Patchwork Meeting, or watching the sunset over an Australian harbor while stitching a few hexagons. In these small, intentional pauses, creativity finds room to breathe and where the solo slow stitch comes in – a small, mindful ritual that magically allows us to recharge.

“Packing for peace” isn't about how many fat quarters fit in your suitcase. It's about intentionally making room for quiet moments of creation. The slow stitching movement isn't about doing less. It's about being present while we create. It's choosing to savour the process rather than rush to the finish line.



I often encourage travellers and students to bring a small, hand-stitching project when they journey – something portable and forgiving. A handful of hexagons, a simple embroidery kit, or a few applique blocks tucked into a travel pouch can become a pock-sized refuge wherever you go. Not only does it fill travel downtime, but it also captures memories in thread. Later, those stitches become touchstones – tangible reminders of where you were and who you were in that moment.

On tour, I've watched travellers gently unpack their stitching after a lively group outing. The conversation softens, the energy shifts, and soon, the only sound is thread slipping through fabric. There's just something sacred in that shared stillness – a reminder that creativity doesn't always need noise or company to thrive.

Of course, you don't need a passport to experience this kind of restorative creativity. A solo slow stitching retreat can happen just as easily at home – an afternoon set aside in your sewing room, a cozy evening by the fire, or a quiet hour outdoors surrounded by nature. Maybe your version of slow stitching happens in your favourite chair at home, with a cup of tea nearby. Or perhaps it's during a guild retreat, where laughter, conversation, and the hum of sewing machines mingle into something both lively and peaceful. The goal isn't productivity – it's presence.



When we give ourselves permission to slow down and create for only ourselves, we reconnect with the pure joy of making. Those peaceful moments often spark our best ideas and remind us why we fell in love with fabric and thread in the first place.

So, wherever you are – at home, on the road, or dreaming of your next quilting adventure – give yourself permission to pause, breathe, and stitch slowly. The world will keep spinning, but your creative spirit will thank you for taking the time to simply be.