

Top free Apps for Holiday Time Pass May 7, 2010

If you are an iPhone user, you'd already have your choice of apps, those nifty little things you download from to be able to do the most unimaginable things. Here's a completely arbitrary list of our favourite free apps...

1. PhotoFunia. Upload a photo of yourself, then select from visuals of the Mono Lisa, a Times Square hoarding, a painter drawing a portrait at his easel, Ophelia lying on a grassy meadow or a billboard on the Underground - and insert Self. Use as wallpaper or mail to friend and enjoy some ego time.

2. Dinosaurs. From the American Museum of Natural History, you will open onto a mosaic shaped like T-Rex (the only dino we all know, this is probably horribly inaccurate but you get the picture). Touch any part, zoom in and you get lots of photographs of archaeologists, museums, pictures of digs, skeletal remains and so on. Go on, indulge your inner Ross.

3. VogueStylist. Notoriously slow to open, but when it does, you enter a fashion wonderland. The point of this App is that you get to directly buy from Vogue's famous ad spreads. If you cannot afford a mere \$ 925 for a DvF Zinthia dress in gold fresh off the runway, you can create your own wardrobe by choosing from the clothes and accessories, mixing in your own and saving it as a visual lovefest for when you're feeling blue.

4. EarthCam. One of the most astonishing tools which gets you live videos from cameras placed all over the globe. In the mood to watch waves crash to shore in Bondi Beach, Australia? Done. Wish you were on Fifth Avenue – the real thing and not the building on Brigade Road? Done. Feel like checking to see if the pigeons are still there in London's Trafalgar Square? Done and done. But in an age of terrorism as a way of life, how this App is accessible is a mystery. Still, it's just the thing for insomniacs.

5. iPron. This is unreal. We've all traveled with Type A personas who will speak only the Queen's English in Japan or Greece or, Godhelpus, France where they go out of their way to pretend if you don't parlais Francais, you're an ijit. With the iPron, you type in 'Hello, Yes, I am from Planet Earth' and this will be instantly translated into Hebrew, Chinese (both Simplified and Traditional!), Arabic and so on. Can it get any cooler than this?

6. Wiki. If Google is God, Wiki is his angel Gabriel. You can make jokes about messing with its contents to pass the time but on a good day, Wiki is omnipotent. So traveling with your own Wikipanion is like having a trusted aide whisper the answer when some hotshot thinks he knows something you don't.

7. White House. An App only the Americans would think of. If you can have the presiding President of these Unites States appear on The Tonight Show, anything is possible. Photos, Video, Newsroom and Blog are some of the functions that give you an idea of how real Government works. You can learn about Wall Street reform and the 'good guys'; Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack will write about spending time with President Obama in places like Iowa and Missouri (or the boonies as the rest of the world calls it) to discuss the future of Rural America, and you can watch a video of the Prez speaking about health insurance reform or see him posing with a patron at 'Jerry's Family Restaurant'. Talk about TMI.

8. WorldsApart. Gives you an idea of our place in the cosmic scheme of things – very small. Tour the solar system or Jupiter's moons, or explore distances with your fingertip, or Go To Neptune and learn why it's moon is retrograde and how this is bad news for the rest of us.

9. Maps. Just makes you feel superior, period. Some dude tells you 'turn left then right then go in a circle and do a U-turn' and is surprised when you call him from Madras instead of Minerva Circle but with this App you get the upper hand. Type in your destination and you get a cute, flagged route, distance to your destination depending on whether you're in a car or bus - and it allows you to keep your temper while you're at it.

10. Shakespeare. We're not kidding here, it's an actual app. The complete plays, poems and sonnets, this is all you need while traveling in an auto or waiting for someone who believes in IST. Not got your daily celeb fix? Try reading Act 1 of Coriolanus which Hollywood honeysuckle Gerard Butler is filming as we speak.

