# User Guide – How to Use the Travlr Artifact

This guide explains how to interact with the enhanced backend API for Travlr. It covers the core use cases, API endpoints, and how to verify results. Screens or routes may vary slightly depending on your frontend; the API endpoints here are authoritative.

## 1) Start the System

1. Run the database seed (once per session, if needed):  
 node app\_api/models/seed.js  
2. Start the backend API:  
 cd app\_api  
 npm start  
3. Base URL for API: http://localhost:3000/api

## 2) Core Endpoints

GET /trips – Returns all trips (should return 60 after seeding).  
POST /trips – Create a new trip.  
PUT /trips/:id – Update an existing trip by id.  
DELETE /trips/:id – Delete a trip by id.

## 3) Example Requests

Create (POST /trips) JSON body example:  
{  
 "name": "New Reef",  
 "image": "reef\_new.jpg",  
 "description": "Demo trip added via API"  
}  
  
Note: Your schema may also include fields like code, length, start (future date), resort, and perPerson (currency string). If required, provide them using the same formats used by the seed script.

## 4) Using a Browser vs Postman

- Quick verification: Use a browser to open http://localhost:3000/api/trips.  
- Full CRUD testing: Use Postman to send POST, PUT, and DELETE requests with JSON bodies.

## 5) Verifying Data Changes

- After creating or updating a trip, refresh GET /trips to confirm the change.  
- You can also verify directly in MongoDB using MongoDB Compass by opening the 'travlr' database and the 'trips' collection.

## 6) What Changed (Enhancement Summary)

The trips list is now served by a direct Mongoose query in the controller (Trip.find()). Previously, it used an internal node-fetch to call the API, which added latency and violated MVC. With the enhancement, the controller talks directly to the model, improving performance and maintainability.

## 7) Expected Results

- GET /trips should return 60 seeded trips after running the seed.  
- POST should add a new trip and return it with an id.  
- PUT should update the specified trip and return the updated document.  
- DELETE should remove the specified trip and return a confirmation.

## 8) Common Issues

- 404 or empty list: Run the seed again (node app\_api/models/seed.js).  
- Validation errors when creating/editing trips: Ensure fields follow formats (e.g., length like "7 days", start is a future date, perPerson as "$999.99").  
- CORS issues from a separate frontend: enable CORS in the backend.