



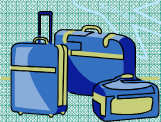
Travel Tips

Let's Pack!

Each airline has its own regulations regarding the size and weight of checked and carry-on luggage. You will receive a copy of the luggage requirements/regulations of the airline you will be flying. *Due to limited space on the motor coach, each tour participant is asked to bring only one large suitcase and one small carry-on bag.*

Carry-on Luggage

Remember not to pack any prohibited or sharp objects in your carry-on luggage as these may be confiscated at the airport. Nail clippers, safety razors and tweezers are all permitted in carry-on luggage. *For complete and **updated** information on what is and isn't allowed go to www.tsa.gov.*



Packing Tips

Experienced travelers plan well and travel light. One of the quickest ways to ruin a trip is to be overburdened by unnecessary luggage.

- Make a list of all the items you have packed before you leave home. Then leave the list at home so you will be able to file insurance claims if your luggage is lost or stolen.
- Consider limiting yourself to a one or two-color wardrobe. Also, you can definitely make your wardrobe do double duty by wearing clothes several times.
- Do not take expensive jewelry.
- The most important item to pack is a comfortable pair of walking shoes.
- Include a neck pouch to carry your passport, credit cards and cash.
- Don't forget your umbrella!

CHECKLIST

- Adapter plug and converter
- Address list/phone #'s/postcard labels
- Aspirin, motion sickness medicine
- Bathing suit
- Calculator (pocket-sized)
- Camera, batteries, film, case
- Carry-on bag (for items on bus)
- Cash, credit cards/ATM card, PIN #
- Clock/travel alarm
- Comb/brush
- Contacts (extra pair), contact solution
- Deodorant
- Detergent (bring baggies for wet things)
- Ear plugs
- Eyeglasses/case/copy of prescription
- Guidebook (only the pages you need)
- Hat/scarf (rollable/packable)
- Itinerary/hotel list (in trip journal)
- Money belt
- Passport/passport pouch
- Prescriptions, meds, doctor's letter
- Raincoat (w/liner, if necessary)
- Razors (disposable)
- Reading materials (throwaway)
- Sanitary supplies
- Shaving kit (w/travel-size items)
- Shampoo/conditioner (small bottles)
- Shirts (wash & wear type)
- Shoes (2-3 pairs maximum)
- Skirts/slacks/shorts (wash & wear type)
- Soap (small bar in plastic bag)
- Steamer/travel iron
- Socks/stockings (3-6 pairs)
- Sunscreen/Sunblock/Sunglasses
- Sweater or light jacket
- Tissues/towelettes/wet wipes
- Toothbrush/toothpaste/dental floss
- Traveler's checks (optional, see info inside)
- Umbrella (compact travel size)
- Underwear (one pair for each day)
- Vaccination records (if needed)
- Washcloth (most hotels do not provide)



Making Purchases

Every traveler knows the old adage, "Take it from one who knows, bring twice the money...and half the clothes!" This may be good advice, but bringing the money is not nearly as simple as it used to be. Many options are available to today's traveler. Please note that although this information is the result of much practical experience and research, conditions do change, and this information is offered only as a guide in deciding how to best make purchases and obtain foreign currency.



American Cash

Nothing beats cash for convenience...or risk. Still, it's a good idea to carry some American currency in cash, if only to tide you over until you get to an exchange facility.

If you're traveling in a number of countries, some extra cash in U.S. dollars is a good idea, too. It can be easier to change a small amount of cash (when leaving a country, for example) than a traveler's check. Because of the obvious risk of theft, carrying large amounts of cash is not recommended for most travelers. Also, many banks charge a fee for "cashing cash"– for obtaining Euros, pounds and other foreign currency for dollars.



Credit and ATM Cards

Plastic cards are the perfect traveling companions. If you lose your card, you are usually liable only for the first \$50 of fraudulent charges and a new card can usually be issued within a day or

two. Plastic cards allow you to receive the best possible rate of exchange, avoid the hassle of exchanging currencies at the mercy of limited banking hours and are usually not accepted at only the smallest cafés and street vendors. It is a good idea to carry two different cards (with different accounts). The two most popular are MasterCard and Visa. American Express and Diners Club do not have credit limits, but they may not be accepted in small establishments or off the beaten path.

You can also use your credit card to obtain foreign currency at almost any automatic teller machine (ATM). ATMs are usually linked up internationally, so you can shove your card in, punch in a personal identification number (PIN) and get instant cash. The two major ATM networks you will see that will be compatible with your card are Cirrus and Plus–the back of your ATM card will have one of the two logos on it and ATM machines usually display the symbols of the networks to which they belong. But ATMs aren't fail-safe, especially if the card was issued outside Europe, and it is safer to go to a human teller. It can be a major headache if an ATM swallows your card.

Plan on withdrawing enough money to last a few days. You may not have access to an ATM for a day or two, depending on your schedule. We do not advocate carrying large sums of cash, but at the same time, we discourage travelers from making daily withdrawals from ATMs as this costs you time and money.

Credit cards usually aren't hooked up to ATM networks unless you specifically ask your bank to do this and request a PIN number. You should also ask which ATMs abroad will accept your particular card. Note that some European ATMs won't accept PIN numbers of more than four digits. Cash cards, which you use at home to withdraw money directly from your bank account or savings account, are becoming more widely linked internationally– ask your bank at home for advice.

We very strongly recommend that you contact each credit card company you plan on using during your trip prior to departure. These companies are increasingly vigilant about protecting their customers from credit card fraud. If you do not notify your credit card companies of your international travel plans, there is a very real chance that they may freeze your account due to "suspicious activity." Also, confirm what number to call should your card be lost or stolen. Something else to ask your credit card companies about is that some credit card companies now charge an "international handling charge" which is typically 2% on all credit card purchases outside the U.S.

Exchanging Dollars to Foreign Currencies

Many travelers like to have Euros (or Pounds or Yen) in hand when their plane touches down. That erases any initial anxiety about "Where will I find an ATM machine...and will it actually work with my local bank card?" It's nice not to have to think about exchanging currency immediately upon arrival, but you will likely get an unfavorable exchange rate when buying foreign currency in the U.S. prior to your trip. Plus, processing fees will eat into your funds. If convenience and peace of mind are priorities, exchange money in the U.S. But you'll save money by waiting and using your ATM card after you arrive.



Traveler's Checks

The traveler's check has had its day and now can be viewed – at best – as an emergency tool. As a rule, businesses now refuse to take them. Even banks have become balky. And when you do find a business that will cash them, you get hit with a high processing fee and (when the checks are in dollars) an unfavorable exchange rate. Of course, Thomas Cook and American Express offices in Europe waive the fee, but just try to locate one of those places when you need one! If you feel more secure with traveler's checks in your financial arsenal, that's okay, but use them as a last resort.

Guarding Against Theft

The safest way to carry your passport, credit cards and cash is in a neck pouch. When worn inside your shirt or blouse, this is your greatest protection against theft. Money belts can also be used when worn in front under clothing. Wallets and passports should never be carried in a rear pocket. Purses are somewhat safe only when carried in front. Nothing used to carry important documents or money should be set down when resting. We recommend that you carry about \$50 in small bills with you for airport purchases or to exchange small amounts of money—but rarely more.



Mail and E-Mail

You will be given a list of hotel addresses to leave at home. These should be used for emergencies only. Unless your tour is extensive, it is probably best not to receive mail abroad as it is often delayed and will not catch up with you. However, internet cafes and computer terminals for checking e-mail in airports and hotels are becoming much more common and this is an excellent way to stay in touch with those at home.

Rx Medications

Be sure to bring enough of the medication you require and carry it in the original containers. Carry your medications in your carry-on and not in your checked luggage. You should keep a copy of your prescription(s) separate from your medications themselves—be sure that your prescription includes the Latin name, not just the brand/commercial name. Even though your prescription cannot be filled overseas without a doctor's order, having this information will help the doctor identify what you are currently taking. Go to www.tsa.gov or your airlines website to find more information about traveling with medications.



Film

In our experience, airport scanners have not caused damage to film. However, extremely high speed professional film may be the exception. Also, repeated passing through scanners may cause slight fogging in film. To reduce risk of damage, do not pack film in your checked luggage. Take your film through security with your carry-on luggage. If you purchase film outside of the US, make sure it can be processed back home or process it while in the country where purchased.



Tipping

Gratuities are included in the tour price for hotels, step-on guides, and included meals. In most cases, the end of the tour tips for the bus driver and tour leader are **not included**. We recommend a tip of \$3 per person each day for the coach driver and \$4 per person each day for the tour leader. When ordering meals on your own the gratuity is often included in the price. In many countries, however, it is customary to include a small courtesy tip also—this can be done by simply rounding up your bill to, for example, the nearest euro. To be certain, ask your guide for the unique customs of each country you visit.



Passports

Any U.S. citizen traveling abroad needs a valid passport. This passport must have an expiration date well beyond the return date of your trip—we recommend at least six months. Application forms are available at the county courthouse or the post office. In applying for a passport, you will need a certified copy of your birth certificate plus two passport photos—details regarding how to get these photos are on the application form. Minors require a sworn affidavit by a witness. Non-U.S. citizens must follow the requirements of their own country regarding passports. Extra visas may be required for non-U.S. citizens. Allow several weeks for the government to process your application. During peak travel seasons, it could take months. Expedited passports can be obtained, but at a much greater cost.