

## TRAVEL TIPS

(from Alex's Mom and edited for UNCP Study Abroad)

1. **Believe your tour guide / professor:** you're paying for their expertise, so *listen to them!*
2. **Less is better:** remember—you're going to be schlepping that suitcase yourself!
  - 3 changes of underwear works—one set on, one drying, one spare
  - layer whenever possible; quick dry T shirts with a basic colored blouse will work most days (sweaters and sweatshirts take up too much space); prints travel better than solid colors—grease stains and wine slops don't show as much.
  - one fleece and a waterproof windbreaker will work for most situations; stick a pair of cheap stretchy gloves in the pocket
  - 2 pairs of shoes will do it; maybe a pair of flip flops that can double as slippers; make sure the shoes really fit well—break them in before taking on a trip
  - those socks with gripper bottoms will work as slippers in cold places
  - a T shirt type nightie doubles as a beach cover-up
  - My hubby swears by his zip-off pants
  - Band-aids may save your *life*—if you've ever gotten blisters, you know what I mean. Also, pain reliever, sun block, Vaseline (not to be gross, but one's digestive tract does funny things abroad and a sore bum can ruin your day).
3. **Essentials**
  - I have a multi-colored cotton, lightweight **shawl/scarf** I always travel with: it's been a neck scarf for warmth, a lightweight shawl for cool mornings; dramatically tossed over the shoulders for an evening out; I've thrown it over my head and shoulders before entering churches and mosques; it's been a picnic blanket; it's been wadded up and used as a neck pillow on busses—wouldn't leave home without it!
  - **Earplugs**—honestly, you will be surprised how helpful they will be, esp when you're sharing space with other people. Also, keep the *eye-goggles* they'll give you on the airplane.
  - **Towel**—take a cheap, smallish one; helps to wring out wash, doubles as a beach towel as well as an extra blanket, good for washing your hair as not all places will give you an extra; if you use a **washcloth**, take one of your own—many places in Europe don't have them; see ziplock bags below for carrying around while damp!
  - **Ziplock bags**—take a gallon size and put in a couple of quart and snack size along with 1 or 2 regular plastic shopping bags; toss in a couple of rubber bands

- and 2-3 twist ties (squeeze the air out, of course). You will be amazed at how often they will come in handy. Keep at least one shopping bag with you on a daily basis. I've used one to sit on, carry the food we bought for lunch (lots of places expect you to provide your own bag when shopping), and pop in my wet umbrella after a rain shower. You'll find dozens of reasons to use them.
- All **liquid cosmetics** need to be in a ziplock or similar bag. You will be frustrated if the shampoo leaks everywhere and you have to buy more; you'll be hysterical if it's all over your underwear.
  - **Snacks:** at least as you arrive, have a few granola bars or mini bags of peanuts stashed for easy retrieval. You never know when you might be starving –or when the meal includes something you just can't stomach (that whole fish in China that was staring accusingly from the plate...ugh!)
  - Buy at least one **packing cube** (available at AAA and other travel stores)—great for your underwear and a few feminine hygiene products; makes it easy to get to the daily stuff without having to root through the whole suitcase. Keep the remaining FH stuff in the bottom and bring up to replenish the daily supply. I like the long narrow ones because they fit in between the bars of the suitcase handle
  - **Roll** your clothes when packing—it not only maximizes the space, but eliminates the worst of the wrinkles (PS hanging things in a steamy bathroom will also help with wrinkles)
  - **Tummy pack** for *under* your blouse; Rick Steeves makes a soft one I like. Keep passport and money there; remove a bit of cash if you'll be needing to catch a cab or take a bus—the rest stays hidden. External ones can be cut off you easily.
  - **Purse or daypack** should be worn across the chest, not hanging from one shoulder. In crowded conditions (like busses) wear in front of you, not behind. If you opt for a purse, make it small for essentials only.
  - **Books:** if you're a reader, take a couple of cheap paperbacks and offer to share with other English speakers you meet. If you're just taking *guide books*, it's ok to tear out the sections you'll use (if you're not going to Slovakia, don't take that weight!). Yes, you can use electronic versions, but sharing books along the way makes for interesting conversations. Don't discount the hard copy approach!
  - **Passport and other important info:** keep a *copy* of your passport, plane tickets, and contact info someplace other than your body, just in case!
  - **Where are you staying?** *Always* write your hostel address on something (or take their business card if available) before leaving the building, even for a walk around the neighborhood. Guess why I know this.....

#### 4. Suggestions

- I just bought a neck type holder for my passport, ID, and tickets at the airport. It's a hassle to go through Security and have to dig for them multiple times. You probably won't use it other than in the airports, but it might be useful.
- A blow-up pillow will help a lot to be able to sleep on the plane; most airlines will supply mini-pillows, but they don't support your head as well; those big cushy

ones are great, but then what do you do with them while you're traveling? I haven't decided on this one yet.

- The purse you travel with needs to be as small, flat, and as compact as possible. Maybe you'll put the essential stuff in that tummy pack under your blouse and use a daypack, skipping the purse on a daily basis. Whatever you choose, think in terms of what can be attached to your body and you can still function. I have a small daypack/bag with a drawstring closure. It travels in the suitcase but comes out for use when I arrive at my destination.

## PACKING

<u>Medical/Personal</u>		<u>Clothing</u>
Vitamins	Bath towel	Undergarments
Daily prescriptions	Adapters & plugs	Bathing suit
Anti-diarrheal	Nail scissors, clippers,	Cover-up/bathrobe
Tylenol PM/sleep aid	tweezers	Flip flops
Allergy	Pillow	Pants
Anti-itch cream	Blanket	Tops
Vaseline	Passport, copy	Sweater/sweatshirt
Fresh wipes	Credit cards	Jacket
Eye drops	Foreign money if	Hat, gloves, scarf
Eye wipes	applicable	Shoes
Mosquito repellent	Camera/phone	Sox/tights
Ear plugs	iPad	Dress-up clothes?
First aid kit	Cords, ear buds	Shawl
Wash cloth	Flashlight	
Hand towel		