

Packing Checklist: What you need to bring to Costa Rica

Weight restrictions: Though the airline will let you bring more, we must restrict the weight of our bags at 45 lbs. total because for the last section of our trip, we go to the Carribean coast where the town is only accessible by boat. The boats restrict our luggage weight to 45 lbs. per person.

The following items are essential:

- _____ passport
- _____ university ID
- _____ the name, phone number, and fax number of your physician and a close relative
- _____ list of credit card numbers, and numbers to call to cancel the card in case of loss or theft
- _____ two large manila envelopes to leave tickets and excess money in safes
- _____ your required reading (books and reading packets assigned by instructors)
- _____ rain poncho/jacket (it will rain during the trip!)
- _____ daypack or book bag (to carry your lunch, poncho, and notebook in the field)
- _____ a handful of ziplock baggies of various sizes to keep things dry/protected from dust
- _____ two reliable flashlights or headlamps and spare batteries (rechargeable batteries are great)
- _____ lightweight plastic water bottle
- _____ watch
- _____ alarm (either on your watch or a separate alarm clock)
- _____ journal
- _____ small notebook to jot down information in the field
- _____ ample supply of pens and pencils
- _____ spare glasses, contact lenses, contact lens solution, and a copy of your lens prescription should your lenses get lost, broken, or stolen
- _____ shampoo and toiletries; use containers that won't leak and put them inside ziplock bags
- _____ sunscreen and after-sun cream
- _____ insect repellent (avoid aerosols; Avon's "Skin-so-soft" is a non-DEET alternative; DEET works best, but remember you will be wearing it for 21 days straight)
- _____ anti-itch cream (such as Caladryl)
- _____ analgesic tablets (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- _____ powdered oral rehydration salts for replacement of electrolytes (bring a dozen small packets; Gatorade makes these as do various other brands)
- _____ band-aids of various sizes
- _____ disinfectant or antibacterial ointment for minor wounds
- _____ Dramamine (non-drowsy formula!) if you suffer from motion sickness
- _____ any medications you normally take or might need (such as an antihistamine if you tend to have reactions to bug bites); for prescription medications, bring a copy of the prescription
- _____ bathing suit

- _____ long, lightweight but sturdy field pants (quick-dry are best) and shorts (more pants than shorts)
- _____ t-shirts and lightweight long-sleeved shirts (quick-dry are best)
- _____ plenty of socks (including long socks for wearing with rubber boots; ankle-high socks will result in blisters with rubber boots)
- _____ plenty of underwear (cotton or Capilene are most comfortable in tropical climates)
- _____ sweatshirt or warm fleece for high-elevation climates (it gets cool at night)
- _____ brimmed hat for protection from sun and rain
- _____ comfortable, sturdy walking shoes (light-weight hiking boots recommended, but running/cross-training shoes are probably ok)
- _____ strap-on rubber sandals (Teva, Chaco, Keen, or similar types) for walking around your dorm room
- _____ rubber boots (essential for walking in rain forest), these may be acquired in Costa Rica after arrival
- _____ laundry bag
- _____ an extra duffel bag or collapsible luggage item (packed inside your luggage) if you want to bring back souvenirs

The following items are optional, but do bring them if you can:

- _____ camera
- _____ all the film and/or storage cards you will need
- _____ small Spanish dictionary and phrase book
- _____ binoculars (strongly suggested as this is a birding course)

Room to spare? Students have commented that they wished they had brought extra socks and t-shirts. They also wished they had brought shoes that didn't rub their feet funny, a more reliable flashlight (you WILL depend on your flashlight!), more film or digital cards, and a more durable rain poncho. Pack accordingly, and think ahead!