

Costa Rica Packing List

Keep In Mind:

- Temperatures fluctuate greatly throughout the day--Plan to dress in layers! From 60's to 80's
- We recommend bringing a day bag that can hold a water bottle, a sack lunch if necessary, your school supplies, an umbrella, and a few notebooks /other materials. On excursions it should be able to hold a water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray and a towel. While studying at the language school and doing outreach work, modest and respectful, semi-professional clothing is necessary.

Clothing/Accessories:

- ☐ Day bag- Tip: Look for one that can be folded up like [this one](#)
- ☐ Several short sleeve and long sleeve shirts (think thin layers, and fast drying)
- ☐ Ladies: capri pants, long pants, jeans, long skirts or professional dresses
 - ☐ [Examples](#)
- ☐ Blouses or nice tops (no strapless or spaghetti straps)
- ☐ Gentlemen: nice jeans, shorts or khakis & polo shirts
- ☐ Shorts for excursions
- ☐ Socks and undergarments
- ☐ Comfortable athletic shoes for light hikes and/or early morning runs
- ☐ 1-2 nicer outfits for evening outings (optional)
- ☐ One pair of teva or chaco sandals (something that will stay on your feet in water and hold up to mud)
- ☐ Comfortable sandals or casual shoes for daily wear
- ☐ Modest pajamas
- ☐ House shoes, slippers or flip flops
- ☐ Hat for sun protection
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Lightweight rain poncho, rain jacket and/or umbrella
- ☐ Sweater or light jacket for colder days and evenings
- ☐ Swimsuit/coverup for beach or lake outings
- ☐ Beach towel
- ☐ Conservative athletic clothing if you choose to work out on your trip *Please NO short athletic shorts*

Toiletries:

- ☐ Shampoo and Conditioner
 - ☐ 2-in-1 recommended for quick showers
- ☐ Toothbrush and paste
- ☐ Body wash
- ☐ Face wash and any cosmetics
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Hair brush/comb
- ☐ Sunscreen (tends to be expensive in Costa Rica / Nicaragua)
- ☐ Insect repellent (CDC recommendation is 30-35% DEET, giving you at least 5 hours of protection before reapplication is necessary. See www.cdc.gov for a complete list.)

- ☐ Antibacterial soap (small, portable bottles)
- ☐ Alcohol Gel (small, portable bottles)
- ☐ Tissue packs, antibacterial wipes
- ☐ Extra pair of contact lenses/solution (if applicable)
- ☐ Personal medications/Vitamins if applicable, plus a copy of any prescription medications
- ☐ Customs officials may need to verify that a medication matches its label, so please carry medication in its original container
 - ☐ Some recommended medications to pack: activated charcoal pills (very useful for digestion of new foods!), imodium, pepto bismol, ibuprofen, benadryl (cream and/or tablets)

Documents:

- ☐ Valid Passport
- ☐ Two copies of your passport
- ☐ Your flight itinerary, printed (in and out of country) to show at customs
- ☐ Proof of insurance -- Your travel insurance ticket & bag tags
- ☐ Other form of identification (Driver's License or School ID)

Money:

- ☐ ATM Card for cash needs (we suggest Visa)
- ☐ Credit Card for other expenses that you don't want to pay in cash (we suggest Visa)
 - ☐ Call your bank in advance and let them know the dates that your cards will be used internationally

Notes:

- Withdrawing cash at ATMs is the most efficient way to get local currency
- \$50 USD for airport meals and the first couple of days should be fine
- Exchanging money in the US is NOT necessary
- Exchanging US bills in Costa Rica is only done in banks - so it is a long process and requires presenting your actual passport - we recommend ATMs for cash in Costa Rica

Miscellaneous:

- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Flashlight/headlamp
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Necessary chargers (portable cell phone battery recommended)
- ☐ Travel purse/wallet
- ☐ Small travel alarm clock/watch
- ☐ Ear plugs if you are a light sleeper
- ☐ It is safe to bring your cell phone, tablet, etc., as long as it won't distract you from your immersion experience
- ☐ Gift for host family
- ☐ Some ideas: a packaged food item famous in your home city, game to play with your family, paraphernalia from local sports team, book of pictures of home city, decorative home item from home city (like a picture frame)
- ☐ Small plastic bag for wet clothes, zip locks for cell phones in the rain, or waterproof bag
- ☐ Small mesh bag to transport items to shared bathroom (like [this](#))
- ☐ Mesh laundry bag
- ☐ Journals and Pens
- ☐ Donations if you would like to contribute, will be specifically defined in pre-departure information

- ❑ If you know in advance your diet includes specific snacks or bars that may be hard to come across, we recommend you bring those in your suitcase (protein bars, snack bars, etc.)

Tips for Packing Light:

- Try using ziplocks or packing cubes to reduce the size of clothing
- Pack versatile clothing items that can be both casual and professional
- Pack compact day bag/backpack in your suitcase
- Opt for thin, lightweight clothing with many layers and shoes that are not bulky
- Optimize space by packing items like toiletries and electronics in small pouches
- Remember--you only need to pack 7 days' worth of clothing
- Be a minimalist with toiletries--bring only what you really need

Recommended (Free) Travel Apps:

- [WordReference](#): Spanish-English or Spanish-Spanish dictionary
- [WhatsApp](#): Communication app (necessary for our group communication)
- [Uber](#): Ride-sharing app used in Costa Rica / Ecuador
- [Venmo](#): Payment app to repay friends (handy for group travel!)
- [Maps.me](#): Navigation app that can be used offline with points of interest
- [GlobeConvert](#): Conversion app useful for quick currency conversions
- [TripAdvisor](#): travel guides for weekend excursions