

Packing for a Photo Adventure

The art of packing for a photographic adventure is a careful balance of bringing everything you will need, and leaving everything else at home. The problem lies in the fact that it's difficult to predict your future needs. Below are categories of equipment: clothes, toiletries, medical, camera gear, computer/technology, camping, and food. Each of those categories is broken into subgroups like: absolute must haves, location/weather considerations and luxuries.

Journeys can be as unique as the people taking them and thus there will never be a perfect pack list that everyone can go by. What might be considered a luxury for one person is a "must have" for another. I'm a strong believer in bringing a little something to help make life on the road good again. Whether it's a book for the airport, a pillow for the flight or an iPod for a long bus ride, a small luxury can bring peace to a frantic world.

However, these "little" items can add up and when they do, we should remember that the best luxury item any traveler can have is a lightweight bag. With airlines tightening baggage restrictions along with charging more for bags and over-ages, it's worth your time to carefully pack your bags with only what is really necessary and minimize the luxuries. What follows is good start list for anyone on a major photo adventure. The idea is not to take everything on the list, but to pick and choose what works best for you and your journey.

Black - Must Haves

Blue - Location or Seasonal consideration

Green - Luxury

Clothes

The clothes list is greatly dependent on location and personal style. A good first step is avoiding cotton, as it takes an extended time to dry and makes the washing and drying process a long one. Notice the laundry detergent, sink stopper and clothesline for washing clothes. Clothes should be comfortable and versatile. Think about layering – that way, you can use any of the smaller items rather than being stuck with one bulky item.

Body

T-shirt
 Long sleeve polypro top
 Travel shirt
 Warm coat (fleece)
 Waterproof jacket
 Down jacket
 Down vest
 Fleece vest
 Fleece sweater
 Dress shirt
 Dress jacket, wrap or sweater

Head and Accessories

Hat
 Warm hat
 Buff/bandana
 Sun hat
 Rain hat
 Belts
 Bug head cover

Legs

Underwear
 Pants
 Convertible pants
 Shorts
 Socks
 Waterproof pants
 Long underwear

Hands

Thin gloves
 Warm gloves
 Waterproof gloves

Feet

Socks
 Walking shoes
 Boots
 Sandals
 Waterproof (over)boots



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Toiletries

Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Dental floss
Sunscreen
Lip balm
Ear plug:
Comb
Razor



Hand lotion
Insect repellent
Liquid soap
Sanitizer gel

Personal info

Passport
Driver's license
Credit card
Bank card
Cash
Itinerary
Copy of passport/driver's license
Yellow Fever card



Other

Money belt
Watch
Sunglasses
Water bottle
Flashlight
Spare lenses or glasses
Binoculars
Travel alarm
Plastic or Ziploc bags
Electric converter
Sewing kit
Baggage locks for use outside U.S.
Walking stick
Powder detergent
Clothes line
Sink stopper
Pocket knife (in checked bag)
iPod and charger
Journal/notepad/pen
Book



Technology

The decision to bring a computer should not be taken lightly, as the peripheral devices needed to support it use can add up to a fair bit of weight and bulk. Carefully consider how much it's needed and how much time you will have to work with it. With memory card size outpacing megapixels, it's now possible to go for weeks and perhaps months on memory cards. For the hardcore professional photographer a computer is a must, but for the average photographer going light and simple may help you focus on the moment.

Laptop computer
Power supply
Plug adaptor
Power converter
External hard drive
Card reader
Cables for hard drive and card readers
Card reader
USB jump drive

Medical

A close consideration to the nature of your journey should be given here. Key factors to consider are your personal health needs, proximity to medical assistance and what the quality of that care will be. Look to travel or outdoor gear stores for First Aid kits. Check with your doctor or travel clinic for advice on remote or extreme travel locations.

Small bandages
First Aid antibiotic
Anti-itching cream

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Medicine

A small collection of over-the-counter medicine for curing common ailments won't take up much space and can really save the day. Once again, personal health needs must be considered. A visit with a doctor at a travel clinic can give much more precise information about regional and personal needs.

General pain reliever
 Antihistamine
 Laxative
 Antacid
 Anti-diarrheal
 Motion sickness

A doctor at a travel clinic can prescribe medicine to deal with the following health related travel issues:

Bacterial infections (food poisoning)
 Malaria
 Altitude sickness

Photo Gear

The nature of what photo gear to bring greatly depends on: what you own, where you are going, what you plan to photograph and what your photo goals are. The following is a list of what a serious photographer might bring for a major photo journey.

Camera body x 2	Polarizing filters for all lenses
Wide lens	Graduated Neutral Density filters
General lens	Flash unit
Telephoto lens	Batteries for flash
Super telephoto lens	Cable release
Tele converter	Rocket blower
Extension tubes	Cleaning cloths
Off-camera flash cord	Sensor cleaning kit
Tripod and head	Swabs
Memory cards	Fluid
Camera batteries (minimum)	Rain cover for pack
Battery charger	Rain cover for camera

See you there... Photo Jomo

