

Bob Reif's Packing List for European, Asian, or Australian Tours (March through September)

Here's *all* you need for a week or a *month* of foreign travel:

- Two or three changes of underwear, preferably something that will dry fast (as you will likely be doing some laundering in your hotel room, especially on longer-duration tours). REI and Patagonia make travel undies that are impregnated with anti-microbial chemicals.
- Two or three pairs of shorts/pants. Men could bring a pair of shorts that could double as a swimsuit. Coordinate clothing so that mixing and matching a few basic things will give you several outfits. Consider a pair of “convertible” pants with the zip-off legs.
- A pair of comfortable sport sandals, walking/running shoes. You may be walking quite a bit some days. Be certain your sandals and/or shoes are thoroughly, completely, absolutely **BROKEN IN** *before* you go. Flip-flops are not an especially good idea for most occasions, but they're perfect for long “transfer” days when you'll be riding in the coach for many hours between cities. If you're going to a notoriously damp country, you'll need footwear that either dries quickly or is fairly water-proof.
- A swimsuit – *if* you know you'll have access to a pool or beach.
- A hat, bandana, or visor for those who are especially sun-sensitive. The closer you are to the equator (or if you'll be at higher altitudes), the greater the concern.
- A pair of inexpensive (in case they get lost) UV-ray-blocking sunglasses and sunscreen.
- Inflatable neck pillow. This is especially useful if only partially inflated and used for *lumbar* support on long bus rides.
- Some sort of compact, portable clothesline. I use a nifty braided-rubber line I bought at a scuba shop. You can find them at travel stores or on-line. They don't cost much.
- A small container of powdered detergent, a few packets of “Shout” stain-removing wipes, and a Tide “pen.”
- A small flashlight equipped with *new* batteries.
- Basic personal toiletries.
- Wet-Wipes and/or some anti-bacterial hand cleanser.
- Small camera, spare battery, and an *extra* memory card/chip. You might also upload/back up photos into iCloud regularly, just in case...
- A good paperback novel, a deck of cards, and a *map* for those long hours on the road or in the air.
- A “stuff sack” to separate soiled clothing from your clean stuff until you can launder it.
- A small, collapsible umbrella -- but those are inexpensive should you need to buy one on tour.
- Your own mini-medical kit: some kind of analgesic, some Immodium AD, Band-Aids, moleskin, antiseptic wipes and maybe even a tiny bottle of tea tree oil (as that can be used for a thousand different things: to sterilize cuts or scrapes, to deodorize funky footwear, to help with an upset stomach). Tea tree oil will have to be placed in your zip-lock bag of liquids for security checks.
- A lightweight, waterproof nylon jacket and a micro-fleece top or vest, or an anorak. Do your research on climate and weather. Things are different in Pompeii from what they might be in Edinburgh, and different in Sydney from what they are in Cairns. Some tour itineraries will run you through a quite a range of conditions.
- Two or three shirts, preferably NOT white. I used to urge people not to wear designer-label clothing, but times have changed. Young people in all the sizable cities of the world are increasingly fashion conscious. “Labels” are fine, though I'd still steer clear of American Eagle (for obvious reasons), and I would encourage young women not to go out of their way to be too sexy. (Fluorescent, spaghetti-strapped bras would *not* be a good idea in Florence.) If possible, go for fast-drying blends rather than 100% cotton.
- A collared golf or polo-style shirt might be a good idea, or perhaps one of those travel shirts with a collar and “roll-up-able” long sleeves. Women may want to bring a “broomstick” peasant skirt or one of those “all-purpose” black dresses that dries fast and never needs ironing. You'll be all set for

- a night at the theatre.
- Earplugs. (Trust me on this one.)

Think *twice* about bringing...

- Sweatshirts. They're bulky and they never dry if you're laundering in your hotel room sink. If you find you really need one, buy one on tour.
- Jeans. They are heavy and take forever to dry. On some tours, I bring *one* pair of jeans that are nice enough to wear to a classy restaurant or to the theater. If you are an ardent jean-wearer, you could get by with two pairs; alternate wear days, and launder after every third, fourth or fifth wearing. If you are a "jeans person," you may not need the shorts, etc. listed above.
- More than three of anything. Remember that many of you will purchase souvenir clothing -- t-shirts, etc. -- while on tour. You can always pick up some item you suddenly think you need. This may provide a perfect opportunity to interact with local merchants. Good experience!
- Pungent perfume or cologne. These can leak in your luggage, or make fellow travelers nauseous if they happen to be allergic to fragrances of this sort. This can be awful on a full coach for long hours.