

# Pacific Discovery – South America Semester – Packing List

## Equipment

- Duffel with pack harness, travel pack or backpacking pack. – approx. 65-100L
- Daypack for hiking – approx. 35L
- Sleeping Sheet
- Sleeping mat
- Water filter bottle (essential - see gear tips), and 1L Nalgene (or similar)

## Footwear

- Trail running shoes for hiking and all other use
- Sports sandals (Chaco, Teva, Keen etc.)
- Flip flops (optional but useful)

## Outdoor Clothing

- Rain jacket and pants (waterproof shell/unlined)
- Long pants for trekking in (quick dry – not jeans)
- Hiking shorts (quick dry)
- Fleece pants/sweat pants (optional)
- Light weight fleece top
- Fleece jacket or down jacket
- Thermal layers – 1 x long top and 1 x pants, Capilene or Smartwool (or similar)
- 2-3 x warm socks
- Warm/woolen hat (ski hat)
- Sunhat and sunglasses
- Warm gloves
- Gardening gloves for volunteering (essential)
- Swimsuit
- Pack-towel or lightweight towel – large enough to wrap around yourself to get changed under
- Rashguard for snorkeling (optional)

## Regular/Casual Clothing

- 2-3 x long pants/leggings
- 1-2 x shirts
- 1-2 x shorts/skirts
- 1-2 x light weight/sport socks
- 3-4 x cotton T-shirt/shirt/tank tops
- Underwear x 5-7 and bras x 5, including 2-3 sports bras
- Boxers and t-shirt to sleep in
- 1 x outfit for city evening wear (optional)

## Accessories

- Stuff sacks or packing cells to pack/organize your gear inside your duffel
- Reusable shopping bag (eg. LOQI bag)
- Sunglasses
- Compact headlamp
- Alarm to wake you up – watch, phone etc.
- Camera and charger and memory cards (or use phone)
- One good book to share
- Something simple & fun for interacting with kids (small & light weight is key) - not something to give to kids, but to play with them eg. frisbee, bubbles etc.
- Ziploc bags for keeping things water/dust proof

- Combination padlocks for duffel bag & room
- Photo album (phone or flip album of friends, family, your home life, to show your trip mates and local people you meet.
- Big trash bag to line your daypack for Inca Jungle Trail
- WiFi compatible device e.g. phone (optional)
- Foam ear plugs and eye shade (optional)
- Travel pillow – compact and lightweight (optional)
- Pocket knife/multi-tool (optional)
- Light cord clothesline approx 20ft (optional)
- Universal basin/bath plug (optional)
- Waterproof 'Drybag' – approx 10L (optional)

## Paperwork etc.

- \*Passport & photocopy of same
  - \*Air tickets & photocopy of same
  - \*Travel Insurance policy details
- Must also leave copy of above 3 items\* with family member for easy reference if needed
- Copies of prescription for any important medications in case these are lost or damaged during program.
  - Something to store your money, passport etc, in eg. money belt
  - Student ID card or ISIC card
  - 2 x debit or credit or prepaid cards and some USD cash
  - Travel journal
  - Course outline etc (if taking academic credit)

## Toiletries (compact & biodegradable)

- General toiletries (toothbrush, tooth paste, soap, small shampoo, sanitary needs etc.)
- Contact lenses and solution and/or glasses – if needed
- Sunscreen and lip balm
- Effective insect repellent
- Hand sanitizer

## Your required personal first aid kit (should contain)

- Any prescribed medications to last duration of program (including birth control).
- 1 course of azithromycin (antibiotic for bacterial gut infection)
- Immodium/loperamide
- Pepto-Bismol tablets
- Electrolyte sachets
- Band aids and blister tape/moleskin for feet
- Pain relief (Tylenol, Ibuprofen etc)
- Antihistamine (for hay fever, bites, allergies)
- Eye drops for dust/smoke irritation
- Spray or cream (for insect bites)
- Tweezers & scissors
- Antiseptic solution
- Non-adhesive dressings
- Strapping tape
- Motion sickness pills (non-drowsy)
- Throat lozenges
- Pro-biotics and cranberry supplements (optional)

# Gear Tips

Please refer to the gear list and gear tips when you are packing for the program. There's quite a lot of information here, so take your time and read through this carefully.

You don't need to go out and spend lots of money on the latest gear. In fact, it's best to bring clothing and footwear that is comfortable and worn-in. Over the course of the program, your pack/duffel and gear will get rugged use, so there is no sense in buying a whole new wardrobe just for this program.

Traveling light is the 'ideal'. Everything you bring should fit into one large duffel bag and your carry-on daypack. Please try to bring only what is on the list below – you will certainly collect extra clothing and mementos along your journey. Read carefully through the Gear Tips on the following pages for fuller explanations of gear list items.

**Do not bring:** hairdryer; electric razor; expensive or irreplaceable electronic items or jewelry.

**Travel light:** When you begin packing, you'll be tempted to bring more clothing than is on the clothing list because you still have room in your backpack or duffel – this is a fatal mistake! If we get one piece of advice from past students it's consistently, "tell them to bring the absolute minimum".

## Clothing tips

**Quick dry:** Look at all the clothing you are planning to bring and think to yourself, "How long is that going to take to dry". This goes hand in hand with traveling light.

**Cultural sensitivity:** Throughout South America, people dress fairly conservatively. In larger towns and cities people are used to international travelers, but whenever we are in rural areas and villages we expect you to wear long pants, or knee length shorts/skirt, and have your shoulders covered.

**Buying clothing in South America:** If you find you need another pair of pants, skirt, shorts, top or flip flops and are of average build, then you will be able to get them easily. Good shoes, comfortable sports sandals, and clothing for larger builds can be difficult to buy. Decent outdoor clothing and equipment is more expensive in South America than in the USA.

**Clothing for different situations:** In terms of choosing the clothing you bring on the program, we have outlined the main situations below that require different clothing.

Covering up on the program: Culturally, Peru and Ecuador are more conservative than USA, Canada, UK, Europe. Over the course of the program you will spend quite a lot of time at homestays, in rural villages, at school visits, on volunteer projects etc. In these situations, you need to dress respectfully and modestly. Have a top/shirt and pants you can do volunteer work in, and a clean change of clothes for the evening.

Andes (high elevations): Think Colorado/Wyoming mountain foothills. You may get down to t-shirt and shorts during fine weather but it could also be cold and rainy, and will be cold at night. Think rugged travel clothing.

Capchica Peninsula/Lake Titicaca: From being warm enough to summon up the courage to plunge into Lake Titicaca at midday, to freezing at night. The island is rugged, so bring good sturdy hiking/running shoes.

The Amazon and Galapagos: The weather will be warmer and humid in the Amazon and the Galapagos. It is likely to be raining most days in the Amazon. You will probably spend most of your time in light-weight trekking pants (in the jungle) or shorts, a t-shirt, and sports sandals or running shoes.

Inca Jungle Trail: When hiking you will carry your daypack containing rain gear, spare clothing and personal gear. It is likely to rain most days, so bring a large plastic bag you can put inside your daypack to keep everything inside dry. You'll wear trekking pants, moisture wicking layers on top, and hiking shoes. You'll need to have warm fleece or down layers to put on in the evening. Any gear not needed on this trip will be stored safely in your duffel bag, at our guest house.

**Casual clothing:** In larger towns and cities there are no particular clothing requirements, therefore you can wear whatever you are most comfortable. Keep in mind that most local people dress more conservatively.

**Evenings:** In larger towns and cities you will have the opportunity to go out in the evening. Bring something you feel good wearing in the evenings, so that you're not just wearing travel/trekking clothing. This might be a tidy shirt or dress – whatever you would go out in at home.

**Sleeping:** You will be sharing accommodation with other group members over the course of the program and should bring something to sleep in, for example, a t-shirt and cotton boxers/shorts.

**Multi-use:** When you are planning what clothing to bring it is good to choose clothing that will be multi-purpose and will work in multiple situations. Make sure all your tops go with all your bottoms.

### Clothing Layering

Staying comfortable outside is a matter of dressing to outwit Mother Nature. It's a balancing act between the climate, your activity level, exposure time and tolerance to heat and cold. Choosing the right clothing and layering it properly can make the difference between a pleasant outdoor experience and an uncomfortable (or even dangerous) situation.

1. Layering clothing is the best way to ensure comfort in the outdoors; it allows you to make quick adjustments based on your activity and the weather.
2. Each layer has a function: the innermost layer (against your skin) manages moisture; the middle layer insulates you from the cold; the outer layer shields you from wind and precipitation.
3. Fabrics that either pull moisture from your skin or retain warmth when damp are effective at maintaining your body temperature.

There are three basic stages in layering: an inner, moisture-management layer, an insulating middle layer and a weatherproof outer layer. You make adjustments depending on the degree of exertion and the outside conditions. The ability to peel off layers as you heat up and add them when you cool off is the key to this system.

**Moisture-management layers:** More than any other, the moisture-management layer influences how you regulate your body temperature. Have you ever worn a cotton T-shirt under your raincoat while you hiked or walked briskly? Even though you weren't getting wet from rain, you probably felt wet and cold. Trapped inside your clothing, perspiration can leave you chilled, no matter how well your outer shell fends off rain and snow. Cotton does an effective job of retaining perspiration where it can leave you feeling chilled. Your next-to-skin layer should not be cotton. Silk, wool and synthetic wicking fabrics such as Capilene®, Polartec® PowerDry® and CoolMax® polyester works to transport perspiration from the skin. Rather than absorbing moisture, these fabrics disperse it on the outer surface, where it can evaporate. The result: You stay warmer even when you sweat.



**Insulating layer/s:** The insulating layer/s helps you retain heat by trapping air next to your body. Polyester fleece vests, jackets and tights are good examples of insulation suitable for outdoor activities. They not only trap air but are also made with moisture-wicking fibers. For cold, dry conditions like Peru, goose down is great. Fleece is a favorite insulation material because it's lightweight, breathable and insulates even when wet. Plus, it dries faster and has a higher warmth-to-weight ratio than wool.



**Shell or outer layer:** The shell layer (jacket and pants) protects you from wind, rain or snow. If wind or water is allowed to penetrate to the inner layers, you begin to cool off.

Without proper ventilation, perspiration can't evaporate. Instead, it your shell. The shell layer should also be roomy enough to fit easily over restrict your movement. Some outer shells have a layer of insulation built for cold conditions, but not very good for the South America program as layering in a variety of temperatures and are much heavier and bulkier.



condenses on the inside of other layers and not in, making them suitable they are not as versatile for

**Trekking shirt and pants:** You'll be wearing these a lot, so it is good to comfortable. Trekking pants are usually have higher waists than regular rubbing from your backpacks hip-belt.

make sure they'll be pants. This is to prevent

**Casual clothing:** Try not to bring too much ☹️

**Pants:** Bring comfortable light-weight trousers (light cotton or synthetic), not heavy jeans or cords.



**Shorts:** You need to bring at least one pair of shorts for hiking in. Considerations here are again 'light weight' and not too short because of cultural sensitivities. Knee length hiking shorts are ideal. No heavy cargo shorts or short shorts. Guys could plan to have their hiking shorts double as a swimsuit.

### Footwear

You will need footwear for the following situations: Hiking, rafting, volunteer work, casual and travel situations. We suggest:

Trail running or hiking shoes: Rugged-soled trail running shoes are the best compromise for the program, being rugged enough for the hiking yet light enough for running/exercise. The key thing is that your footwear has good grip. Regular paved road running shoes are not as suitable.

Sandals: The best sandals stay firmly on your feet and dry quickly. We recommend Chaco's (pictured). People generally find the Z1 model more comfortable than the Z2. Other popular brands include Teva and Keen. Make sure any sandals you bring won't give you blisters – you need to be comfortable wearing them for many hours.

Light weight flip-flops for casual wear and showering in, are also a good idea.

Socks: Bring at least two pairs of medium weight hiking socks and a winter-weight pair for wearing in the evening while in the Andes. In the event that you start to get hotspots or rubbing, a thinner pair of liner socks can help. Make sure these socks are either wool or a synthetic trekking sock. Cotton socks will not keep your feet warm when/if they get wet.



**Daypack/small backpack:** Similar to a backpacking pack but smaller. Must have 2 shoulder straps and have plenty of room for our overnight trekking trips where you will carry a change of clothing for the evening, rain jacket, camera, sunscreen, sunglasses, swim-suit & sarong, water bottle, diary etc. Around 1,500-2,000cu (30-35L) is ideal.

**Sleeping sheet:** For example refer: [www.rei.com/product/850235/](http://www.rei.com/product/850235/)  
This is used: inside your sleeping bag (to prevent needing to wash your sleeping bag); if you have to share a double bed

with another participant (so you have your own space); if it's too hot for your sleeping bag. Made of light weight cotton or silk. If you don't already own one, you can just get an old single summer sheet, fold it in half and sew it into a sleeping bag.



**Pack towel:** Bring a lightweight towel that is large enough to wrap around yourself, for getting changed under.

**Water Filter Bottle:** We ask that you buy and bring your own water filter bottle, so that you have access to safe and cheap drinking water throughout the trip. Bottled water can be purchased, but results in a lot of plastic waste, and over the course of the program, can cost up to \$200. Investing in a water filter bottle will save you money, and is great for the environment.

We recommend a Camelbak All Clear Water Purification bottle (\$79): <http://ow.ly/TRaf3005gCc>

A more expensive choice but the #1 student recommended water filter bottle from our alumni feedback.

Or, Seychelle Water Filter bottle (\$25) with advanced filter for back-country use: <http://ow.ly/UYz83005gTg>

In addition to a water filter bottle, please also bring a 1 litre Nalgene.

### **Duffel Bag/Travel Pack**

We recommend that you bring a duffel bag with shoulder straps, a travel pack or backpacking pack on the program. You will not use this pack for the trekking trips. It will stay behind and you will use your day-pack for the trekking trips.

You need a medium sized duffel or pack eg. 65-75L pack or 70-100L duffel.

The main reasons we suggest a duffel or travel pack are:

1. You can lock it, which keeps your belongings safer on travel days and removes temptation from accommodation cleaning staff to go through your stuff.
2. As these open right up, they are easier to live out of than a backpacking pack.

If you only have access to a backpacking pack, it is fine to bring this to use. Don't bring a duffel without pack-straps or a suitcase.

Duffel Bag: Example: [www.rei.com/product/884916/](http://www.rei.com/product/884916/)

Any large rugged duffel with pack straps is ideal, like the one pictured here >

Travel Pack: Osprey Porter 65.

Volume 65L

Weight 4 lbs. 13 oz

\$150

This is a nice, compact travel pack, with a zip away harness to reduce the risk of straps getting caught. The advantages of a pack like this over a backpacking pack is that you can lock it and it is much easier to live out of a pack like this than it is a backpacking pack because you can open it right up like a suitcase.

**WiFi/internet access:** There is a lot of free WiFi in Peru and Ecuador (a lot of our accommodation has it), so having a device that you can go online with can be very handy.

If you decide to bring a device you need to be careful that you don't break it over the course of the program through crushing, wetting, humidity, cooking in the sun, getting sand or dust into it. Internet speeds in South America are generally A LOT slower than at home.

**Cellphone:** Having a phone is good from a safety perspective – you can easily contact your program leader when you're out and about. If you arrange a roaming plan with your provider, check the cost to make and receive calls from these countries (you don't want to return home to a \$1000 phone bill, as one participant did a few years ago). Alternatively, if you have a WiFi compatible phone, you can just plan on using it for keeping in touch via skype etc. as WiFi is common at places we stay throughout both countries.



**Electrical outlets and power adaptors:** Electrical outlets in Peru and Ecuador are most commonly the same as the United States. Peru uses 220v electricity. Ecuador uses 120v electricity. This means that phones, tablets and digital camera rechargers (designed for international use) can usually plug straight in, but other electrical appliances, like hairdryers etc., that only take 110v will overheat and short-circuit without a voltage converter. Please don't bring a hairdryer.

**Your documents and how to keep them safe:** You need something to put documents into. Inside it, in zip lock bags to keep everything dry, will go your passport, air tickets, travel insurance document, credit/debit cards and the bulk of your cash. Most of the time this will be locked inside your duffel. For day to day purchases bring a small pocket size purse or wallet. Additionally have photocopies of your passport, air tickets and travel insurance policy in a zip lock bag safely stashed in your duffel or pack. Make sure you also leave a copy of these items with a family member at home –having a copy will speed up replacement if necessary.

**Camera:** Bring the best one you own or can afford. Bring the battery charger and a couple of spare memory cards. If photography is not a passion, you can use your phone for photos.

**Toiletries:** Make sure your toiletries are not too bulky/heavy. You will be able to buy more as you go. Be aware that you may not be able to get the same brands as at home.

**Washing/Laundry:** You will be able to pay to get your clothes laundered when we are in cities. This usually costs around \$1 for a kilo of laundry (2lbs). You can hand-wash and dry items in your room if you bring a line and pegs. You will lament wearing the same clothes all the time but everyone else will be doing the same and it is much better if all your gear fits easily into your duffel!

#### **First aid kit**

We require you to bring your own personal first aid kit on the program. Although our instructors carry group first aid kits for emergency use, for minor health complaints, your instructors will show you how to utilize what you have in your kit, to help you become more skilled at taking care of yourself in a developing world travel setting.

We ask you to bring a course of antibiotics as traveler's diarrhea is one of the more common illnesses on the program. This is caused by exposure to new bacteria, commonly from food. This condition typically fixes itself over time. However, research has shown that early treatment with antibiotics significantly reduces the duration of the illness, meaning you make the most of your program experience, and reduces the likelihood of ongoing complications. You will only take these antibiotics in consultation with your instructors.

Many people take probiotics as a preventative to getting ill, however there is no solid scientific evidence that this is true. You may choose to take these as a preventative if you wish (some of our instructors do).

We suggest that females bring cranberry supplements as a preventative to getting UTI's.

#### **Finally**

Bring what is on the packing list and nothing else ☺. In most cases you'll only be allowed to check one bag at max 23kg for your international flights, so your luggage has to be within this.