

## PACKING TIPS

*What you can do to fit 3 weeks' worth of clothing and toiletries into a carry-on!*

It can be difficult to gauge how much clothing you really need for three weeks, let alone preparing for inclement weather and formal visits to governmental buildings! Take it from me, who traveled on the Maymester '08 trip wearing a different *outfit* every day while only bringing a small suitcase *and* an extra bag for my return trip to the States.

*\*Please note that the methods described below assume only the bare necessities\**

- It is strongly recommended that your main suitcase has wheels. Keep in mind some cities have mainly cobblestone sidewalks/streets.
- The key is to pack in neutrals: choose either cool tones (blacks/whites) or warm tones (browns, greens, purples) to maximize your wardrobe. This way, you don't pack the same type of shoes in two different colors, which would reduce the amount of space in your luggage for other necessities.
- Choose clothes that are either wrinkle-free, or clothes where the wrinkles will easily fall out when hung.
- Ball up socks & stockings into your shoes. This will allow your shoes to retain their shape & create more space!
- Rather than folding all of your clothes, roll as many items as you can (i.e. your casual wear). Keep your formal wear on the very top, or in your garment compartment.
- Roll/compress undergarments into a smaller cloth bag. This will help centralize your necessities if you are in a rush in the mornings.
- For day trips/excursions, bring/pack comfortable shoes and bottoms to change into. Ladies, this is the perfect time to bring out those extra-large purses because I used mine for *every* day trip! Gentlemen: not to worry, we usually traveled by bus, so you can definitely leave your belongings on it. Otherwise, some brought small messenger bags large enough to hold jeans, sneakers and/or a casual shirt.
- Do trial packing! I packed my belongings at least 3 times in 3 different ways before I was finally able to arrange everything to fit. *Do not wait until the last minute* – you never know what else you will throw in your bag on the day of your flight!

### Recommended items:

***Note: For small appliances such as hair dryers/straighteners, travel irons, etc, you might want to try coordinating who brings what items in your group so you can be more efficient in your packing.***

- An electricity adapter and converter (be sure to bring the adapter for French plugs)
- A light, multi-purpose coat (e.g. I had brought a very light trenchcoat, perfect for each excursion)
- Sunglasses

- An extra (foldable) duffel/weekend bag (in case you travel during your free weekend, or have extra items to bring back to the States)
- A hanger (if preferred, stores like the Container Store sell collapsible/foldable hangers)
- Camera (& batteries, if necessary)
- A major credit card for emergencies – preferably VISA (AMEX & MasterCards are not widely accepted)
- A pillowcase
- Small face towel
- Neck pillow
- Ear plugs
- Eye/face mask (to block out the light when you nap during the day or on a train/bus)
- Mp3 player
- Reliable Alarm (the one on your mobile phone would also be fine)
- Socks & undergarments to last 7-10 days (in case laundry facilities are not readily available)
- Headset (for those of you who are planning to bring your laptop... highly useful for calling back home via Skype)
- Small book of French phrases
- Flip-flops for the shower
- Small umbrella or poncho
- Sneakers
- Sandals
- Formal dress shoes
- Hand sanitizer
- Pocket tissue
- Nail clippers/file
- Notebook & textbook
- Copies of passport (1<sup>st</sup> pg only), drivers' license, & both sides of credit card/debit card
- Copies of any prescriptions (meds, glasses or contacts)
- Chargers
- Dry snacks (granola bars, etc)
- Cold/allergy medicines
- Neutral-scented hand lotion (I brought a small metal case of Nivea hand crème/lotion and *everyone* used it – including the men on the trip)
- Travel iron
- Running clothes, if you are a runner (since the Chateau is located right next to a beautiful park, with access to tennis courts & bicycles)
- Emergency sewing kit
- Other basic toiletries – please remember to follow TSA guidelines for items you wish to carry-on. Although 3 oz. does not seem much, I had more than enough shampoo to last me the entire 3 weeks!
- Extra zip-loc bags/grocery-store trash bags

Random tip for shaving cream: If you are weary of the canisters from which shaving creams are generally made available (since they take up a LOT of space), try Crabtree & Evelyn – they sell a shaving cream available in a 3.1 oz. *tube*. The scent in Sweet Almond (very light) works for both men & women (advice from a Crabtree & Evelyn salesperson!).

SPECIFICS:

Men

Sport jacket/suit (wrinkle-free)

Collared shirts (for formal site visits)

Dress shoes

Tie

Women

Hosiery

Closed-toe shoes (for formal site visits)

Scarf (in a neutral tone that will match with your packed clothing)

Extra bobby pins/hair bands (for windy days)

Layering tanks/shirts

Business skirt, slacks and/or dress (knee-length) – 3 bottoms in total

2-3 blouses that will match with the above

Lounge pants & light sweater (for those breezy nights at the Chateau)

Extra set (or two) of clothing for a night in town 😊

Feminine hygiene products that you are comfortable with (as you may not find the same in Europe)

Smaller handbag that will go across the shoulder (make sure all purses that you bring ZIP all the way! Or that when the purse is clasped, the spaces leftover are not large enough to fit a hand through – **be mindful of pick-pockets!!!**)