

The Weekend Getaway Packing List & Tips

The essentials¹

- Passport
- Wallet (money, health insurance cards, credit cards, ID cards)
- Camera
- Camera battery charger (plus extra batteries & extra memory cards)
- Trip itinerary & all flight, hotel, car rental email confirmation printouts
- Emergency phone number list, credit card information²
- Guide books (or print-outs from internet)
- (Phrase book)
- Ipod & charger
- (Adapters)
- House keys and my Navigo (metro) pass for when I get back to Paris!
- Book
- Sunglasses
- Everyday walking around bag or backpack³
- (Small purse for evenings)
- Small rolling suitcase or backpack that most of this will go in
- Cell phone/blackberry & charger
- Laptop & charger⁴
- Extra zip-lock/plastic bags
- **Toiletries** (and other liquids)⁵
 - Deodorant
 - Toothbrush, toothpaste & dental floss
 - (Shower gel, shampoo, (leave-in) conditioner, q-tips, moisturizing lotion)⁶
 - Face wash & moisturizer (with SPF)⁷
 - Comb/brush
 - Basic first aid supplies (Band-Aids, moleskin & some Advil/aspirin at a minimum)
 - Downy wrinkle release⁸
 - (Hair styling product)
 - (Hair dryer)⁹
 - (Contact lens case, solution and spares)
 - (Prescriptions Medicines)
 - (Tampons)
 - (Mosquito repellent)
 - (Tweezers)
 - (Nail file)
- (Make-up)
- (Jewelry)¹⁰
- (Umbrella)¹¹

¹ *Tip:* Compress and organize your clothes in large zip-lock bags. I usually have one zip-lock for toiletries and one for other small items (chargers, etc.) as well. It serves the added purpose of keeping everything dry.

² *Tip:* It's best to take a few precautions in case you get your purse or wallet stolen or in case your phone/blackberry fails. Bring a printed list (or have accessible in your email if internet will be easily accessible) of phone numbers for your hotels, emergency numbers and credit card company numbers to call. If traveling with other friends, exchange emergency contact information.

³ For cities, usually a shoulder/messenger bag and for countryside often just a backpack.

⁴ I usually take my chances these days that there will be wifi and don't bother bringing an Ethernet cable.

⁵ *Tip:* If you travel often, keeping a permanently packed zip-lock of toiletries saves a lot of time. If you are running low on something, replace it at the end of the trip so you're ready to go for the next weekend away. Remember, if you are flying with only carry-on luggage you will need to keep liquids separate in a zip-lock bag in any case. I try my best to bring *only* the essentials and tiny sample-sized products (smaller than travel-sized) when I can find them. MUJI (www.muji.fr/) has a good selection of toiletry containers.

⁶ *Tip:* Perhaps not needed if you are staying in a hotel that will provide all this. If really going "lite" I'll bring shampoo that can double as shower gel and just my leave-in conditioner, not the regular conditioner.

⁷ *Tip:* Again, if going "lite" I'll bring one moisturizer for daytime that has SPF in it and use it also at nighttime. If hiking, I tend to bring waterless face wipes instead of face wash.

⁸ *Tip:* If you have clothes that may wrinkle, you have to try out this fabulous invention: <http://www.downy.com/en-US/product/downy-wrinkle-releaser.aspx> that also comes in travel size. Just spray it on most fabrics, shake it out or hang the item up for a few minutes, and all but the most stubborn wrinkles are gone. I have grouped it with toiletries as you will need to keep all liquids in that zip-lock bag if you are flying with only carry-on luggage.

⁹ I would *not* bother with a hair dryer but I know some people cannot live without them.

¹⁰ *Tip:* I try to just wear something simple that will match everything I plan to wear that weekend.

¹¹ I usually only bring an umbrella on a city break; otherwise a waterproof windbreaker is enough.

- **Clothes**
 - Underwear, socks, (bras), (tights) *x # of days*¹²
 - One pair jeans
 - (Black pants/hiking pants)¹³
 - Tanks or t-shirts *x # of days*
 - 2 sweaters/long-sleeve shirts
 - Pashmina¹⁴
 - (Running/workout clothes: shorts, t-shirt, socks, (sports bra))
 - Pajamas
 - Waterproof windbreaker/poncho
- **Shoes**
 - A decent pairs of shoes¹⁵
 - Sneakers (if you plan to work out or run, otherwise any comfortable walking flats)

Is it a city break?

- Street-by-street map
- One nice outfit for evenings

Is it a beach weekend?

- Bathing suit
- Sun screen
- Hat
- Flip flops
- (Beach towel)
- Beach cover-up/sundress

Is it winter?¹⁶

- Heavier coat, mittens, hat, scarf, thermal underwear top & bottom¹⁷
- *If you are skiing*¹⁸, skis, poles, boots, ski parka, snow pants, heavy socks, long underwear, goggles, hat, gloves, scarf, and bathing suit (if you plan to hit the Jacuzzi after the slopes!)

Will you be doing any Hiking? (For serious hiking, see my hiking packing list)

- Hiking boots & socks
- Hiking pants, shirt, (sports bra), fleece
- (Headlamp/flashlight)
- Backpack¹⁹ with camel pack (or other water bottle)

Is there a special occasion?

- *If you are attending a wedding*, your dress/suit, necessary undergarments, shoes, jewelry, directions to the ceremony and reception, gift
- *If you are staying with friends or attending a birthday*, a gift

Will you be driving?

- GPS (including mount and charger)
- Roadmaps
- Driver's license
- CDs or Ipod hook-up for car
- (Voucher for the car rental)

¹² *Tip:* I keep my underwear in a zip-lock bag and my socks in another, to compress the air out and use up less space.

¹³ This is usually an either/or for me—a pair of matches-everything black pants for slightly fancier locations or jeans as my “nice” pants and hiking pants during the day outside of the cities. In the summer, I might replace with capris.

¹⁴ *Tip:* A pashmina is one of those wonderful multi-purpose items that can serve as a scarf if it's cold or in place of a sweater in the summer, over a tank top for going out in the evenings. Any time of year, I always have a pashmina along (and I pick a color that will match everything).

¹⁵ *Tip:* You save a lot of room by only bringing one pair of shoes. If you need sneakers or hiking boots plus one decent pair of shoes, consider bringing foldable ballerinas (for the girls) or other shoes that double as walking shoes.

¹⁶ *Tip:* I often find it easier to pack for winter getaways, at least if they are city breaks. Usually just one pair of black boots works for walking around and evenings. And I wear the only coat I'll be bringing.

¹⁷ *Tip:* The thermals or at least a pair of tights can be a lifesaver on winter city breaks.

¹⁸ *Tip:* Coordinate with the others you are traveling with on whether you'll bring your own skis (if you have them) or rent!

¹⁹ *Tip:* I own a few foldable mini-backpacks from Decathlon (www.decathlon.fr/) that are extremely useful.