

Packing Checklist

Costa Rica Explorer

Below is a gear list of required and optional items to bring on your adventure. Try your best to avoid cotton clothing for being active in, looking instead for clothing made of nylon, polyester, wool, etc.

Required Items

- Main piece of luggage: a sports bag with wheels, a soft-sided suitcase, a backpack or similar with small padlocks or combination locks
- Daypack: used for day trips and on the bus. Must be well fitting with supportive shoulder straps and a waist-strap. Should be large enough for your water bottle, packed lunch, raincoat, fleece, camera and personal items.
Recommended size: 30 litres(2000 cubic inches)
- Hiking boots/shoes: lightweight and breathable with good traction
- Water bottles: need to be able to carry 1-2 litres per day. For water bottles, wide-mouth water bottles, 1-litre capacity. Bring two and make sure they are leak-proof, heavy duty plastic
- Waterproof Jacket: a waterproof breathable, shell jacket with a hood which keeps you dry when active.

Recommended Items

- Water-sports sandals: Teva or Keens are good brands
- Other Shoes/Sandals: to wear at the lodges
- Socks: two or three pairs
- Light sweater: one for evenings or cool days
- Tanks/T-shirts: four to six, lightweight, quick dry
- Mid-layer shirt: one light, mid-weight long-sleeve shirts for sun protection
- Shorts/Pants: two or three, lightweight, quick-dry bottoms
- Underwear and good support, comfortable bras
- Bathing Suit
- Pyjamas/nightwear
- Brimmed sun hat
- Sunglasses: with a retainer strap if you have one
- Camera: memory cards and batteries/charger
- Toiletries (ideally all biodegradable): shampoo, conditioner, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, chapstick, facecloth/small travel towel, prescription medications (Bring in duplicate and pack separately), glasses/lenses, feminine hygiene products, wet wipes, hand sanitizer etc.
- Small travel towel
- Biodegradable Sunscreen: with high SPF rating
- 10-litre dry bag or Ziplock baggies: for waterproofing your camera or other items.
- Earplugs (recommended for shared rooms)
- Small flashlight or small headlamp with spare batteries

Optional Items

- Dress/ Skirt/ Jeans/ Nice top (to travel in or extend your stay in Costa Rica)
- Bandana/ Buff
- Small Pillow (for travelling + camping)
- Binoculars (8×42) recommended, 7×32 minimum (getting a closer look at wildlife is really rewarding)
- Pencil and Notebook/Journal
- Reading material
- Field guides. Our naturalists recommend [Birds of Costa Rica by Richard Garrigues](#), for both portability and content.
- A map can also be an enjoyable addition to have, we recommend [this waterproof one](#).
- If you are used to hiking with a walking stick, bring a collapsible one
- Energy snacks and drinks: while snacks will be provided, you may like to bring some along too if you have special dietary needs or personal favourites.
- Personal first aid kit: for any essential items that you know you'll need (e.g. blister treatment if you are prone to blisters, anti-nausea meds if you get motion sick etc.). Your guides will carry a group first aid kit.
- Caladryl/After Bite/Benadryl Cream or lotion to ease itching from bug bites
- Insect repellent (20 - 100% Deet) and/or Bug jacket

Essential Documents

- Passport: stored in a waterproof wallet/Ziploc bag

- Copies of your passport, medical insurance, air tickets (pack separate from the originals)
- Money: cash in local currency, credit/debit cards with pin number for cash withdrawals
- Air tickets and itinerary

Packing Notes

Luggage Logistics

As a general rule, **don't bring more than you can carry**. This will help ensure smooth and efficient transfers in airports, customs, hotels, and loading vans/trailers/boats.

On adventure travel trips it is best to travel with one larger check-in bag and one carry-on bag. These bags are easy to move around, can be toted easily, fit in boats, small planes, and van/bus roof racks. Backpacks can work too; do try to avoid large suitcases. While on tour, your local guide will instruct you on how to prepare for travel between locations.

Most airlines have reduced the weight maximums for each bag to 50 pounds. Be sure to check with your airline for weight restrictions and carry-on allowances. When packing your carry-on try to include what you would need to be comfortable your first few days in case your checked baggage is misrouted by the airline.

We recommend a medium duffle bag or backpack of 50-70 litres (your checked bag) and a medium daypack of 20-30 litres (your carry-on bag) for most adventures.

Prepare for lost or delayed luggage by wearing or carrying on the items that are essential to your adventure such as an active outfit and your hiking boots. In your

day pack (your carry on), you should bring a full change of clothes, your waterproof jacket, toiletries, medications, camera and all paperwork.

Day 1 - have your daypack packed and ready to hike with. Your other bag should be packed and ready for pick up, so it can be taken ahead to the lodge.

It is recommended you have one small waterproof bag (10-litre dry bag) for your documents, camera, etc., that you can carry in the cockpit of your kayak and have handy on motorboat trips. It is especially important that electronic equipment such as digital cameras, video cameras, etc. is fully waterproofed, especially on the boat ride.

Your Daypack Essentials are:

- Insect repellent
- Sunblock (a small one will last for your whole trip)
- Chapstick with sunblock.
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Light rain jacket
- Flashlight
- Water - we recommend bringing your own refillable bottle for environmental reasons. Recycling in Costa Rica is not what it should be, and you will almost always have access to potable water.
- Field guide
- Sunglasses
- Alcoholic hand sanitizer
- Hat (actually this should probably be on your head)
- Personal medication- any medication you might need, for example, an asthma inhaler, heart medication or for a diabetic; insulin, glucose etc.
- Additionally, our guides recommend a small, microfiber "hiker's towel", which will dry easily but do wonders for keeping sweat from accumulating.

Resources for Buying Outdoor Gear & Clothing

- Mountain Equipment Co-op, REI, SAIL, Atmosphere, Sportchek
- Borrow: Why buy when you can borrow from a friend?
- Variety/Value Village, Goodwill, Salvation Army and online swap sites are also great places to find second-hand gear for a fraction of the price.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rewear!