



PACKING SUGGESTIONS FOR DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Anyone traveling in a foreign country should be aware and mindful of differences in what is culturally acceptable, especially when it comes to clothing. What may be appropriate in the city and country where you live, may not be appropriate in the country you are visiting. In general, err on the side of **dress conservatively**. In most countries where we have programs, it is important to dress modestly. This means avoiding clothing that reveals shoulders and shorts that fall above the knee. Students will attract less attention to themselves as an outsider when they are dressed appropriately and respectfully...dress like the locals do!

Typically, it is best for women and girls to wear long shorts (at least mid-thigh or to the end of your fingertips) or knee-length skirts. Spandex shorts by themselves, overly tight or form-fitting tops with thin straps, or cut-off t-shirts with large arm holes are not appropriate work wear. Bathing suits are only appropriate to wear on the beach.

Suggested Packing List

During the course of your travels you will be responsible for carrying and tending to your own luggage. Travelers tend to significantly overpack; it is actually quite amazing how little you need. In general, plan to pack for a week to ten days.

Must - Haves:

Passport & Photocopy of Passport - Must be valid for up to 6 months after your scheduled departure date from the Dominican Republic. Upon arrival, GLA staff will collect all passports and lock them in a safe for the duration of the program.

Print Copy of your Itinerary (sometimes immigration officials want proof of your return flight before allowing you to enter the country).

Two refillable water bottles

Insect repellent

Clothing:

Lightweight rain gear - Waterproof windbreaker or poncho for sudden, unexpected tropical showers.

Short-sleeved shirts (4-6)

Sleeveless shirts - No spaghetti straps! These are to be worn only at the Home Base. Shoulders will always be covered when in the community (2-3)

Loose pants, capris, or below-the-knee shorts - Spandex will not be allowed when in the community (3-5)

Jeans / long pants - not recommended to work in (1)

Under garments & socks

Bathing suit (2)



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Flip flops / sandals / water shoes (1-2 pairs)

Running/hiking shoes - these are for hiking and WILL get dirty (1 pair)

Hat - highly recommended (1)

PJs - Lightweight pants and long sleeve shirts are recommended, as they offer students additional protection from mosquitoes during the warm nights. (Mosquitoes fly only between dusk and dawn and students are encouraged to cover up during these hours)

Bath / Personal:

Towel - for swimming / beach (1)

Personal medication*

Prescription sea sickness pills or patch, **if applicable**

Glasses / contacts / contact solution / retainer, **if applicable**

Personal toiletries - If you have certain items that you absolutely need, bring enough to last until you return home. Ladies: Pack enough feminine hygiene products for the duration of the program as access to certain products may be limited once in country. Tampons are very rare in the Dominican Republic!

Sunscreen

First Aid Kit suggestions - All staff carry a fully stocked first aid kit to care for student needs, however, we recommend for students to carry the following items to promote their own self-care and personal comfort while abroad:

Emergen-C packets or electrolyte tablets

Pepto-Bismol

Hand Sanitizer

Benadryl (if coming with any known allergies)

A Savvy Traveler in the Dominican Republic Will Bring:

Sunglasses (1 pair)

Watch or small alarm clock (1)

Mini-flashlight / headlamp (1)

Extra batteries (for your flashlight)

Light day bag or pack (See an example day pack [here](#))



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Personal snacks that you may need or crave (such as granola bars or power bars). We provide 3 full meals a day, however, some have particular dietary/health needs.

Disposable camera, film camera or digital camera - and film or memory card(s) for digital camera

Adapter and converter for your electronic devices

Books and/or magazines

Spending Money:

\$100 per week + \$200 emergency fund

We recommend bringing some cash with you, along with an ATM Debit and/or Credit Card, if you have access to one. Bringing an ATM Debit card will allow you to take out local currency from ATMs. This enables you to receive the best exchange rate possible. Please ask your bank about fees associated with using the card internationally as they can vary significantly. Be sure to let your bank know you will be using the card overseas.

Your tuition covers most costs, including your food, accommodation, transportation to-and from community service sites, and program activities. On a day-to-day basis, your spending will be limited to communication (Internet and phone calls), market purchases (souvenirs and gifts), extra snacks, minor medical expenses, and travel to and from the country.

Students often misplace their money or spend it much quicker than they expect to, not taking into account the exchange rate. Please take into account your shopping and snacking habits when determining how much spending money you will need.

IMPORTANT NOTE on \$200 emergency fund:

This is not to be spent on gifts or snacks. This money is for emergency purposes only, such as minor medical expenses or unexpected purchases. You are responsible for medical expenses while in-country. You pay upfront medical costs and then submit receipts to your insurance company. The GLA travel medical insurance policy provides secondary insurance – if your primary insurance denies coverage, the GLA policy covers it. If you do not have primary insurance, the GLA policy will serve as your primary insurance.

Important Notes on Packing:

Climate/Weather:

The majority of the Dominican Republic enjoys beautiful tropical weather all year round, with the average annual temperature hovering around 25°C (77°F).

Some call the Dominican Republic's climate the "endless summer" due to warm and sunny conditions experienced throughout the entire year.

It does rain frequently and can begin unexpectedly. Students are encouraged to pack accordingly.



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Luggage:

IMPORTANT -- confirm baggage weight allowances with your airline provider! Be sure to consider ahead of time if your bags will be overweight upon departure from the program, as it might result in additional fees from your airline provider (some airlines ONLY accept major credit cards as payment, prepare accordingly!).

One day pack to carry your water, journal, etc while hiking and at service (See an example day pack here)

Large suitcase or backpacking pack for the bulk of your belongings.

What to Pack in Your Carry-On Luggage:

Prescription medication (unless it is a liquid)

Keep medications in their original packaging, with the original label that has your name clearly listed on it. Often, customs officers will check to make sure that the medication is prescribed to you.

If possible, ask your doctor for additional prescriptions for every medication that you are bringing. Please make sure that the doctor also lists the generic brand of each drug that he is prescribing. This is important because if we have to refill your medication at the local pharmacy, they may not carry the exact brand name that you are requesting. They will, however, probably have the generic equivalent or some other brand name equivalent available.

Photo copy of your passport

Print copy of your travel itinerary (sometimes immigration officials want proof of your return flight before allowing you to enter the country)

Anything you cannot live without for a few days in the event that your checked luggage is delayed! (Glasses, contact information, underwear, etc.)

For Community Service:

Service-appropriate clothing at most sites will be athletic wear. Bring clothing that you don't mind getting dirt, paint, and wet cement on. Among the above items listed, please be sure you bring the following:

Comfortable, light weight/quick dry T-shirts

Shorts that are knee-length or longer, capri pants, or light, loose hiking pants - Please note that Spandex or excessively tight clothing will not be allowed at the service site

Running/hiking shoes that you do not mind getting dirty

Work gloves



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Voltage and Adapters:

Voltage in Dominican Republic is 110. Outlets are Type-A.

Electronics:

We encourage that expensive electronic equipment be left at home. We cannot guarantee that iPods, CD players, lap top computers and expensive cell phones will be safe at all times.

With the exception of cameras, students may not permitted to bring electronics outside of the Home Base on certain occasions, such as to service sites. If you choose to bring electronics with you, expect to only use them during specified free time at the Home Base.

What to Leave at Home:

Pocket knives/sharp objects

Lighters/matches

Perfumes & body sprays - these attract insects!

Candles & incense

Jewelry & expensive items

Laptops

Blow dryers/curling irons/straighteners - you'll be too busy to worry about your hair!

A bad attitude!