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COSTARICA
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COSTA RICA
OUTWARD BOUND

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PO Box 1817-2050
San Pedro, San Jose

PACKING LIST – LEADERSHIP SEMESTER COURSE

This is a list of what our instructors deem as fundamental gear for your course. Feel free to bring items that are not on this list, but please keep in mind that you will be responsible for your personal belongings. Do not bring more than you think you will be able to carry.

Prior to leaving our base, instructors lead students through a process we call the “Duffle Shuffle.” During this process you will be issued the necessary equipment for whichever phase of your course (backpacking, rafting, etc.) that you are about to embark on. At this time, instructors will advise you as to which of your personal items you will not need or cannot take on course. Any such items will be locked in our storage facility on base and returned to you at the end of your course.

When packing, please keep in mind that rain, mud, and cold nights are inevitable. Good equipment can protect your body from these elements and really make a difference in your comfort level.

Personal Clothing

- 2-3 Pairs of casual/street clothes for travel
- Underwear - fast drying and/or non-cotton
- 3 Pairs (minimum) of serious hiking socks – wool or synthetic, such as Smartwool
- 3 T-shirts – highly preferred: non-cotton, fast drying, and/or wicking fabric
- 3 Tank tops
- 2 Pairs of modest shorts - lightweight, fast drying, non-cotton (no short shorts please)
- 2 Pairs of pants - lightweight, non-cotton (for mosquito protection)
- 1 Pair of Jeans or other comfortable pants
- 1 Long underwear layer (top and bottom) - light to medium weight synthetic material such as polypropylene (you will want this for cold, wet nights)
- 1 Fleece jacket – at Base Camp and during the hiking section, you will encounter cold nights
- 1-2 Bandanas
- 1 Baseball cap or wide brimmed hat

Rain Gear

****You WILL get rained on during your course. Rain gear can make or break your trip. Take the time and spend the money to get quality rain gear.**

- 1 Lightweight WATERPROOF/breathable rain jacket with a hood. Check at your local outdoor store (REI, EMS, etc.) for their store brand of jacket.
- 1 Poncho with hood (decent strength material). You WILL want both a rain jacket and a poncho.
- 1 Large waterproof backpack cover



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Foot Wear

- 1 Pair medium-weight, high-top hiking boots.

When you are purchasing new boots make sure they are comfortable and come up ABOVE the ankle for good ankle support. **BREAK IN YOUR BOOTS! If you purchase new boots, follow the advice of the sales representative/boot manufacturer as to the length of time you need to wear your boots to sufficiently break them in before arriving. The more you wear your boots before you arrive the less chance you'll have of getting bad blisters. Students have had to leave their courses because of bad blisters caused by new boots!!! Don't let this happen to you!*

- 1 Pair non-Velcro sandals with ankle straps OR neoprene SCUBA/surfing shoes with a rubber sole. This is to protect your feet during the river section. We recommend Chacos, Keens or Texas. Crocs are not recommended.
- 1 Pair of running shoes – not necessary if your sandals are sturdy (may want these for exercising during certification courses in San Jose)
- 1 Pair of Flip-flops (for the beach/casual days)

For Women

- 2 Swimsuits – at least one needs to be a sports swimsuit

- 1 Pair of board shorts/swim trunks

- 2-3 Comfortable sports bras – non-cotton if possible

Tampons – bring a good supply even if you do not expect to need them. You DO NOT want to be surprised on course. Try to find a brand without plastic applicators or that are bio-degradable.

Menstrual cramp medication recommended if you normally need it

For Men

- 2 Pairs of board shorts/swim trunks

Personal Gear

- 1 Pair gaiters, medium height – Gaiters are a valuable piece of equipment that help to keep water,

mud, and other debris out of your hiking boots.

- 1 Pair UVA/UVB protection sunglasses - polarized lenses are best for being on water

- 2 Nalgens or other wide-mouth water bottles – 1 L each, the lid should be attached to the bottle so you can use a carabineer to hook it onto your backpack

- 1 Camelback - just the plastic bag and hose, backpack not necessary. *Very helpful on long hikes.

- 1 Carabineer – nothing fancy

- 1 Fox 40 whistle (non-cork ball)



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- 1 Headlamp with extra batteries – Energizer brand headlamps have proven to be durable as well as cost efficient for course
- 1 Box of large Ziploc-type plastic bags
- 1 Bottle of insect repellent
- 1 Aloe Vera gel or other sunburn cream
- 1 Lip salve or balm with sunscreen
- 2 Bottles of waterproof sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)
- 1 Tube Zinc oxide sun protection – if you burn easily this is the best sunscreen for you
- 1 Pack towel (shammy)
- 1 Full size bath towel and/or beach towel (Costa Rica Outward Bound does not provide any towels)
- 1 Roll Duct Tape (small roll)
- 1 Personal journal, paper, envelopes and pens – we gladly provide postage for postcards home
- *Several pens and notepads/spirals for taking notes during the certification courses

Toiletries

Your toiletry kit should include toothbrush, toothpaste, biodegradable soap, biodegradable shampoo/conditioner, foot powder, deodorant (unscented), antibacterial hand sanitizer, brush or comb, etc.

Because you will be in Costa Rica for such a long time it is natural to bring large bottles of shampoo/conditioner, sunscreen, toothpaste etc. However, you will not want to carry these large bottles in your backpack during the hiking section. Please bring small refillable bottles (travel size) to carry while backpacking. Your back will thank you.

Medical

Moleskin or Molefoam (for blister protection) is strongly recommended

- 1 bottle of Swimmer's Ear to help prevent ear infections while on water phases

NOTE: Instructors carry complete First Aid kits on all courses, so you only need to bring medications that are specific to your needs. If you are taking prescription medicines or have glasses/contacts, bring backup supplies (up to twice the normal amount – in case of loss/emergency).

Travel Documents/Money

Your passport (must be valid for at least six months)

Your plane ticket and copies of your flight itinerary to assist us in planning transportation for your return flight

Two photocopies of the picture ID page of your passport (very important)

\$500 US CASH or Credit Card for medical emergency and personal items



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Required Readings

An important part of your leadership course is learning about Costa Rica, leadership, and the various activities that you will be receiving certifications in (Scuba, rafting, wilderness medicine, etc). Because of this, we ask that you purchase the following books and bring them with you to Costa Rica (you might have better luck finding these books online, so keep that in mind when looking):

- Leadership the Outward Bound Way: Becoming a Better Leader in the Workplace, in the Wilderness, and in Your Community, by Outward Bound USA.
- Culture Smart! Costa Rica, by Jane Koutnik.
- Wilderness First Responder, 3rd Edition, by Buck Tilton.

In addition to the required readings, we will provide copies of the following books for you to use on course, but if you are serious about pursuing a career as an outdoor professional, you may wish to purchase your own copy:

- The Field Guide of Wilderness & Rescue Medicine, by Jim Morrissey.
- NAUI Scuba Diver Textbook
- Whitewater Rafting, by Graeme Addison.

Optional

- 1 Tight-fitting rash guard for lifeguard training, surfing, rafting, and/or SCUBA
- 1 Pair of lightweight trekking poles – these will protect your knees while backpacking.
- 2-3 pairs of synthetic sock liners – NOT COTTON
- 1 Extra pair of boot laces
- 1 Small dry bag
- Camera(s) – disposable/disposable waterproof are good options. If you bring a more expensive camera, we recommend a small dry bag or other waterproof case to store it. If you bring a digital camera, bring extra batteries and memory cards.
- 1- 2 Secure straps (“Croakies”) for your sunglasses and/or glasses, if applicable
- 2-3 Books for your reading pleasure
- 1 Winter hat – synthetic or wool, lightweight
- 1 Sweatshirt – for cold days at base
- 1 Travel size sewing kit
- 1 Travel pillow
- 1 Spanish-English dictionary
- 1 Deck of cards or other travel game
- 1 Pair of goggles for use during Lifeguard Training (especially if you wear contacts and/or have a sensitivity to salt water)
- A couple pairs of ear plugs (if you’re a light sleeper, nights at the homestays can be noisy)
- Snacks



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We provide non-inflatable sleeping mats. If you have your own inflatable (backpacking size) sleeping mat and would like to bring it just remember that we are not responsible if it gets damaged. **We strongly encourage you to bring your own if you anticipate having problems sleeping on our thin foam pads.**

Costa Rica Outward Bound Provides:

Hiking backpack – 80 Liters (if you have your own and would rather use that, you are welcome to do so)

Sleeping bag and pads

Meal kit

Surfboard/boogie board

All necessary river equipment

SURFBOARDS:

Costa Rica Outward Bound provides all of the equipment necessary for the surfing sections of your course. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO BRING YOUR OWN BOARD!** It is not a good idea to buy a board if you are a new surfer just for your course!

If you intend to bring a board with you to Costa Rica:

Ensure that it is carefully packaged for transport- if you need suggestions for this, ask!

Be sure to bring all necessary parts: fins, bolts leash, bag, etc. and necessary tools specific to your board.

Costa Rica Outward Bound provides surf wax.

Think carefully about bringing your own board- it may be damaged in flight or on course. Costa Rica Outward Bound is not responsible for any such damages should they occur.

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED ON COURSE

The following items will not be allowed while you are on course and will have to be left at our base. You may consider leaving them at home:

Cell phones – Cell phones will most likely not work once you land in Costa Rica and therefore are only useful in US airports. Regardless of service, they are not permitted on course – this includes I-phones and other smart phones you might consider to also be your camera.

I-pods or other music devices- These items will be put in our safe at the beginning of the course and you will not have access to them again until the last day of your course.

Watches/ Clocks- If you are used to checking your wrist every five minutes, it's time to relax. =) If you bring a watch with you, you will be asked to leave it at base. We find that students enjoy themselves much more if they aren't worried about the time.



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Pocket Knives or Multi-Tools- We supply all the cutting implements you will need for your course; personal ones will need to be left on base.

Lighters- Our instructors carry all fire-starting devices you will need for camping and cooking activities on course.

ANY OTHER PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (with the exception of cameras) must be left behind once you start your course, so think carefully before bringing them.

ANY ALCOHOL, DRUGS, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (OTHER THAN PRESCRIBED BY A PHYSICIAN) and TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE FORBIDDEN ON COURSE!

We take this very seriously! Violations are grounds for expulsion from course. If you have questions, please ask.