



### TIPS FOR PACKING FOR YOUR CUBA CYCLING TRIP

At ExperiencePlus!, we have traveled enough and loaded enough luggage to have some useful suggestions.

- **Weight limit per piece of luggage.** Safety protocols prohibit our tour leaders from lifting bags greater than 45-50 lbs (20-25 kgs). No single piece of luggage should exceed this weight. We enforce this to safeguard the welfare of our tour leaders as they load and unload the van and transfer luggage to your room, and your welfare as you carry your bags from your hotel room to the lobby.
- **Preferably limit your luggage to two medium-sized pieces.** The best combination of luggage is a medium-sized (22 -24") suitcase on wheels and a small or medium carry-on bag, such as a backpack, overnight bag, or a small duffel bag. However, to avoid exceeding our luggage weight limit we prefer you add a third small bag as opposed to overloading the first two.
- Place your ExperiencePlus! luggage tags on all of your luggage pieces including carry-on bags. You will receive them on Day 1 of your tour.
- **Pack Light!** Keep in mind that you will be toting your luggage at different times during your vacation. Remember, you may have to go from the airport to the train or bus station, and will need to bring your bags down to the hotel lobby in the morning for our staff to load the van. Some hotels may not have elevators. If you are flying into Havana, consider going carry on since it can take a very long time until you'll get your checked bags back.
- **Adhere to the 3-1-1 carry-on packing guidelines** of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for liquids and gels. See <http://www.tsa.gov/> for the current restrictions, but be aware that different countries may have different requirements.
- **Eliminate and combine containers (bags inside bags).** Do you really need the toilet "kit," cosmetics "case," passport "case," camera "case," etc. or do you need the contents? Combine items in a plastic bag. Be sure to follow the TSA guidelines.
- **Travel samples save space and weight.** Visit the "trial-size" section of your drugstore or supermarket for small size toiletries. If your favorite brands are not available then transfer contents to small plastic bottles that can be purchased in the size you need. Be aware that in Cuba you won't be able to buy most things, so

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you should make sure you bring what you need throughout your trip. If you plan to go carry-on, consider avoiding liquids to comply with the TSA rules and bringing e.g. soap bars instead of liquid soap.

- **What's in your carry-on.** Feeling Lucky? It is not much fun to find out that your checked luggage with your cycling gear has not arrived at your destination. You may wish to pack one change of cycling attire, shoes, and helmet in your carry-on, or travel 100% carry-on. DO NOT pack prescription medicines in luggage that will be checked. Again, if you are flying into Havana, consider going carry on since it can take a very long time until you'll get your checked bags back.

### WHAT TO BRING TO CUBA

- **Passport** (It must be valid for 6 months beyond your trip start date.)
- **Photocopy of passport** (we recommend you carry one copy with you packed in a zip loc and separate from your real passport, and that you leave a copy at home with friends or family)
- **For US Citizens: Cuba Tourist Visa card** (make sure to confirm with your airline when and how to obtain this; read more about the options here: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/cuba-documents/>)
- **For US Citizens: General License** (read more here <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/us-citizens-traveling-cuba/>)
- **Cash to exchange when you arrive** (Note that US-affiliated bank and credit cards will not work in Cuba. Read more here: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/cash-cuba/>)
- **Insurance information** - health and travel information including policy numbers and phone numbers. Cuba requires proof of medical insurance. Read more here: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/cuba-documents/>. Remember a toll free number will not work from overseas, so bring the "regular" phone numbers.)
- **General Tips for Clothing & Shoes:** Even though we've designed our tours to run during the dry seasons, weather is unpredictable. Rain is always a possibility and days and evenings can be cool. As such, lightweight, fast drying clothes are best, as are clothes you can layer. Bring cool weather gear for any spring or fall tour. While our tours do not have a dress code and we encourage you to be comfortable, some restaurants frown upon shorts and t-shirts at dinner. Therefore, we suggest you bring casual

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pants and/or a skirt. No sport coats or ties are needed. Note that shorts and sleeveless tops are frowned upon in some churches, so come prepared.

### City Clothes:

- 1-2 pair casual pants and/or skirts
- 3-4 wash and wear shirts
- 1-2 pair shorts or capris (depending upon season of travel)
- 1 light to medium weight long-sleeve top for layering
- 3 pair socks
- undergarments
- swimsuit for swimming or sunning or saunas. If your tour takes you along the coast and you'd like to stop and swim along the ride we suggest you bring a pack towel. They come in a variety of sizes are very packable, super absorbent, and quick to dry.
- hat (scrunchable)

### Footwear: (Do not bring new shoes, break them in now.)

- Comfortable sandals or casual shoes, as your tour may involve walking on cobbles. Check your itinerary for potential non-cycling activities.
- Sandals or shoes that can get wet are often useful, especially on tours with cave visits or canoe/rafting events.
- If you use only one all-purpose shoe for bicycling and walking, then bring a second pair of sandals or shoes to give your feet a rest, or in case one pair of shoes get wet.

### Biking Gear

Your bike will be equipped with: a men's saddle or women's saddle (we have a variety of styles to choose from), a quick release style seat post adjustment, rear rack and pack (approx.11" X 6" X 7" and expandable), pump, patch kit, spare tube, cable lock, toe cages (optional), cyclometer, a water bottle cage and a water bottle. *Be aware that if you bring your own bicycle we are happy to provide a rear rack pack but your bike must*

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*have a rear rack. Otherwise we suggest you bring a small daypack to carry miscellaneous items you will need during the day.*

### Here are items you **SHOULD** bring:

- Helmet – Helmets are required on tour. Please bring yours.
- Sunglasses – Bring some good-quality eye protection.
- Cycling gloves

### Here are items you **MAY** want to bring:

- Mirror – on helmet or on handlebars. All of our bikes in Cuba accommodate bar-end mirrors.
- Your own bike seat. While we have a variety of saddles for you to choose from, saddle preference can be a very individualized choice. Because the bike saddle plays such a prominent role in your comfort we encourage you to bring your own saddle if you feel it would be best for you. If you do bring your own saddle do not bring the seat post and make sure that the saddle has rails for mounting in order to fit our bikes. Our tour leaders will mount and adjust the saddle at the bike fitting and remove it at tour end for you.
- Small tool kit (optional, but useful), small rag for chain grease (ever wonder why cyclists wear black shorts?)

### Cycling clothes & shoes - We recommend wearing bright colors that make you visible to traffic:

- 2-3 pair padded cycling shorts or knickers, or other bottoms comfortable while cycling
- 3 brightly colored (for visibility) cycling jerseys, athletic tops, or shirts comfortable for cycling
- 1 long-sleeved, performance-type fabric shirt jersey for layering
- 3-4 pair cycling socks
- Water-resistant wind breaker
- You should also plan to bring some cooler weather gear for chilly mornings and rainy days: Cycling tights or leg-warmers, long-sleeved jersey or arm-warmers, water proof (*Gore-Tex* or similar) rain jacket and pants, head warmer (hat and/or headband), long-fingered gloves, and cycling booties and/or part-wool socks.

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- Cycling shoes—either stiff-soled athletic shoes or clipless cycling shoes with your pedals. If you are using cycling shoes with cleats we strongly recommend mountain or touring style shoes that have a **recessed cleat** so you can comfortably explore during the day. If you stick with stiff-soled road riding shoes, bring a light pair that you can change into for sightseeing and that fits in your rear pack.
- If you bring your clipless cycling shoes with cleats then **also bring your pedals** that are specific to your type of cleat. Our staff will put your pedals on and take them off for you at the end of the tour.
- **Cosmetics, toiletries, medications, and sundry items:**
  - Back-up pair of contact lenses or glasses (you never know!)
  - Sunblock or sunscreen
  - Lip balm
  - Cycling anti-chafing cream for those prone to chafing
  - Laundry soap for doing hand wash, laundry line to dry your laundry (any nylon rope will do)
  - Deodorant, toothpaste, brush, comb, etc.
  - Shaving materials
  - Insect repellent (bugs are generally not a problem but mosquitoes are sneaky)
  - Allergy medicine for pollen or bee stings
  - *Kaopectate* tablets or equivalent
  - Aspirin, *Tylenol*, or equivalent
  - Wash cloth (if you use one; hotels often provide only towels)
  - Wet wipes
- **Reading/Writing/Listening Materials:**
  - Small pocket guidebook (or your preferred travel app on your smartphone or tablet)

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- Phrasebook/dictionary (or your preferred travel app on your smartphone or tablet)
- Small notebook/diary/logbook/sketchbook/ and pen or pencil
- Any electronic device you use for reading, listening to music, etc. **Note**--items that use headphones are dangerous and illegal to ride with in some countries. Please don't use them while on your bike.
- **Miscellaneous (optional):**
  - Ear Plugs
  - Camera, storage cards and extra batteries (or your smartphone – remember your charger)
  - Utensils for picnicking
  - Small travel binoculars
  - Electrical outlet adapter(s) specific to your countries of travel or universal plug adapter. 220-volt converter if required for your devices (most smartphones, tablets and laptops come with a built-in converter).
- **Miscellaneous (optional):**
  - Travel alarm
  - Ear Plugs
  - Camera, storage cards and extra batteries
  - Utensils for picnicking
  - Small travel binoculars
  - Small travel hair drier if you like to use one since availability in Cuba can be hit and miss. Remember you are traveling in a tropical climate though.
  - Electrical outlet adapter(s) specific to Cuba or universal plug adapter (for electrical items such as hair dryer, travel iron, etc.), 220-volt converter if required for your items. Read more on electronics here: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/electronics-internet-cuba/>

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- Snacks; Food and snacks will be different in Cuba. While we provide snacks on tour, you might have a certain type of cereal bar might work better for you than local snacks. In that case, you might want to bring along your own.
- Gifts for Cuban friends along the way (read more here [\[insert link\]](#)).
- **What to leave home:**
  - Any devices that you plan on going online with (unless you really must). Expect to unplug and enjoy in Cuba.
  - GPS-device – they are illegal in Cuba. You may use your smartphone with an app.
  - Anything valuable that cannot be replaced.
  - Formal attire
  - Extra outfits, pack light!
- **Frequent Packing Errors or General Travel Mistakes**
  - Bringing new shoes that are not broken in or cycling shoes not suited for walking.
  - Grabbing the wrong passport on your way out the door (make sure it's yours).

**ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours is not responsible for any items left in the van overnight.**

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