

Currie's packing list for Costa Rica

General

- Passport (indispensable, obviously. Make a photocopy of the page with your picture and keep it somewhere separate from the passport)
- Money belt (indispensable!!! Keep your passport, money, plane ticket on your person at all times!)
- Socks (lots -- they get wet; not heavy cotton ones – they take too long to dry)
- Underwear
- Handkerchiefs, as opposed to Kleenex (useful for wiping away sweat)
- Personal toiletries. I include:
 - Shampoo (the less scented, the better; avoid attracting bugs)
 - Soap (unscented or at least little scented)
- Wrist watch with an alarm
- A small pack of Kleenex (can double as emergency toilet paper)
- US cash

For the field

- 2 or 3 long-sleeve shirts (I always wear one in the field. They prevent sunburn, bug bites, thorn stabs, etc)
- Long pants (Indispensable. You should *always* wear long pants in the field. Fast-drying only. Jeans are the worst possible choice.)
- Tee-shirts (I wear a tee-shirt and put on a long-sleeve shirt over it when we go in the field. Synthetic fabric is best. Cotton takes too long to dry.).
- Footwear. At least two pairs. Plan to get wet. I take:
 - 1 pair of light breathable hikers or running shoes
 - 1 pair of solid, waterproof hikersBoots are important. They protect your feet if you step on a snake (there can be snakes on the trails), which has happened on this course!! Boots also protect against spines, scorpions, stinging nettle, etc.
- Sweatshirt or fleece + light jacket. It will be quite cool at high elevation
- Daypack with the following:
 - Rain coat or poncho (*always*. Everywhere you go.)
 - Rain hat (rainforest and cloudforest can be very wet)
 - Sun hat (indispensable in the tropical sun. It also keeps bugs out of your hair, e.g. the little, stingless, harmless, but panic-inducing sweat bees that can swarm around your head)
 - Sunscreen
 - Sunglasses
 - Pocket knife (optional)
 - Camera, etc.
- Water bottle (indispensable. Always carry water with you. You can use the disposable 350-500 mL water bottles, and just refill them.)

- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Bug shirt (optional; almost nobody else but me brings one, but I like them when we are working in the forest, instead of the long-sleeve shirt. Lee Valley and Mark's Work Warehouse have them.)
- Binoculars -- We will be bird-watching and there will be lots of opportunities to see wildlife. It is worthwhile to beg, borrow or buy a reasonably good pair.
- Insect repellent, although I do not use it often. Bugs are worse in Canada.
- Notebook & pencil & pens
- Flash light or a good head lamp. Spare batteries

Après field

- Shorts
- Sandals or running shoes are OK at the lodges
- Towel (I take a little travel towel for our day at the beach)
- Bathing suit & swimming goggles (for pools and ocean)

Useful

- First aid kit
- Kaopectate or Peptobismol (in case of moderate diarrhea)
- Imodium (in case of severe diarrhea)
- Intestinal antibiotic (e.g., Cipro – discuss this with your travel physician) and rehydration salts (in case of really severe diarrhea)
- Gravol (if you are susceptible to motion sickness. We travel in a little bus on some very bumpy, windy roads)
- Anti-histamine (for reactions to bites. This can be important.)
- Anti-malarial, if required. Check with your travel physician. The incidence of malaria in Costa Rica is decreasing, and it may not be necessary in the areas we will visit.
- Laundry detergent (for hand washing things). Liquid is better than powder (which does not always rinse out well).
- Some light rope to dry things on.
- Zip-lock bag with some silica gel tied up in a stocking (If you can get this easily. For desiccating cameras, binoculars, which can fog up in humid places.)
- Plastic bags (for things that are wet and dirty)
- A big plastic garbage bag or two -- to keep things in your luggage dry under really wet circumstances.
- One clean change of clothes to wear home on the plane. We will also likely go to go out somewhere nice on the last night in San José. We may go dancing. Brush up your salsa.

There are no laundry facilities along the way. I hand-wash underwear, t-shirts, etc., in the evening in the sink in the lodges where we stay. I bring some light rope as a clothes line, and I hang the washing to dry overnight. The quantities of clothes you need to bring depend upon how much washing you are willing to do, or how grimy and stinky you are willing to get.

You don't need:

- Sleeping bag (we always stay in places with beds and clean sheets and towels)
- Bed net