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## NICARAGUA Packing Checklist & Narrative

- Passport
- Copy of airfare
- Physical COVID vaccination card or physical copy of negative COVID RT-PCR test results
- Vaccination cards (*\*yellow fever card required if coming from a yellow fever infected country*)
- Copy of your itinerary and any other important planning documents, including immigration arrival instructions & COVID protocols overview
- Cash (USD \$)
- ATM / credit cards
- Face masks
- Phone / Camera
- Laptop / Tablet (*if desired*)
- Toiletries (*don't forget the basics, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, soap, razors, hair product, floss, etc.*)
- Prescriptions in original bottles (*remember to bring enough for the duration of your stay*)
- Other over-the-counter medication (*ie: Ibuprofen, anti-histamine, Pepto Bismol, Lactaid, cold medication, anti-diarrheal, vitamins, etc.*)
- Hand sanitizer
- Feminine products
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray (*natural products preferred; if not, please do not bring products containing more than 35% DEET*)
- At least one pair of closed-toe comfortable walking shoes (*which are likely to get dirty / muddy from time to time*)
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Shower shoes or flip-flops
- Small umbrella
- Raincoat or rain jacket
- All clothing (*see below*)
- Family photos to share with new friends (*digital or printed*)
- Small flashlight
- Notebook and pens
- Snacks (*those high in protein and vital nutrients are recommended*), especially if you have dietary restrictions, medical conditions, etc.
- Any supplies needed for any lessons or activities you intend to do with the students / others
- Any supplies or donations (*ie: art & craft supplies, teaching materials, books, sports equipment, games, etc.*)

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## **NECESSARY ITEMS**

### **Important Documents**

Don't forget your passport, copy of roundtrip airfare & itinerary, physical copy of COVID vaccination card or physical copy of negative test results, cash, ATM or credit cards, vaccination card (if applicable), personal health information (if any), and any other documents you'll need. It is best to keep all documents well-protected in some sort of case or travel wallet. Make at least two copies of all important documents—leave a set of copies at home, take a set of copies with you and put them somewhere else in your luggage that you will not lose them. You should leave irreplaceable items, such as family heirlooms and expensive jewelry at home.

### **Spending Money**

Your program or guest fee does not include your visa-on-arrival fee (\$10), personal expenses, alcohol, return COVID PCR test (\$150), international airfare, or any souvenirs you might wish to purchase. The amount to bring depends on the person, but a few hundred dollars usually goes a very long way. If bringing cash, try to bring new, unripped, unmarked bills (as old, torn, or marked bills are often not accepted). ATM machines are also readily available, including at the airport on arrival or in any major town or gas station. Budget for this in the beginning. Heavy shoppers bring extra. Remember to store your money somewhere safe while traveling. At Vera Eco-Resort, we provide safes in every room where you can store your money and other valuables.

### **Hand sanitizer / Handwipes**

### **Feminine products**

### **Toiletries, Deodorant, Bodywash, Soap, Shampoo, etc.**

### **Phone / Camera / Laptop / Tablet and their chargers**

### **At least 1 pair of good closed-toe / hiking shoes**

### **Light raincoat or rain jacket**

It rains frequently in the cloud forest, even during the “dry season”. Showers can be unexpected and sporadic, often lasting just a few minutes. It may be bright sunshine one minute and a quick shower the next, so it is a good idea to always keep a light rain jacket on you!

### **Umbrella**

### **Bug Repellant**

Thankfully, we do not have many mosquitoes at Vera Eco-Resort. Many guests find it unnecessary to use bug repellant. If you wish to bring some just in case, we recommend that you bring repellant made from natural products, as we do not use any harmful chemicals on our property in controlling for bugs. If you do decide to bring bug repellent with Deet, please do not bring anything stronger than 35%, as it can be damaging to both the environment and your own skin / health.

### **Sunscreen**

### **Sunglasses**

### **Hat**

### **Face masks**

## **RECOMMENDED ITEMS**

### **Lotion**

### **Flashlight or Headlamp**

### **Photos from Home**

Bring at least a few photos of your family and friends, as people may ask you about your family and photos are a great way to start a conversation and share with new friends. Please avoid bringing pictures of your home, cars, or other material possessions though – keep the focus on the people!

### **Journal / Notebook & Pens**

### **Snacks**

At Vera Eco-Resort, we serve only vegetarian and vegan healthy cuisine, using mainly ingredients grown from our own gardens. We do not use any chemicals to treat our food, so everything we grow is 100% organic. For those goods we have to source, we always aim to source products that are organic, sustainably raised, and healthy. However, we realize this type of diet can be a bit of adjustment for those who are not accustomed to eating in this way. For that reason, all our guest villas have their own kitchens where you can cook your own meals or snacks, if you like. Still, it is worth emphasizing that you might want to bring some snacks with you, especially if you have any medical conditions, severe food allergies, or other specific dietary restrictions. Foods that are high in protein, like nuts, trail mixes, protein bars, etc. are always a good idea, as well as crackers, snacks, and so forth.

## **TIPS ABOUT MEDICATION**

**\*\*It is your responsibility to consult with your doctor about required or necessary vaccinations and medication specific to the country to which you are traveling (for example, anti-malarial medications and yellow fever vaccination). Check <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/nicaragua> for more information about travel to Nicaragua in particular.\*\***

Bring a full supply of any prescription medications you will need to take regularly, as well as any necessary over-the-counter medications such as Ibuprofen, Pepto-Bismol or anti-diarrheal for the occasional headache, stomachache, etc. that you may encounter when adjusting to a new climate and diet. **Remember to consult a doctor or travel health expert about any health concerns prior to coming.**

As a preventative measure, some people get a small personal supply of antibiotics (ie: Ciprofloxacin, Azithromycin, general penicillin, etc.) from their doctors before traveling, in case they do get sick and do not have immediate access to medical care. Ask your doctor or a travel health professional for advice about this.

## **TIPS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY**

### **Where to pack technology and other expensive items**

Remember to keep all expensive items, such as tablets, cameras, and laptops in your carry-on luggage. Do not check luggage that contains valuable possessions, as they could easily be stolen.

**Tablet / iPad / Kindle / etc.**

Whatever you bring, just make sure to bring your charger!

**Laptop**

Having a laptop with you is certainly not necessary, but it may be helpful / nice to have with you. At Vera Eco-Resort, we are proud to offer fiber optic wifi – the first facility in this entire region to be able to do so! The fastest and most reliable option there is, you have access to high-speed wifi in all of the major buildings on this property, including all guest villas, dining hall, gym, school and barn.

**Phone**

An essential for travel these days, please keep control over your devices when sharing photos or anything else on your phone with the students / youth in particular.

***\*Plug adaptors and converters are not required at Vera Eco-Resort***

*\*It must be understood that each participant assumes the risk associated with carrying expensive equipment, such as a tablet, laptop, or other technological devices, and that Visions assumes no responsibility in the event that such equipment is lost, stolen, or damaged.*

**TIPS ABOUT CLOTHING**

*\*\*Please note that Nicaragua has a “wet season” that lasts from mid-May through mid-November, in which rains can be frequent and heavy. The average temperatures at our property at this time are around 60s – 70s during the day and 50s at night. During the “dry season”, which lasts from mid-November through mid-May, temperatures at our property are typically 70s – 80s during the day and 60s at night. It still rains frequently throughout the “dry season”, just not as often or as hard as during the “wet season”. The months of February thru mid-May are the hottest and driest months of the year.*

*On average, Managua and other cities like Granada or San Juan del Sur are 10-15 degrees warmer than Matagalpa, year-round.*

**Tennis / Hiking Shoes & Socks, Sandals**

We recommend footwear that is sturdy but not too heavy or difficult to transport in your luggage. If you have hiking boots or rain boots, those might be useful. During the “wet season”, warm socks are recommended for cool nights. No matter what time of year, your footwear is likely to get dirty or muddy, so please be aware. Our cleaning staff will clean your shoes each day if you leave them outside your doorsteps, but it is generally not advisable to bring shoes you do not wish to get to dirty. We also recommend bringing shower sandals.

**Casual wear**

In general, you should wear whatever makes you feel the most comfortable. There is no particular dress code for guests at the eco-resort or at Vera Angelita School. Shorts and t-shirts are fine, if you prefer, though pants are generally a better idea if out hiking or walking around the property. The only things to avoid outright would be clothing with inappropriate messages or clothing that is too revealing.

**One nicer outfit**

We may have special meetings or a nice dinner for which a nicer outfit would be good to have on-hand. A simple button-up shirt and pants for guys, and dress or top with pants / skirt for ladies is just fine. A step up from everyday dress, just in case!



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**Swimwear**

While there are no opportunities for swimming at Vera Eco-Resort, there may be possible swimming opportunities at other locations (depending on the particular itinerary of your trip). Most hotels in Granada have a pool. Of course, if heading to one of the beach towns, a bathing suit is a must!

**Underwear**

Honestly, it is always good to bring too much than too little...same with socks.

**Jacket or Sweatshirt**

It can get cool at night or on the plane, so it is always a good idea to bring a sweatshirt or jacket.

**Hats / Bandanas / Hair Ties**

A note for guests with longer hair in particular –be aware that lice can on occasion pop up with some of the youth with whom we work, both at Vera Angelita School and in neighboring schools & communities that you may be visiting. If you have longer hair, you may want to simply tie your hair up, wear a hat, keep it from hanging freely when around young children, and/or just be aware of your surroundings.