

Packing Guide for Nicaragua

Critical - Passport (valid for at least six months after departure)

Bring a carry-on bag with enough essentials for 2-3 days in case there are delays in retrieving baggage. This can happen—be prepared! Pack no more than you can carry and use canvas or nylon duffel bags rather than hard luggage. American, Delta, and Continental airlines all permit passengers to take one carry-on bag and one personal item as well as two checked bags. Checked bags must be 50lbs per bag or less and no more than 62 linear inches (length + height + width). Bags over 50lbs will be charged an additional fee. Please note: For all volunteers traveling to Siuna, total weight of all bags must not exceed 50 lbs per person. Baggage restrictions on La Costena only permit 50 lbs per customer for groups traveling to Siuna. For carry-on purposes watch your liquid containers. Clear containers, 3 oz limit, packed in a clear zip lock bag.

Sleeping

Twin bed, top & bottom sheet and sleeping pad for extra comfort while sleeping on cots.
Small camping pillow.

Clothing (As estimated for a 8-10 day trip)

2 pairs of jeans or light weight work pants	1-2 shirts (long sleeve)
3-4 quick dry T-shirts	Cotton socks/underwear
Flip-flops or sandals for the shower	1-2 pairs of shorts
Raingear (if trip falls between May and October)	Swimsuit
Work or Hiking boots (comfortable optional)	1 long skirt (for women,

Personal effects

Flashlight/headlamp with extra batteries	Toilet paper & small tissue
Camera with Batteries	Hat(s) and /or Bandana(s)
Towel and washcloth	Journal and pens
Sunscreen/lotion	Antibacterial handi-wipes
Toiletries and small mirror	Hand sanitizer
Tampons or sanitary napkins (if needed)	Sunglasses
<u>Biodegradable</u> hair and body soap	Work Gloves (at <u>least</u> 2 pair)
Insect repellent (w/ 20-35% DEET)	Ear Plugs
Water bottle (please write your name on it)	Alarm clock
Pictures of you, your family, your town, etc	*Laundry bag
Swiss Army knife (must be packed in your checked luggage)	
Liquid soap for showering	

Corrective vision wearers should bring an extra pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses/case/solution.
*For those who are interested, members of the local community usually offer inexpensive laundry service.

Cameras, CD players, MP3 players, cell phones, jewelry, etc

Though bringing a CD player, MP3 player, expensive camera, cell phone or some other item may seem like a basic essential when traveling, we encourage volunteers to only bring items that they cannot live without! We take many precautions to assure that volunteers' belongings are well protected. However, there have been a few incidents of things "disappearing." We ask you to be aware of the wealth that you both represent and bring with you and pack simply. Please do not bring anything that will be sorely missed – Bridges to Community will not take responsibility for any lost or stolen items.

Things for the local children

We strongly encourage all volunteers to bring games and toys to share with the local children. They are extremely friendly and eager to play. Wiffle ball bats and lots of wiffle balls, soccer balls, Frisbees, bubbles, paper and crayons, crafts, playing cards, or any simple children's games are great things to share as a group.

*We strongly discourage individual gift-giving such as clothing, radios, flashlights, etc. Please review 'Bridges Policies.'

Donations

We encourage all participants to trust their instincts to be generous and bring items to donate to the people of Nicaragua. ***However, while in country all donations should be given to the Bridges to Community staff and not handed out to individuals in the community.*** Many volunteers continue to donate once they return home. Upon your return, feel free to donate additional funds to a specific site through the Bridges office in NY.

Please keep in mind the following things when collecting items to donate:

Clothing: Nicaraguans are generally petite. Clothing for adults should be regular or petite length (not tall) in sizes S, M, or L. All sizes of clothing for children are welcome and needed. Any clothing should be in good condition with no stains or tears. Because Nicaragua is a tropical climate, winter clothing is *not* needed (sweaters, coats, long sleeved shirts, etc).

School supplies: pencils, pencil sharpeners, crayons, markers, coloring books, construction paper, drawing paper, writing paper, notebooks, metric rulers, solar calculators, Spanish books...