

Planting Hope - Sembrando Esperanzas

What To Bring to Nicaragua List



The Essentials:

Sun Protection and Hydration - prolonged exposure to the tropical sun can bring on headaches, dehydration, and/or nausea, really!!! Apply, reapply, stay out of the sun and look for shade when you can.

- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Lightweight, long sleeved shirt
- Sunglasses
- Water bottle (You can buy a small "disposable" one in Nicaragua, but if you have one of your own, you can refill at your home stay family or the office.
- Ener-C rehydration packets. (A powder solution to help keep you hydrated in case you are sick. Some people drink more water if it is flavored with these packets.) (Gatorade is available in Nicaragua as well.)

Insect repellent with or without DEET

Travel during the dry season (January-early May) means that mosquitoes are not abundant, but they still exist. Host families will have mosquito nets for sleeping under. Generally, the mountain breeze in San Ramon and environs keeps the mosquitoes down. But there are still biting bugs and mosquitoes. We recommend REPEL (lemon eucalyptus) spray, since it has a more natural scent and is proven effective against tropical mosquito bites that could produce illnesses. (Zika, dengue, etc.) Some prefer to stick with DEET in spite of its chemical potency. It's a good idea to wear repellent and/or long sleeves/pants and/or closed toed shoes if you're hiking or out in the evenings.

Nighttime aids

- Small flashlight
- Earplugs if you have trouble sleeping through noises... (ie chickens, dogs, etc)

Vaccinations: Hepatitis A and current tetanus update

Medications/ Supplements-- Consider:

- Acidophilus pills (A week before you go and to take while you're in Nicaragua. It helps to put some good bacteria (yogurt-like) in your belly to greet the new stuff that your stomach will meet.

We will have most of the following in our med-kit, but feel free to bring them if you think you might need them:

- Diarrhea medicine (PeptoBismol or Lomotil/Immodium) on In general, we don't recommend them, because diarrhea means your stomach is trying to get rid of something that doesn't sit well, so really you want to flush your system and not block it up. But in case of needing to travel on a bus, these medications can be helpful.
- Upset stomach med. (Tums Antacid)
- Antiseptic and band aids
- Ibuprofen and/or Tylenol (fever reducer and aches & pains)
- Moleskin – lots of walking.
- Anti-nausea medicine or wrist band if prone to motion sickness

You know yourself best; take along your usual needs. You don't want to get stuck feeling uncomfortable or not sleeping well. You will be riding on the bus daily on bumpy curving roads, think about how that might affect you.

Clothing

It is usually hot in January-May, but occasionally may rain.

Here are some ideas on what to pack

- Shorts (not super short shorts)
- T-shirts/tank tops
- Cool button-down, short-sleeved shirts.
- Skirts or Dresses
- Light-weight Rain Coat
- One nice outfit for special events.
- 1-2 pairs of pants/Capris and warmer long-sleeved something, just in case.
- Undergarments
- Pajamas
- 1 summer weight cardigan or jacket
- Bathing suit
- Towel (Family and hotels will have bedding, but a towel is useful.)

Your host family will wash your clothes, so sturdy fabrics are best and you don't need to bring so many sets of clothes. Clothing dries on the line in one day. (And you might watch your clothes being washed and give it a try yourself)

Shoes

- Flip-flops for around the house; Flip flops (Texas/Chacos ok) to wear when showering-bathing. In Nicaragua you never walk around barefoot. It is the custom.
- Sandals and/or Closed-Toed Shoes. You will be walking LOTS and the terrain is often rocky. Bring known, comfortable shoes; this is not the time to break in new shoes.

Hygiene & personal

- Tampons or other products
- Skin cream, Chap Stick, Aloe Vera for sun exposure
- Small shampoo, small hand soap
- Toothbrush & paste
- Contact Solution
- Shaving supplies

Cash for spending.

Bills should be small, up to \$50 and need to be clean, no ink or markers or anything. Most of your basic needs will be taken care of, so you won't really need to spend a lot of money on a daily basis. The recommended amount depends on how many souvenirs-crafts-extra activities extra drinks-snacks you want to buy. You certainly could get by with \$100 or less, but if you want the flexibility to buy from the crafters we visit or buy hammocks, paintings in the market towns, you might want to bring more.

Host family gifts: Things that can be shared (books, coloring books, markers, candles, Vermont themed knick-knacks, LED or rechargeable flashlights, nice kitchen utensils)

- Small “picture book” of photos of your family, school, local scenery, etc. Can be a nice conversation starter with host family and others.
- Dictionary or phrase book can be helpful
- Sheets/towels, kitchen utensils, even used are ok. Often the quality here is higher than what’s available in Nicaragua.

Camera/Phone for documenting: Bring your own AA Batteries or charger. (Outlets are the same as in the US)

Small travel pouch for passport and money.

Light-weight everyday shoulder bag or back pack. It is convenient to have something for carrying a water bottle.

What NOT to bring

Big suitcases that you need to lug back. (If you’re leaving the suitcase in Nicaragua with donations, that’s fine). If you can limit your own stuff to a big backpack or small, carryon pull suitcase, you will be a happier traveler. For the last day, we’ll be able to buy bigger souvenirs, which can be packed in the group’s shared suitcases.

We have a US line where we can make and receive calls to a Vermont number. That number is (802) 778-0444 and works as long as we have power and internet.

Donations to Planting Hope: For our Yard Sales in Nicaragua and for Activities with Kids

Children/Baby/Adult Clothing in Good Condition, unstained

Backpacks: All sizes and styles from pre-school through adult. In good, working condition.

Shoes: Black dress shoes are worn by both boys and girls for school (sizes for kids ages 4-18)

Sandals, sneakers, cleats, flats and flip flops, all popular. Women’s Sizes: 6-9 Mens’ sizes 8- 11

Kitchen Ware:

- Silverware
- Pans for baking
- Mugs, glasses
- Plates and cups (solid plastic easier to transport)
- Coffee makers, blenders

Sports Equipment

- Jump Ropes
- Kick-balls
- badminton
- volley balls
- Soccer balls

- Good condition sheets, (twin and full), pillow cases
- Towel and hand towels

School Supplies and Crafts

- Pens, pencils, markers
- Paints, brushes,
- Paper, colored and white, construction, etc.
- Magazines, calendars, cards for collages
- Clay, Play-Dough
- Glitter, glue
- Foam Board
- Notebooks

Toys

- Complete puzzles, (16- 200 pieces) strong plastic toys, legos, duplos, educational pre-school and elementary school toys (plastic holds up better in Nicaragua than wood)
- Storage containers (small & med).

Electronics:

- Cell phones that take a sim card
- MP3 Players

Bedding and Towels:

What we don’t usually take:

- Snow suits Or Winter Boots
- Mittens, Socks, Fleece, Wool
- T-shirts/Sweatshirts with odd sayings or brand-names printed on them
- Really heavy shoes or boots
- Very large, oversized t-shirts, shirts or pants, Women’s Jumpers or corduroys