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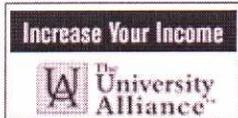
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10 Favorite Things to Pack

By SUSAN SPANO, Times Travel Writer

It's amazing how having the right things on hand makes traveling so much easier and more enjoyable. These may be common items, like zip-lock plastic bags, or high-tech gadgets made especially for traveling. Here's a list of ten things worth taking along, drawn from my own experience and travel gear retailers. (Unless noted, catalog prices do not include shipping.)

Sawyer Controlled Release Insect Repellent: Bugs aren't just a nuisance; they can also transmit diseases (malaria, yellow fever). Keeping covered is the best defense against bites, followed by using a good repellent with the chemical formula DEET (which can be dangerous in high concentrations). Sawyer's bug juice claims to reduce unnecessary skin exposure to DEET by releasing the chemical over 24 hours while nourishing the skin with proteins. It comes in a non-alcohol-based cream, and can be removed by simply washing with soap and water.

Available at the Travel Medicine Center, 131 N. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, telephone (310) 360-1338; Magellan's catalog, tel. (800) 962-4943; Sawyer Products, tel. (800) 940-4464. About \$7.

Outdoor Research Tahiti Travel Pouch: My medical kit is the most important thing I take along on trips, hands down, containing everything from earplugs to antibiotics. To keep all the odds and ends organized, I use this travel pouch from Outdoor Research in Seattle, with two zippered compartments, numerous pockets and a hook so it can be hung almost anywhere (as opposed to taking up valuable bathroom counter space). Outdoor Research also makes pouches that are pre-packed with medicines and medical equipment.

Available from Mountain Gear, tel. (800) 829-2009. About \$24.

No Jet-lag: Developed by a laboratory in New Zealand, this homeopathic remedy made of leopard's bane, daisy, wild chamomile, ipecac and clubmoss helps me feel better after long-haul flights through multiple time zones. You chew one before

departure, one every two hours during the flight and one after landing. I've had no side effects, and the product supposedly doesn't react adversely with other medications.

Available through Magellan's catalog, tel. (800) 962-4943; at health food and travel bookstores; and at Trader Joe's. About \$9 for a packet of 30 tablets.

Chaco sandals: These amphibious sandals, designed with white-water rafting guides in mind, also make marvelous warm-weather walking shoes for travelers. Available in seven styles, each features a continuous pull-through strap and a single buckle, eliminating the need for Velcro (which tends to wear out). They have arch-supporting foot beds to minimize foot fatigue, and can be resoled to boot.

Available at REI and Adventure 16 stores; L.L. Bean catalog, tel. (800) 341-4341; Chaco Inc., tel. (970) 527-4990. \$68 to \$100.

Packable Panama Hat: These hats are one of TravelSmith's top sellers. Wide brims keep the sun off your face and head, and the hats come in different, attractive styles for men and women. Better still, they can be rolled or folded for efficient packing.

Available from TravelSmith's catalog, tel. (800) 950-1600. \$36.

Bogen Tabletop Tripod 3008: For low-light situations and low shutter speeds (particularly when you can't use a flash), a tripod is indispensable. But most are too bulky to carry on trips. This small, portable mini-tripod (under 2 pounds, 9 inches long) can be set atop a table.

Available at Freestyle Sales Company, 5124 Sunset Blvd., tel. (323) 660-3460 or (800) 292-6137 for catalog. \$39.95.

Kangaroo Pouch: Hidden money pouches come in all varieties, but this one is particularly useful because it has three compartments roomy enough for passports and large foreign currency. It can be worn outside your clothes, on a belt, or inside, around your neck or at your waist (with comfy knit flannel against your skin). Available at travel bookstores around Southern California, such as Distant Lands, 56 S. Raymond Ave., Pasadena, tel. (626) 449-3220, and California Map & Travel Center, 3312 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, tel. (310) 396-6277. \$12.

Travel Tech International slim alarm clock: This non-digital travel clock (with old-fashioned analog hands and face!) is less than an inch thick, with a lens cover that converts into a stand. The alarm grows progressively louder as you ignore it, and it doesn't require an IQ of 150 to set.

Available at Distant Lands (see above) and the Traveler's Bookcase, 8375 W. 3rd St., West Hollywood, tel. (323) 655-0575. \$25.

Eagle Creek Endless Journey backpack: Made specifically for travel, not backpacking, this roomy pack breaks into three smaller units, including a day pack and waist pack. The zippers



are large and lockable, and there's a leather hand grip on the side for carrying the pack suitcase-style. Well padded, with internal stays and a lumbar pad/hip belt, this pack is comfortable and durable enough to take on a yearlong trip around the world.

Available from Walkabout Travel Gear catalog, tel. (800) 852-7085. \$275.

Uncle Bill's Sliver-Gripper Tweezers: When you get a splinter in the tropics, you've got to get it out fast to avoid infection. So I keep a pair of Uncle Bill's sliver-grippers in my medical kit at all times. They're about an inch long, with pinpoint precision tips, and they come in handy for all sorts of other jobs, like untying knots and plucking eyebrows.

Available at Restoration Hardware stores and in the Real Goods Trading Corp. catalog, tel. (800) 762-7325. About \$5.

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