



2015 Packing List: Tacna, Peru

In the spirit of living counter-culturally in JVC and with the goal of living simply in solidarity, we invite you to consider the packing list here (compiled with the input of JVs in the field), through the lens of the following questions:

- How is what I am bringing demonstrative of my intention to immerse fully into the local culture and live as they live?
- How is my approach to packing reflective of a commitment to being dependent on the resources locally available to purchase?
- How might what I bring debunk or rectify negative stereotypes about U.S. Americans living, traveling, or working abroad? How can I learn what those are, generally, and in my particular host country?
- How might what I bring into the JV house affect security, perceptions of security, especially knowing that it is easy to observe when new, “green” JVs are arriving, how much luggage they are bringing, etc.?
****Also please note the baggage policy on page 18 of your handbook – take this seriously!***
- What items may be more advisable to purchase in-country, after receiving local perspectives on what is most culturally appropriate? *e.g. volunteers in the past who have chosen to not purchase work clothes in the U.S., rather put their stipends towards having clothes or uniforms locally made or bought, have tended to be perceived as dressing more appropriately in the local culture, often find they receive more respect (from local students, co-workers, supervisors, etc.) initially from the local community by seeking out advice and reflecting this sensitivity to culture*
- What items may I perceive as necessary, though would be a privilege to have (not because of cost but because of access)?
- How might I consider adapting certain habits rather than looking to continue them? *e.g. bringing a 2-yr supply of contact lenses and solution to circumvent that they are not available; consider adjusting to glasses all or most of the time*
- How might the choices I make in items I bring have the potential to hinder (intentionally or not) my ability to bridge the gap of power and privilege between my co-workers, local neighbors, etc. and me? *To reinforce perceptions that foreigners think local resources and resourcefulness are ‘substandard’? e.g. bringing a year’s worth of teaching supplies to be able to carry out my job well – well intentioned and a positive effort towards a strong work ethic, though also begs the question of what does that mean for co-workers who reply on what the school can provide or not provide? Their perceptions of your resources? How they might perceive your openness (or lack thereof) to learn from their resourcefulness, accept their conditions as is, be willing to sacrifice to learn new approaches to teaching and/or understand their educational systems?*

We also encourage utilizing the Handbook as a tool for reflection, here are a few sections that could be helpful in framing how you approach packing:

- Pg. 24-25 (Appendix A, section B. Simple Living)
- Pg. 16-17 (5.G. Living Simply with Technology)



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Packing List with JV input

The following information has been compiled by past JVs working in Tacna, Peru.

Images of Peru go floating through your mind. You probably picture tropical Amazon jungles with fascinating wildlife or the high Andean peaks with llamas prancing in all directions or the majestic visions of Machu Picchu. Well, think again! You are going to the coastal region which is desert as far as the eye can see. Tacna is just 30 miles away from Arica, Chile, which is known as the driest city in the world. You will be situated around the center of the Atacama Desert which stretches from the middle of Chile and all the way up the Peruvian coast. So, what does that mean for packing? We hope you'll find the following information helpful. **Note: Items marked with a * are considered helpful, but not necessary.**

I. The Basics

a. Climate

- i. Summer (January - March) is hot and dry, though it does get cool at night.
- ii. Winter (May - September) is quite cold and damp, though it can be warm when the sun is out. The temperatures never get really low in the winter, but it is definitely winter-jacket cold (without the benefit of indoor heat). Damp doesn't mean wet - it rarely rains here, but it gets misty. It does rain a lot in other parts of Peru, so you'll need a rain jacket when traveling.
- iii. Spring and Fall are warm during the day once the fog burns off mid-morning and pretty chilly at night.
- iv. No matter the season, you will want layers! During most of the school year, you'll want a dress shirt, a sweater, and a jacket.

- b. Make sure to bring sturdy clothing. Hand washing wears out the fabric more quickly and sun drying tends to fade colors - so don't bring your nicest outfits. Tacna is really dusty and, even with bleach, white clothes will never be the same - so don't bring an entirely white wardrobe.
- c. In Peru, the schools have somewhat formal atmospheres. Therefore, although it is hot and dusty, try to pack for a more formal work environment. Be practical but professional. It is very important to be neat.
- d. Volunteers will be accompanying students on service trips (Mes de Misión), so bring clothes and shoes that can get dirty.
- e. Outside of work and Mes de Misión, you will have a social life! You'll want both casual and semi-formal attire for spending time with host families and friends and attending events for work, birthday parties, baptisms, and weddings - dress more or less like you would in the United States.

II. Work

a. Men

- i. Nice slacks or khakis to wear to work every day
- ii. Button up shirts or polos
- iii. A belt

- iv. Comfortable, durable shoes which can be shined and that you can stand in all day
- v. Sweaters for the winter that you can wear over dress shirts
- vi. One dark suit (or at least a sports coat that you can wear with slacks that you are bringing) and at least one tie for more formal occasions
- vii. *** Wrinkle-free items strongly recommended, but we do have an iron
- viii. Lots of underwear and socks!

b. Women

- i. A couple pairs of nice slacks or work pants for school (Peruvian teachers almost never wear skirts but skirts are acceptable too as long as they fall below the knee and are formal looking). Nothing should be tight (especially for teaching in the high school).
- ii. Button up blouses or polo shirts with collars
- iii. Sweaters that can be worn over work blouses
- iv. A couple of pairs of comfortable and durable flats or nice work sandals (including close-toed shoes for the colder months)
- v. Thermal leggings come in handy for exercise and travel in the mountain regions and can be worn under slacks during the winter.
- vi. At least one nice dress and dress shoes for formal occasions
- vii. Lots of underwear and socks!!! (Hand washing wears them out quickly; lace does not hold up well)

III. Mes de Misión: ***NOTE: If you are crunched for space, the clothing items on this list can be found easily and cheaply here in Tacna.***

- a. Jeans/track pants that can get dirty
- b. Shorts that can get dirty (basketball type/long shorts – Nike running shorts *not acceptable* for MDM Cristo Rey)
- c. Old T-shirts and long sleeve shirts (to protect you from the sun)
- d. A fleece or sweatshirt
- e. Tennis shoes that can get trashed (in addition to the tennis shoes you plan on using regularly)
- f. * Steripens are not necessary, but have been found useful on Mes de Misión and for travel. We boil all our water at home, though. Recommended to either buy rechargeable batteries or a Steripen that can be plugged directly into the outlet to recharge.
- g. A hat and/or bandana
- h. Work gloves – MUST HAVE!
- i. A sleeping bag, which also comes in handy for camping trips with the school, travel, and for the house when winter gets cold. You will want something small and portable, but don't sacrifice warmth!
* It may be helpful to bring your sleeping bag in a compression sack that will squeeze the air out of it and make it easier to transport.
- j. *Hand sanitizer and face wipes



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IV. Other Clothing Items

- a. A couple fleeces/sweatshirts/sweaters and sweatpants for cooler evenings and winter months
- b. A heavy winter jacket is not necessary but you'll need something warm for the winter (a pea coat is a good idea)
- c. * Gloves/hat/scarf for cold weather (all can easily be bought here)
- d. A light raincoat/windbreaker for traveling because other areas of Peru do get rain
- e. Make sure to bring swimming stuff --the beach is only one hour away. Recommended for girls to bring both a one-piece (for beach trips with students; in place of a one-piece, a two piece covered by shorts and a tank top/shirt will also work) and a two-piece.
- f. Baseball hat
- g. Sunglasses with UV protection
- h. Jeans and shorts to wear outside of work
- i. Athletic gear you'll need for running, playing sports, or working out
- j. Sturdy flip-flops and or sandals for beach and warm weather (Cheap flip flops for showers and at home can easily and cheaply be bought here, but durable ones for outside and lots of walking should be brought. Shoes are a difficult topic, and it is probably easier to ask specific questions of the current JVs instead of list it all here!)
- k. * Boots and slippers – it gets cold!

V. Toiletries

- c. Sunscreen
- d. Contact Solution - very expensive and difficult to find, bring a lot if you decide you need it
- e. Chapstick and Lotion – is it very dry here.
- f. ***** We buy shampoo, conditioner, and soap as a community, but bring your own if you have a strong preference (especially for face wash).** It is a good idea to bring travel size refillable bottles to get you through the first month or so, and to be able to use for retreats and other travel.
- g. Tampons are kind of expensive. Bring a lot or consider alternatives (like a Diva cup)
- h. Vitamins, Pepto Bismol, Ibuprofen, and other basic medications
- i. Prescription Medicines – medicine cannot be shipped to Peru, so try to bring a large supply
- j. * If you are prone to stomach problems, get a few prescriptions of Cipro to bring along
- k. Things that can be bought in Tacna:
 - Toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, soap, Q-tips (almost all toiletries if you are not brand picky)
 - It is a good idea to bring enough to get you through the first couple weeks and have some familiar things from home, but not necessary to bring a 2 year supply of anything.

VI. School and Work Supplies

- c. Most school and art supplies can be found here pretty cheaply, but it's not a bad idea to bring a *few* basics to get you started - pens (colored are helpful for grading), pencils and a notebook
- d. White board markers – you will go through a lot of them!



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- e. Agenda / day planner
- g. *Thick construction paper is great for teaching in primary but not necessary.

VII. Miscellaneous

- g. Two sturdy water bottles
- h. USB/Flashdrive (more than one is recommended – viruses are easy to catch here)
- i. Headlamp – strongly recommended
- j. *Bug repellent – we don't have many bugs in Tacna, but you'll want it for Mes de Misión and traveling, we currently have an overstock in the house ☺
- k. US stamps (we often send mail back with people traveling to the States), stationery, envelopes, and addresses of friends and family
- l. Watch. Recommended to bring something durable and waterproof (and a light function is helpful too)
- m. Small alarm clock/travel alarm clock/watch with alarm
- n. Camera
- o. School backpack
- p. Backpacking backpack for travel or weekend retreats
- q. School bag (you can use a backpack for school, but some people prefer messenger bags or briefcases)
- r. Quick-drying travel towels (sold at REI or similar outdoor stores; very useful)
- s. *Extra batteries for electronics if necessary. Rechargeable batteries are recommended. (Batteries can be bought here easily as well)
- t. 1 extra copy of your passport for travel
- u. * Pictures of family/friends to share with community and friends and/or for room decoration.
Any small/light room decor you want to bring.
- v. Journal(s) – not an easy thing to find here if you're specific
- w. * Small musical instrument/sheet music if you're a musician or items for any other hobbies/interests you have
- x. * Any prayer/community resources you think might be helpful for community/spirituality nights (although we have a lot of resources at home)
- y. ***** We have an extensive library with reading materials from all genres. You are more than welcome to bring books or materials from home but we recommend you check with us first to see if we already have it.**
- z. * If allergies, especially to dust, are a problem for you, a hypoallergenic pillow cover is recommended.

Computers/electronics: We have regular computer/Internet access at all the schools where we teach plus 2 Internet cafés across the street from our house that are open late. We also have a community laptop, webcam and headphones/microphone that are for community use. Bringing a computer is a personal choice but not necessarily recommended. They could cause a distraction at home if some community members have computers and others don't.



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Be aware that dust is everywhere here all the time and viruses are prevalent in Peru. Also ask yourself what you would do with a laptop if you plan to travel before leaving Peru. In keeping with simple living, the decision of whether or not to bring a laptop should be well-discerned.

Whether or not to bring iPods and other electronics is also a personal choice. Some volunteers choose to live without them, while others may find them helpful for relaxation or classroom activities. We have found music to be a good opportunity for sharing with the community and with Peruvians. We have a nice set of iPod speakers in our living room for shared use, and some volunteers have also brought their own small speakers to have in their bedrooms. Travel speakers could be useful for use in the classroom, in your bedroom, on the beach, or while traveling.

Money/credit cards: In general things are very cheap here in Tacna, and we have found our monthly stipends to be more than sufficient for our personal expenses. Some volunteers feel more secure traveling with ATM/credit cards, but they are definitely not necessary and should be left at home if they'll be a temptation for you.

DON'T FORGET: PASSPORT, prescription medicine

A FINAL NOTE ON PACKING: A word of warning – sending packages to Peru is expensive and you cannot receive used clothes (clothing must have a tag), so don't count on getting extra clothes shipped to you from home. That said, you can buy inexpensive clothes and jackets at the markets here if you want, so don't be afraid if you forget something or can't decide exactly how many long sleeve t-shirts to bring!

**Try to pack light - don't bring your entire medicine chest, wardrobe, or library.
The idea is simple lifestyle!**