

# WHAT TO BRING TO CUBA and some other information

## Personal Items

You should be prepared for hot, humid weather...and we mean hot and humid! There might also be brief but strong periods of rain which will bring some temporary relief. You can expect the temperature to be over 90 degrees! Because Cuba must conserve its electricity most air conditioners are not running on the island these days. You should be prepared to be very hot while you are in Cuba. Some places will be air conditioned and so you should also bring an over-shirt or light sweater.

Bring light, loose fitting, comfortable clothes. While people dress informally we urge you to respect the fact that you visiting another country and will be the guest of a Cuban family. With that in mind, we suggest that you not bring short-shorts, but knee-length walking shorts are fine.

You will be traveling for 11 days, so bring enough clothing for that time period. It is a good idea to bring clothing that you can easily wash and then wear without ironing.

Be sure to bring enough of any personal hygiene items you will need:

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| extra pair of glasses                               | alarm clock                    |
| camera (and film and batteries)                     | soap, shampoo and toothpaste   |
| sanitary napkins or tampons                         | mosquito repellent             |
| tissues   | plastic bag for soiled clothes |
| a small amount of detergent<br>for personal laundry |                                |

If you are carrying a prescription medicine be sure that you have enough for your stay and that the bottle or box has the druggist ID label. (This could be important on your return into the U.S.)

In addition to a bathing suit, you will also want to bring:  
sun screen, sun glasses and a hat for protection from the sun

If you play a musical instrument (one that is small enough to travel easily with) bring that along as well - there will be plenty of opportunities to make music!

## Donations for the Cubans

### Individual Gifts

You will be living with a Cuban family and you should bring something to give them as well: soap, shampoo, vitamins, toothpaste, etc.

In addition, you will be meeting lots of Cubans and people from all over the world. Everyone always loves to exchange political buttons, tee-shirts, stickers, etc. Bring whatever you can.

### Group Donation

Cuba's economic crisis means that virtually everything is in short supply. We urge you to bring supplies that can be part of a donation from the U.S. delegation. We will collect the items you bring once we are in Cuba and hand them over to our hosts.

Items you might bring include:

- |           |                        |
|-----------|------------------------|
| pens      | pencils                |
| notebooks | rechargeable batteries |

blank cassette tapes  
writing pads  
toothpaste  
aspirin

magic markers  
vitamins  
condoms  
other over-the-counter medicines

***If each of you brings a small box or a small piece of luggage filled with such items we will end up making a large donation to our Cuban friends.***

## **Other Things You Need to Know**

### **Money in Cuba**

The package you are paying for includes your round trip travel from either Cancun or Nassau (unless you have made other plans with us), your accommodations in Cuba, three meals each day, transportation to all Festival activities ( including travel out of Havana) and full participation in all activities.

It is a good idea to have some cash on you to cover any additional expenses. For instance, you may want to buy drinks, any taxi rides, to purchase things to bring home with you, etc.

Due to the U.S. blockade laws, you cannot use credit cards, your personal checks or travelers checks drawn on U.S. banks in Cuba. You will need to bring enough cash for your stay in Cuba. Some of you are staying in Cuba longer and so will have additional costs. Be sure to bring as much money as you will need to cover everything.

### **Medical Care**

Should you have an accident or get sick you will have access to the best health care available. If you have any medical or health problems please tell the family you are staying with, or someone from the U.S. Organizing Committee or one of the Cuban Festival coordinators immediately. Hospitals, clinics and family doctors are located throughout the island.

### **Water**

We strongly recommend that you only drink bottled water. Visitors who drink tap water may have some digestive problems.

### **Personal Safety and Security**

For the most part you will be part of the group activities of the Festival. If you have the opportunity to go off on your own, you should know that there is some petty theft in Havana and other tourist spots - so watch your bags and cameras.

### **Phone Service to the U.S.**

There is direct phone service between Cuba and the U.S., but calls from Cuba to the U.S. are expensive. If you need to make a call from Cuba ask someone (one of the U.S. Organizing Committee representatives or one of the Cubans working with us) how and where to do that. You should not expect to be able to make calls from the home you will be staying in. Not every Cuban home has a phone and even if one is available it is too costly to put such a charge on their phone.

Before you leave you will get information on how someone can get a message to you while you are in Cuba in case of an emergency.

Prepared for participants in the U.S. delegation to the 14th World Youth Festival  
by the U.S. Organizing Committee.