

BITES & BORDERS

Mediterranean Packing List

The complete carry-on-friendly packing guide for Greece, Turkey & the Eastern Mediterranean

8 categories • 80+ items • Chris's personal picks

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This packing list is built from Chris's real Eastern Mediterranean trips — including an 11-night Virgin Voyages cruise covering Athens, Istanbul, Kusadasi, Mykonos, Crete, Rhodes, and Santorini. Every item has been tested in the field. Items marked ★ **Essential** are non-negotiable. Everything else is a smart addition depending on your travel style.

✈ DOCUMENTS & MONEY

★ Passport (valid 6+ months beyond travel dates)	★ €100–200 in local cash (euros accepted widely)
★ Printed copies of all reservations & itinerary	■ Digital copies of documents in cloud storage
★ Travel insurance policy & emergency contacts	■ International driver's license (if renting a car)
★ Credit card with no foreign transaction fees	■ Student/senior discount cards if applicable

■ Chris's Tip:

Chris's pick: Chase Sapphire Preferred — no foreign fees, great travel rewards, and trip cancellation protection built in.

■ CLOTHING

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| ★ 5–7 lightweight, breathable tops (linen or moisture-wicking) | ★ Sandals or flip-flops for beach & casual days |
| ★ 2–3 pairs of walking shorts or lightweight pants | ★ Packable rain jacket or windbreaker |
| ★ 1 smart-casual outfit for nicer restaurants | ★ Sun hat or baseball cap |
| ★ Swimsuit (2 recommended — one always drying) | ★ Modest cover-up for mosque/church visits |
| ★ Light cardigan or layer for evenings & AC | ■ Compression socks for long flights |
| ★ Comfortable walking shoes (broken in before trip) | ■ 1 nicer dress or collared shirt for special dinners |

■ Chris's Tip:

Dress code matters: mosques require covered shoulders and knees. Santorini's cobblestones will destroy heels — wear comfortable flats.

■ TOILETRIES & HEALTH

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| ★ SPF 50+ sunscreen (reef-safe for swimming) | ★ Antidiarrheal & antacid tablets |
| ★ After-sun lotion or aloe vera gel | ★ Hand sanitizer & travel-size soap |
| ★ Insect repellent (especially for coastal evenings) | ★ Lip balm with SPF |
| ★ Prescription medications + 3-day emergency supply | ■ Feminine hygiene products (harder to find in small towns) |
| ★ Basic first aid kit (bandages, antiseptic, blister pads) | ■ Melatonin for jet lag adjustment |
| ★ Motion sickness tablets (ferries can be rough) | ■ Electrolyte packets (hot days drain you fast) |

■ Chris's Tip:

The Mediterranean sun is intense — reapply SPF every 2 hours. Pharmacies (marked with a green cross) are everywhere and well-stocked.

■ BAGS & GEAR

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|--|---|
| ★ Main luggage (checked or carry-on — 22" works for 2 weeks) | ★ Reusable water bottle (hydration is critical in the heat) |
| ★ Day pack or crossbody bag (anti-theft recommended) | ★ Packable tote bag for markets and shopping |
| ★ Packing cubes (game-changer for organization) | ■ Luggage lock (TSA-approved) |
| ★ Dry bag or waterproof pouch for beach/boat days | ■ Luggage scale to avoid overweight fees |

■ Chris's Tip:

Chris travels with a 26" checked bag + a 22" carry-on for 2 weeks. Packing cubes by category (clothes / toiletries / tech) save 20 minutes every morning.

■ TECH & ELECTRONICS

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|--|---|
| ★ Smartphone + charger | ■ Camera or GoPro for content creation |
| ★ Universal power adapter (Type C/F for Europe) | ■ Laptop or tablet (for content creators) |
| ★ Portable power bank (10,000+ mAh) | ■ SD cards + card reader |
| ★ International SIM or eSIM (Airalo works great) | ■ Kindle or e-reader for long travel days |
| ★ Earbuds or noise-canceling headphones | ■ Portable WiFi hotspot (backup option) |

■ Chris's Tip:

Get an Airalo eSIM before you leave — €15 covers 10GB across Greece and Turkey. Beats paying \$15/day for international roaming.

■ FOOD & DINING ESSENTIALS

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| ★ Google Translate app (offline Turkish & Greek packs) | ■ Reusable utensils for picnics & market meals |
| ★ Yelp / TripAdvisor / Google Maps saved offline | ■ Snack stash for travel days (nuts, protein bars) |
| ★ Small cash for street food & market vendors | ■ Food allergy card in local language if needed |

■ Chris's Tip:

The best food in the Mediterranean is rarely in tourist areas. Walk 2–3 blocks away from the main square — prices drop 40% and quality goes up.

■ BEACH & OUTDOOR

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| ★ Beach towel (microfiber dries fast, packs small) | ■ Water shoes for rocky beaches (common in Greece) |
| ★ Waterproof phone case or dry bag | ■ Underwater camera or GoPro |
| ■ Snorkel mask (rental quality is often poor) | ■ Portable beach mat |

■ Chris's Tip:

Greek beaches are often rocky, not sandy — water shoes make a huge difference. Rent a sun lounger (€5–10) rather than fighting for sand space.

■ SIGHTSEEING & UNESCO SITES

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| ★ Comfortable walking shoes (cobblestones everywhere) | ★ Portable fan or cooling towel for summer heat |
| ★ Small backpack for day trips | ■ Binoculars for scenic viewpoints |
| ★ Modest clothing for religious sites | ■ Guidebook or downloaded Rick Steves audio tours |
| ★ Printed or downloaded museum tickets (skip lines) | ■ Notebook for journaling (great content source) |

■ Chris's Tip:

Book Acropolis and Hagia Sophia tickets online in advance — lines can be 2+ hours in peak season. Early morning visits (8–9 AM) are dramatically less crowded.

Bonus Tips from the Field

Before You Leave

- Notify your bank of travel dates to avoid card blocks
- Download offline maps for all destinations (Google Maps or Maps.me)
- Screenshot your hotel addresses in the local language
- Set up Google Photos auto-backup before you go
- Check entry requirements — some countries need proof of onward travel

On the Ground

- Eat where locals eat — look for handwritten menus and no English photos
- Negotiate taxi fares before getting in (especially in Istanbul)
- Carry small bills — many vendors can't break large notes
- Ask your hotel for the neighborhood they'd recommend, not just the tourist spots
- Visit UNESCO sites at opening time — crowds triple by 10 AM

Content Creator Tips

- Golden hour is 6–7 AM and 6–7 PM — plan your hero shots around these
- Santorini's blue domes face northeast — morning light is best
- Istanbul's Grand Bazaar is best photographed on weekday mornings
- Always ask permission before photographing people
- Vertical video (9:16) for Reels/TikTok, horizontal (16:9) for YouTube

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