

## What to Bring

### The first days

Whatever is part of a routine or familiar activity, or is used every day that makes sense to bring – do. It's nice at the beginning to have some things you are familiar with such as books, music and games, pillows and linens, coffee mug, soaps, toiletries. Children will appreciate having their favorite toy, snacks and candies from home. Bring a pocket size translation dictionary, just in case you need it in transit.

### Documents

- Marriage license
- Children's birth certificates
- Medical and dental records (your Dr may charge a fee)
- Letter from previous insurance companies
- Wills

### Photos

You will need 10 to 12 passport size photos for each family member

### Prescription medicine and prescriptions

Bring a 3 month supply. Be sure to leave medicines in their package along with the prescription – makes it easier if inspected while going through customs. Bring a copy of the Dr's prescription to avoid any confusion if your luggage is checked by customs.

### Crucial X-rays

#### Clothes & Gear

- adult day pack
- kid's backpacks, lunch boxes & juice holder
- Sports, camping and outdoor gear

If you like sports, bring what you need. It will be expensive to buy new things here.

Kids clothing swaps exist – check our Children's page.

### Food

Pack some easy to make things in your suitcases so you have something familiar to eat the first few days while you sort things out, like breakfast cereals, kids snacks, candies and gum.

If you will be in an unfurnished apartment, bring dinner service for family and a few cooking utensils, a knife, skillet and pan.

### Household

- Coat hangers
- Umbrellas, rain coats & boots
- Beds/Bedding – The bed system here is IKEA style: a foam mattress on wooden slats. If you find them really uncomfortable and bring a box spring mattress, bring the frame too.

- Towels
- Linens – king size sheets are not available here. Bring a few sets to have something familiar, especially the kids' pillow cases.
- Europeans use comforter (duvet) covers instead of top (flat) sheets. However, they can be found at IKEA.

## What to Ship

### Decor

When you move in walls are painted white. So art, pictures and posters, a rocking or comfy chair, rugs, end and/or coffee tables can make it look and feel more like home.

### Electronics

- PCs, cell phones and chargers are ok to bring – they have built in power converters.
- Leave all other electronics (stereos, etc.) and kitchen appliances (oven, stove, fridge, blenders, mixers...) at home as they will **each** require an electrical converter. It is less expensive to buy them here. Same with shavers and hair dryers.

### Household supplies

- Towels, sheets, pillows
- Fabric softener sheets – Bring these especially if you or anyone in your family are sensitive to perfumed products, because the fabric softener perfumes are **very** strong. Fabric softener for babies is gentler.
- Bleach pens
- Vanish stain removers – stick and liquid – are available at Jim's Market.

### Kitchen supplies

- Cookbooks
- Favorite cookware and bake ware
- (US) Cupcake pan and paper baking cups – you can buy these here, but they are for muffins, so shorter.
- Measuring cups and spoons, and a scale. Unless you're used to the metric system, doing conversions can be exhausting. If you don't have a scale buy one when you get here – they have multi-system ones that you can change from kilograms to ounces.

### Medicines & Medical supplies

Medicines are only sold at the Pharmacie (France) / Apotheke (German), not at gas stations or convenience stores, so it's wise to take some with you when you travel around because stores close early, are closed Sunday, and you have to check the local newspaper, at a pharmacy or hospital to find 24 hour pharmacies. And it can be scary giving your kids meds when you cannot read the packaging. Children's over-the-counter medicine is not available – you have to go to the Dr. Medicines will be very different, and flavors will change.

Pharmacies here carry "DAFALGAN" – dissolvable tablets which work great for fever, aches and flu symptoms. They do not carry the enormous supply of over-the-counter

medicines here, and vitamins are expensive, so below is a list of some items you may wish to bring:

- Children's/infant's vitamins and medicine, such as flavored cough drops, cold medicines, child Tylenol
- Adult Ibuprofen, Benadryl, antibiotic creams, hydrocortisone cream, etc.
- Cold meds: Aleve, Dimetap, Dayquil, Nyquil, Sudafed
- If you have certain face/skin/makeup products that you cannot live without, it would be wise to stock up. You can find Aveda hair products at the Aveda salon in Geneva, and Paul Mitchell and Matrix products at some hair salons. Liquid antibacterial soap can be found at grocery stores (but not Cetaphil).

### Books

- New books are more expensive here so we order used books via Amazon.uk, France or Germany. If you want new books you can order them at local bookstores – our Shopping page lists new and used bookstores, and the Library in English has a large selection.
- Travel guides are much better in your mother-tongue. Michelin "green guides" make traveling a richer experience for France, Switzerland and wherever else you plan to visit.
- Translation dictionaries - you can buy them here and order them online, but it would be easier to bring a pocket size one to carry with you and a big one to use at home.
- Magazines in several languages can be found at the kiosks and bookstores
- bring some photo albums from home

### DVDs

You can watch them on a laptop but not on TV until you get a multi-zone player. Multi-zone players for non-Blu-ray DVDs are available in Switzerland, but not in France. Europe is in Zone 2 – so **Zone 1 (US) Blu-ray DVDs will only play here on your computer, PlayStation or similar.**

### Hobbies

Paper products are extremely expensive, so bring

- Note pads, stationery
- Birthday and other cards in English are rare, but people might enjoy getting a birthday card in French!
- Craft materials, especially for kids
- Kids' birthday party, wedding, baby shower and your holiday decorations (eg - Easter, Thanksgiving) will not be widely available.