

# COUNTRY

# OVERVIEW

# & PACKING

# GUIDELINES

IHP Cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:  
People, Planning and Politics  
Spring 2020

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# COUNTRY OVERVIEW

## IHP PROGRAM STRUCTURE & EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

IHP is a global comparative study abroad program – providing students a unique opportunity to examine a timely topic across four contrasting country contexts. Students analyze and compare critical global issues and challenges under an overarching theme related to the environment and social justice.

A fundamental pedagogical approach of IHP is **the learning community**. Students will be traveling, studying, reflecting, debating, and dialoguing together. The aim is to build an inclusive learning community that allows for intellectual and personal growth. Students who are committed, engaged, flexible and interested will grow immeasurably on this learning journey.

To pursue a nuanced and holistic understanding of the program's theme, students interact with activists, public figures, government and organizational leaders, innovators, artists and citizens from all walks of life who are directly involved in the topics of study.

IHP is also unique in that a **Trustees Fellow** and **Faculty** travel with the student group for the duration of the program. The **Traveling Faculty** teach 1-2 courses over the semester and work closely with in-country teams, attend and participate in all components of each country program, including field excursions, guest speakers, etc. Classroom and in-country activities complement one another to create a cohesive experiential intellectual experience. As is common with many roles in IHP, faculty will assume multiple responsibilities including teacher, co-explorer, advisor, and role model. In addition to Traveling Faculty, you will also have Local Faculty members who will teach the other 1-2 courses, deepening the student understanding of the local context.

The **Trustees Fellow** role is designed to support the individual and collective well-being of the student group throughout the semester. The Fellow acts variously as a group facilitator, communicator, mentor, educator, trip-leader, and risk manager. Fellows collaborate with faculty and coordinators throughout the program to guide students in accessing resources and establishing

the support systems they need to adjust to living, learning, and traveling abroad. This entails caring for students when they encounter difficulty, and challenging students to move through discomfort, try new things, and ask better questions that deepen the learning experience.

**Launch and Country Coordinators** are educators and practitioners, responsible for the program in-country and are supported by a local team (program assistants, interpreters, homestay coordinators).

**Homestays** give students the opportunity to become immersed in day-to-day realities as well as the traditions of each country, creating lasting connections and important memorable insights and respect.

IHP is an academic program which travels, and not a traveling program with academics. **Your days are heavily scheduled, and your learning is communal, not individual.** We recognize and respect that not all students learn or participate in identical ways, but we expect you to be fully prepared for classes, to engage with the highest level of respect and interest with all program participants, and to take on the intellectual work of this semester with enthusiasm.

This kind of engaged pedagogy is not typical in most classrooms or educational spaces. It can be physically and mentally tiring, but the time, effort, passion, and curiosity that each of us puts into this work is worth it. At IHP we believe in creating learning journeys that disrupt our ways of being and knowing. The result is a uniquely powerful educational experience that calls students to consider their own potential to act in response to critical challenges of our time. Welcome to this unforgettable journey!

# IHP LAUNCH & PROGRAM ORIENTATION INFORMATION

## Program Orientations

During the first few days of the program launch there will be orientation sessions covering program policy, staff and student roles and responsibilities, health and safety guidelines, academic policies, culture shock, and community building. In addition, there will be an orientation session in the first day or two of each subsequent city program covering city-specific details. Some of these include cultural norms, survival language lessons, local health and safety considerations, access to ATMs, banks and local currency. The city coordination team will support students with accessing local sim cards (see more in the section, *Phones and Email*).

This is a rigorous academic program in which courses are designed to add depth and context to extensive field-based learning. During each city orientation, you will receive the program schedule. Program days are full throughout the course of the semester, and will have you engaged in field activities, classes, group assignments, and individual homework. During weekends, optional activities may be offered, you may want to go on an adventure with your homestay family, prepare for next week's reading or catch up on journaling.

## Launch – New York

The Launch is both an orientation and our first city program and sets the tone and pace of the program. Academic courses begin, you will hear from guest speakers and travel to different parts of the city for site visits. Because a large part of being an IHP student is participating in a unique learning community, the first few days of the launch program are focused on meeting fellow community members, building community and understanding your role in the group. Additionally, Anti-Oppression Training will provide a space for reflection on identities and their relationship to power and privilege; to talk through how privilege and oppression play out on an IHP program; and to build community strategies and systems of accountability to guide the group over the course of the semester.

Many alumni have said that the Launch is full-on and have highlighted the importance of being organized and prepared and taking care of yourself and one another, in order to fully partake in the rich learning experience.

Please do not plan to travel away from NYC during the launch. You are officially on program!

# CLIMATE

## New York: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
39/26	42/29	50/35	60/44

## São Paulo: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
82/66	81/65	77/57	73/57

## Barcelona: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
58/46	63/49	67/52	73/58

## Cape Town: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
79/60	77/57	73/53	68/48

# DIET

Participating in the local food culture is a central aspect of daily life. Special or restricted diets may not always be fully understood by your host family, although they may have previously hosted a student with similar dietary restrictions. By trying to replicate your diet at home you may miss out on an important part of your host culture.

Note: if you have special dietary needs, including allergies, please inform our office prior to the start of your program. We will advise you on realistic expectations about avoiding or incorporating certain foods within the program context.

## New York City:

During the Launch, you will receive a daily meal stipend for all meals that are not provided for by the program. While the hostel and classroom spaces are conveniently located near many restaurants and cafes, students often make a trip to the grocery store to purchase snacks to keep in their rooms. The Launch Coordinator will provide a guide for reasonable restaurants, and bodegas in the area.

## São Paulo:

Brazil's cuisine is as varied as its geography and society. The staple diet is rice and brown beans in sauce, supplemented with meat or green vegetables.

People in this region tend to eat larger meals for lunch and either small dinners or none at all. However, students will be provided with complete meals. Small dinner meals will often be served late in the evening, and at social events, food will be served at the end.

Generally, fruits and fresh juices are also part of the Brazilian diet and can be a good option to complement a vegetarian diet. São Paulo has a very cosmopolitan cuisine which you can explore when eating out on your free time.

## Barcelona:

Barcelona has a rich culinary tradition based on a Mediterranean diet with an increasingly large number of culinary options from around the world. Most people in the Spanish state have something light when they wake up, like toast or fruit, and then later on in the morning, may have a croissant, a sandwich or something similar to hold them over until lunchtime. Many bars and cafes have breakfast specials that also include a coffee or tea. Lunch is the primary meal of the day and eaten on the later side with most restaurant serving between 1-4pm. Many workers and school students have a longer mid-day break and may return home for a meal and a brief nap known as the *siesta*. IHP student stipends will mostly go towards lunch with many restaurants offering a mid-day *menu*, typically including an appetizer, main dish, dessert and beverage. The city has an extensive network of markets offering anything from cured meats, olives, cheeses and fresh fruits and vegetables. Barcelona is an increasingly vegetarian/vegan-friendly city and gluten-free options aren't hard to find either. Most locals have a relatively light dinner and many restaurants don't even open until 8pm. Small plates and finger-foods known as *tapas* are common options and many are served to share as mealtime is a largely social event in Barcelona.

## Cape Town:

Students generally enjoy the diet in South Africa. Food in Cape Town reflects its diverse and eclectic history, with influences from a range of colonial powers (Dutch, English, Portuguese), slave ancestors from the Far East and the more recent influence of hip urban food trends. There are several food markets, and fresh fruit and vegetables are easily bought on the street. There is a strong tradition of BBQ (*braai*) in South Africa. If you are not a meat eater, do not worry. Homestay families are

used to catering to vegetarian, vegan and kosher diets. In addition, it is possible to find gluten-free items at many grocery stores. Your homestay coordinator will discuss your special needs with your family before you begin your homestays and plan accordingly.



## SAFETY, SECURITY, AND HEALTH

Maintaining good health is critical to having a successful semester. To help you do that, we have provided [Health Guidelines and Requirements](#) for your program.

It is very important that you read the Health Guidelines and Requirements document as early as possible and examine it with your medical provider. The guidelines include recommended immunizations; a suggested calendar for immunizations and other prophylaxes; and valuable information on how to avoid exposure to common carriers of disease.

Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. For information regarding safety and security, emergency communications, SIT policies, accident and illness insurance, and general program tips, please read the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) document and [Student Handbook](#).

## HOMESTAYS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

As many SIT Study Abroad/IHP alumni will tell you, the homestay experience can be one of the most rewarding and most challenging aspects of the program. We hope you will come prepared for the experience and committed to moving beyond cultural immersion as you begin to question, distinguish, and analyze the host culture vis-à-vis your own culture and come to a deeper understanding of both.

Family structures vary in every culture. SIT Study Abroad/IHP values the diversity of homestay families, and your family may include a single mother of two small children or a large extended family with many people coming and going all the time. Additionally, please bear in mind that, in many countries, the idea of what constitutes a “home” may be different from what you expect. You will need to be prepared to adapt to a new life with a new diet, a new schedule, new people, and new priorities and expectations.

Each program’s country coordinator team will be responsible for placing students in homestays. These placements are made first based on health concerns, including any allergies or dietary needs, to the extent possible. **Please note: in order to ensure the best fit for students and families, SIT may make final adjustments to homestay placements after student arrival in country. Therefore, SIT will not provide information about your homestay family before you depart for the program.**

Not all of your lodging will be in homestays. You may also stay in hostels, hotels, rural villages, and other types of lodging. The key is to be flexible. Many students appreciate bringing a ‘sleep sack’ (a sleeping bag liner or a sheet folded in half and sewn down the side).



## CLASSROOM SPACE

In all of the countries you visit, you will generally have a “main” classroom location where you will attend faculty lectures and welcome guest lecturers. However, the city will also become your classroom as you go on site visits, explore neighborhoods, conduct research, and travel to other sites within the region.



## TRANSPORTATION

Across locations, students will often use public transportation. Specifics on public transportation will be discussed during the orientation upon your arrival in a country.

### New York City:

Utilizing public transportation is a fantastic way to get to know a city. You will receive weekly passes for both MTA bus and subway access for program-related travel. Green and yellow metered taxis are also available and can be hailed on the street or by smartphone apps including Curb (at your own expense). Biking is also a great way to get around the city and there are bike share programs available.

### São Paulo:

Students will primarily get around using the subway or buses. The Bilhete Único is a transportation smartcard which will be used for paying fares on buses, subways, and trains. With one set payment you get up to four trips in São Paulo's public transportation system, plus a lower fare in transfers between the subway system and buses within a 3-hour period. The use of taxis is encouraged in the evening hours. If you have internet access, Uber or other apps like 99taxi and easytaxi are available in English versions. It is important to note that most drivers (Uber included) do not speak English.

### Barcelona:

Students will receive a 30-day travel card that allows unlimited journeys using the integrated system of high-quality public transit options within the core metropolitan area-- metro, bus (TMB), urban railway (FGC, Zone 1), Montjuïc funicular, tram (TRAM), and regional railway (Rodalies de Catalunya, Zone 1). The city is very pedestrian-friendly and relatively compact

with large areas and public plazas free from motor vehicles. Taxis and public buses are safe options for late night travel.

### **Cape Town:**

The distances between homestays and classrooms are usually walkable. Affordable mini-bus taxis are one popular means of public transport and serve most routes. A different classroom is used for just a few days and can be accessed by (suburban) train, mini-bus taxi, or bus. The relatively recently introduced MyCiti bus service is also available for a limited (but increasing) number of routes. Students are encouraged to use mini-bus (to be explained on arrival). More expensive metered taxis are also available, and Uber operates in Cape Town. For the few days the group will spend in Johannesburg, all transport will be provided by the program.

The South African program gives a stipend for local mini-bus taxi use and arranges transportation to and from homestays for some site visits. As Ubers and metered taxis are more expensive than mini-bus taxis, students who decide to use this form of transportation are encouraged to *share rides* with their fellow students, as this brings personal costs down. A one-way Uber ride, for example, from the furthest homestay to the classroom is around \$5USD; to the CBD is around \$7USD; and to the beach is around \$9USD – costs which can be saved on with sharing.

## **COMMUNICATION**

While you may want to be in regular communication with friends and family from home during the term abroad, please bear in mind that different time zones, unreliable phone lines, and changing program activities can complicate communication.

It's important to be clear with family and friends about your availability during the term. Many students recommend making an appointment to call home or to receive a call. You should also consider the impact of constant communication with friends and family at home on your cultural immersion.

Do not set family or friends up with expected communication during arrivals and departures to/from new locations. **It is not always possible for students to gain internet or phone access immediately upon arrival in a new country.**

When you arrive in a new country, you will have many immediate obligations, including getting to your accommodations, eating a full meal, recovering from jet lag, meeting your new host family, attending required scheduled sessions, evening engagements, and getting oriented.



## **PHONES AND E-MAIL**

As part of SIT's commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working smart phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls throughout the duration of the program. For that purpose students are required to either (a) bring an open, unlocked smart phone from the U.S. to the program that is able to accept a local SIM card, and is compatible with and usable at the country location, (b) work with each country coordinator within the first week upon arrival in to each country to purchase a smart phone locally, or (c) bring a dual SIM smart phone. During orientation, with assistance from IHP staff, students will learn how to use their cellphone, how to purchase and use an appropriate local SIM card, and how to acquire minutes for calls and texting. SIT Study Abroad/IHP requires that each student have a local number for communication with the homestay family and program staff. The Fellow works with students to collect student cell phone numbers and submits to SIT Student Affairs.

While we recognize that alternative communication methods can be free or cheaper than cell service i.e. Facetime, Skype, WhatsApp, etc. those programs alone do not satisfy our need for regular communication with the local program staff and partners, nor do they meet our emergency communication needs. Therefore, local cellular capacity on each student's phone is required for the duration of the program. **Students are required**

**to maintain a minimum amount of phone credits at all times for emergency calls.** Full compliance with this policy is expected, failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Please do not use a host family's phone for overseas calls. Even with a phone card, the host family may be charged a service fee just to dial out. Host phones should be reserved for the family's use.

### **New York:**

You are required to have a working local SIM whilst in the US with a US phone number where local staff can reach you.

### **São Paulo:**

E-mail and internet access are available in your homestays and through internet cafes in São Paulo.

If students need to purchase a mobile phone, the country program staff collects money (R\$50 to 70; approx. US\$20 - 30) and purchases it for them.

To facilitate the procedure, the local team will purchase a SIM card and some phone and data credits for the first week in São Paulo on your behalf. The corresponding cost of R\$20 per SIM card and credits (approx. US\$10) will have to be reimbursed to the program.

Typically, \$3 dollars per week covers basic phone use, with Wi-Fi available at the classroom and homestays. A full data package is \$30-40 for a month.

### **Barcelona:**

Students will be issued a SIM card from one of the local cellular providers with a 10-15 Euro/month plan that includes 2G of data and 200 minutes of calls. No matter which company you choose, 10-15 euros per month will get you a useful amount of calls, texts and data. If needed, there are a range of ways to add money to your SIM via text, website, or in-store. Most locals use WhatsApp to communicate with the texting app Telegram becoming increasingly popular. Note: Calls from a landline to mobile numbers are more expensive. Spain is also part of the European Union, which introduced new roaming regulations in June 2017. These "roam like at home" rules effectively ended roaming charges across much of Europe, meaning you'll usually pay no more for calls, texts, and data in other EU countries than you would in Spain (applicable only for mid-semester break).

### **Cape Town:**

Cell phones are widely used in South Africa and offer the most convenient way to communicate with your family and with program staff. Do not buy cheap international phone cards off the Internet – many will not work in South Africa. Local cell phone calls cost about \$0.25 a minute. SIM cards are provided at no cost to students with an initial amount of airtime (for calling) and data (for accessing the internet).

Be aware that South African data costs are particularly high. Be prepared to adapt your data usage habits accordingly. Students typically spend around \$15 each time they buy airtime, and around \$20 when they buy data. The length of time that this lasts depends on usage habits. Most classroom spaces have Wi-Fi, as well as many of the homestays. In those homestays that do not have Wi-Fi, the program supplies dongles with 10GIG of data. There are also many coffee shops where students can connect to the internet.



## **MAILINGS**

Unlike receiving a package here in the US, receiving a package at your program site is usually **expensive** and **problematic**. Customs agents must inspect all packages and you, as the recipient, are responsible for duty and storage fees. In addition, there are cases of items being lost in the mail or taking so long to reach the recipient that the recipient is nearly back in the US by the time the items are received. **For these reasons, sending packages should be done only for emergency situations.** Additionally, sending valuables is highly discouraged. SIT does not forward student mail and cannot be responsible for lost mail. Please account for 2-3 weeks shipping time when deciding which address to use.



Despite cheaper prices, reliance on the US Postal Service is not advised due to delays and unreliability. If it is an emergency and necessary for someone to send you mail then program staff can assist you with the most appropriate address to give the sender. Posted letters and packages should be sent via **DHL** as this is the service that we have had the most success with for international mail. When given the option, it's always a good idea to send packages certified and with a tracking number that allows the sender to track the package.



## MONEY

In addition to tuition, SIT Study Abroad/IHP program fees cover room and board throughout the program **except if you are planning to leave your homestay during the mid-semester break.**

During the semester, your homestay will provide you with two meals a day, and you will receive a stipend for lunch, as well as basic travel costs to get to and from program sites. All non-program related travel is the student's responsibility.

**You are responsible for all expenses during the mid-semester break including travel, room, and board.** If you choose to stay with your homestay family during the break, room and board (2 meals/day) will be provided.

SIT will provide transportation for program-related excursions and activities that are part of the normal program itinerary. Course materials are made available digitally and there will be some photocopies of course materials available on advanced request. Printing additional paper copies of course readers are the students' responsibility. Please plan accordingly.

### New York:

ATMs are widely available for a fee of \$2-\$5 depending on the machine and your bank's policies. Once a week, you will receive a stipend for your time in NYC that covers your meals not provided by the program.

### São Paulo:

The local currency is the Brazilian Real. There are several ways to obtain money in São Paulo. Credit and debit cards (VISA, Master Card) work at most places in São Paulo. ATM cards (Cirrus and PLUS) also work in Brazil's major cities. However, you may want to bring some cash and get the rest from an ATM.

Withdrawing money from an ATM is very easy in most program locations. Keep in mind that lost credit/debit cards can take several weeks to be replaced. It is recommended that you also travel with some cash. Avoid taking traveler's checks since they are hard to exchange.

### Barcelona:

As in 15 other European Union countries, the official currency is the euro (€). Credit cards, including AMEX, are widely accepted in most businesses, however some smaller restaurants and shops still do not accept credit cards. ATMs are plentiful around Barcelona and are currency exchange centers. Most banks are open from 8:30am to 2pm Monday to Friday.

### Cape Town:

The local currency is the South African Rand. ATMs are widely available for withdrawal in Rands. But if you want to exchange currency it is advised to go to one of the commercial banks since currency exchangers charge extra fees. During orientation you will be given an approximate estimate on expenses for additional / optional activities. It is important to exercise caution when using ATMs in South Africa. Your Country Coordinator will advise you in determining the safest ATM locations.



Check current exchange rates:

<http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

If using a debit and/or credit card, you should contact your bank and/or credit card companies regarding your travel plans. If you don't inform these companies that you will be away, they will often assume the card has been lost or stolen and will put an immediate hold on the card. You should also check on costs of withdrawal, as these costs vary and can sometimes be very expensive. Renewing and receiving reissued credit and debit cards while on the program will be an expensive and highly inconvenient process. Before you leave for your program, please check the expiration dates on your cards to ensure that they will not expire while you are abroad. It is also very important that you make photocopies of all your debit/credit card information and leave them with someone you trust in case your card(s) is/are lost or stolen. Also scan and e-mail yourself a copy.

Having some U.S. cash for cases where ATMs are not available or not working is a good idea. Consider bringing \$100-\$300 to keep as a reserve for this purpose.

Following are suggestions for spending money during the program, including estimates for medical expenses, personal spending, and gifts. Figures are based on recent student evaluations, though individual spending habits vary widely and **these costs are averages**.

A suggested total amount of money to budget ranges from **US \$1,050 to \$2,000+**. To determine where you might fall in this range, please examine your spending habits during a typical semester at your home school and consider any exceptional expenditures you may have on the program, including travel costs for your vacation week or a specific personal expense.

Please budget approximately: *(from past student suggestions, please note that some expenses will also vary depending on preferences)*



### Required Program Expenses

Visa Registration (non-US passport holders):	varies
Visa Registration (US passport holders):	N/A
Immunization:	varies
Travel to Launch city:	varies
Phone credit, data top-up	100 - 150 USD
US sim card (if applicable)	50 USD

### Variable Personal Out-of-Pocket Expenses

Miscellaneous personal spending (i.e. dietary restrictions, excess baggage, laundry)	300 - 600 USD
Property insurance	varies
Accident and illness insurance while in the US (if applicable)	varies
Mid-Semester Break	300 - 500 USD
Books and supplies:	100 - 200 USD
Personal Local Transportation:	200 - 500 USD
Estimated total:	1050 USD+ to 2000 USD+

Please factor in that any medical costs require you to pay up-front and file for reimbursement.

Up-front medical costs (to be reimbursed):	400 - 1000 USD
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If you are concerned about paying for medical expenses, please discuss with staff to seek additional support

Table: Personal Spending Budget \*from past student suggestions

## VISITORS AND FREE TIME

**SIT strongly discourages and will not provide support for any visitors to students during the term**, due to the rigorous nature of the program and the disruption that such visits cause in program flow and group dynamics. Students should be sure that relatives and friends are aware of this policy and that visits are scheduled for dates after the formal conclusion of the program. Students will not be excused from program components to attend to visitors. See the Attendance and Participation section of the [Student Handbook](#).

Please note that any visitors during the course of the program must plan their own independent accommodations; SIT Study Abroad/IHP homestay families can accommodate only their assigned student and, due to cultural and contractual understandings with SIT, should not be asked to host students' guests.

During the program, students follow an intense schedule of classes, site visits and field-based learning assignments. Free time for pursuing an independent interest or hobby during the program will be limited. Your admissions counselor can advise you about particular interests you may have. For example, if you must keep in shape for your next athletic season, or if you play a musical instrument and want to know whether to bring it, we can help you to understand your schedule and any concerns or limitations that may exist.

Given the significant amount of program activity on weekends, and the expectation that students engage fully with their homestay families and the program site, students should not generally expect to have more than three weekends free to travel independently during the semester (one in each city). If a student plans any independent travel within country that includes an overnight stay, s/he should, in advance of travel:

1. Provide travel plans and itinerary to the Program Director.
2. Provide lodging, contact information for travel, and names and contacts of travel companions.

While travelling, students continue to be responsible for meeting and abiding by the program's Conditions of Participation and are responsible for their own actions and safety.

## MID-SEMESTER BREAK

There will be a mid-semester period at the end of your time in Barcelona. Mid-semester dates and other relevant details will be sent in an email from your admissions counselor.

You are fully responsible for all logistical and financial aspects of mid-semester and/or independent travel, including but not limited to accommodations, meals and transportation.

While on this mid-semester break, all students have the option of staying in their homestays and continuing to receive board (2 meals/day) and lodging at no extra expense. If students intend on traveling, or leaving the homestay, they are responsible for making their own plans and covering all costs during the break.

The mid-semester break should be used as a time for rest and relaxation. To help plan the mid-semester break, IHP coordinators may provide contact information of local resources (e.g., travel agents, volunteer or local opportunities).

If you need assistance with mid-semester break costs, please contact the Program Director.

### **Travel outside of the European Union is not permitted.**

If a student plans independent travel that crosses an international border within the European Union, s/he must:

1. Seek permission from the Program Director at least two weeks prior to intended travel. The time of travel and destination are set in consultation with the Program Director and request her approval. Students who are not in good standing academically, for example, may be denied this approval.
2. Provide travel plans and itinerary to Program Director.
3. Sign the Temporary Leave form which relieves SIT/World Learning of any liability.

4. Provide lodging, contact information for travel, and names and contacts of travel companions.
5. Understand that s/he may be subject to a passport check upon return to the program. Some areas may be deemed off-limits by the Program Director due to safety and security concerns.

While travelling during Break, students continue to be responsible for meeting and abiding by the program's

Conditions of Participation and are responsible for their own actions and safety

SIT/IHP is not responsible for supervising students during independent travel, mid-semester, or time away from the program.

You are responsible for advising your parents/guardians about your mid-semester plans. You are also responsible for providing program staff with your travel destination(s) and relevant contact information. You will be given phone numbers and email addresses of the program staff in case of emergency during break.

## PACKING GUIDELINES

### LUGGAGE

Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You should be able to carry all your luggage significant distances on your own. Try to minimize both the number of bags and weight of your bag(s) since you will likely be acquiring more belongings while abroad. You'll want to have a bag that is easy to handle, waterproof (or at least water-resistant) and durable.

If carrying prescription medications, you should carry a letter from your doctor to prevent any concerns at customs or in transit. (Please see the "General Health Tips" section in the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) pre-departure document.)

Please check the current requirements of the Transportation Security Administration (<http://www.tsa.gov>) as well as those of the airline on which you are flying for domestic and international baggage restrictions.

### CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Be sure to research what kind of weather to expect in each of the cities you visit, as well as local clothing customs. [www.bbc.co.uk/weather](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather) has some great country guides. You will be traveling in both urban and rural areas, and will need to dress accordingly in order to avoid offending anyone. When you arrive to each country, you will receive an explanation about how to dress appropriately (both culturally and climate-wise) for each setting.

You will also have the opportunity to purchase local clothing, which may help you to assimilate and feel more comfortable in public. In all settings, however, it is important to dress respectfully. This means no torn, dirty or even well-worn clothing (seen as disrespectful), and no hats worn indoors.

Semi-formal, professional dress will be required for visits to high-profile organizations, but one or two nice outfits should suffice. There won't be many dry cleaners and clothes washing won't have options like "delicate"

or “permanent press”. Clothes may be washed by hand and will typically be hung out to dry. This means you will benefit from bringing items that are durable and won’t take more than an afternoon (day at most) to dry.

## COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

IHP Cities in the 21st Century programs modified its technology policy from discouraging (yet allowing) students from bringing technology such as laptops, netbooks, tablets, and e-readers to encouraging and integrating such resources into academic activities where appropriate. The decision to do so is in response to student and faculty requests made during previous programs as well as our own sense of the pedagogical, economical and environmental advantages of this shift. Be aware however, that the ethics and protocol of device use in site visits and guest lectures will be strongly regulated.

It is highly recommended that you bring a laptop computer. If you bring a laptop, it is your personal property and responsibility. Before leaving home, remember to back up your computer to the cloud or on a hard drive that you leave at home to safeguard all your data in case your computer is lost or stolen. It is also recommended that you insure your computer, smart phone, and other valuables for full coverage in the event of loss or theft. SIT is not responsible for theft, loss, or any duty tax you may have to pay when you enter the country.

When considering how you will use your computer or other electronic device on IHP, please keep in mind:

- Computers (like cell phones) are frequent targets of theft and may get stolen. Keep them safe.
- Computers can break and are frequently more difficult and expensive to repair abroad. Faculty and coordinators cannot be expected to help students with computer repair or replacement and use of your computer equipment is at your own risk.
- Devices can detract from the experience of studying abroad. The more time students spend on their devices, the less time they spend

exploring the communities and connecting with homestay families, which are the most memorable aspects of students’ experience. Start thinking about this now and plan to be thoughtful about the quality and quantity of your use of technology.

- Wireless internet is sometimes not available, including in homestays. Be prepared for much less consistent and much slower access to the internet.
- Faculty members may ask that computers be turned off and kept out of the classroom during class sessions.
- Computers, tablets and phones are not allowed during guest lectures and their use can be limited during site visits.
- For students needing more technology resources, internet cafes can be found, are usually inexpensive, and can provide word processing, internet access, Skype, printing, and online photo-uploading capabilities.
- Any technological devices or electronics that you choose to bring are your personal property and responsibility. It is recommended that you insure it. SIT is not responsible for any duty tax you may have to pay when you enter the country, theft, or loss.
- **Do not** bring other personal valuables – such as cameras, iPods, or recording devices—unless you are willing to lose them. Items such as audio devices and cameras are usually safe at host family homes, but you may wish to consider how such items will be protected on field trips, on weekends, and in hostels.

Please see the following website for information about electricity, voltage and electrical adapters.  
<http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/>.



## PACKING LIST

As you might imagine, it is best to be prepared with a gift to offer your homestay family in gratitude for their hospitality and as a means to share a part of your culture with them. We suggest one or two gifts that the whole family can enjoy. You may also wish to consider gifts for people outside your homestay family. Try to choose gifts that represent you or the part of the country and/or community you live in. Think about what your city, state, or local artisans produce. Draw upon your personal interests or hobbies for ideas. Pack a couple of small gifts for children, such as small games, bubbles, or a Frisbee. Even if your homestay family does not have small children, chances are that you will engage with children in your homestay community. Once you are on the program and learn more about the local culture, you will discover other ways to thank your family. Remember to bring pictures of your friends and family to share.

## WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT OBTAIN IN COUNTRY

You will be able to obtain much of what you need while traveling. However, specific products may not always be found in each country, and it can be difficult to procure items during rural homestays. If there is something you absolutely cannot live without, it's a good idea to make sure you pack it.

If you take prescription medications, make sure to obtain enough for the duration of your program before leaving your home country. It can be difficult or even impossible to obtain specific medications in other countries.

## ALUMNI CONTACTS

If you have further questions, please contact your admissions counselor and/or ask an alumni contact: <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/admitted-students/contact-a-former-student/>.

### Don't miss the Packing List on the next page!

These packing guidelines are based on suggestions from past students and staff.

## GENERAL

- 7 T-shirts or modest tank tops
- 3 long-sleeved shirts (varying degrees of warmth)
- 2 warm sweaters, sweatshirts, or fleeces for layering
- Light, packable rain jacket
- 3 pairs of pants
- 1 pair of non jeans and nice shirt for men
- 1 pair of athletic shorts/pants
- 2-3 pairs of long shorts, skirts, or dresses (covering your knees)
- 14 pairs of underwear
- 6 pairs of socks
- Shower shoes
- Comfortable, durable sandals; also consider dressier flat shoes or sandals
- Sneakers or lightweight, comfortable multi-purpose shoes like trail-running shoes
- Hat or cap (for sun)
- Scarf or bandana
- Bathing suit
- Belt
- Pajamas
- Smart phone (for requirements see Contact and Communications tab:  
<http://studyabroad.sit.edu/why-sit/health-safety-and-support/>)

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- Passport
- Yellow WHO Card (see the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) document for more information)

- 2 photocopies of your passport stored separately from your actual passport
- Photocopy of visa(s)
- 2 passport photos
- A driver's license or other form of identification in addition to your passport
- A copy of your SIT Study Abroad student [insurance membership card](#)
- Medical documents and photocopies of all stored separately from the originals

## HEALTH/TOILETRIES

You will be able to buy and/or restock many of these supplies while you travel. Only bring small amounts to keep your luggage a manageable size.

- Adequate supply of any medications you use regularly
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- Shampoo, conditioner, soap
- Deodorant
- Quick-dry bath towel & washcloth/bandana
- Razor, shaving cream
- Hairbands, headbands, barrettes
- Sunblock
- Mosquito repellent
- Chapstick with SPF
- Comb or brush
- Nail clippers
- Contact lenses and solution, extra pair of glasses



These items are **optional** and can be purchased as needed along the way; however, it is recommended to have a few of these things on hand. Students may want to coordinate buying some of these items to share once they meet at the program

launch. Note: Your Fellow will be traveling with an Emergency Medical Kit at all times.

- Imodium
- Painkillers (such as Advil or Tylenol)
- Band-Aids
- Motion sickness remedy
- Laxatives or digestive aids such as Fiber supplements
- Q-tips
- Anti-bacterial hand sanitizer gel
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Antibacterial cream
- Aloe or burn cream
- Multi-vitamins
- Cold medicine (such as NyQuil)
- Decongestant
- Allergy medicine
- Re-hydration powder



## OPTIONAL ITEMS

- USB Drive
- Money belt or small necktie bag to carry valuable documents
- Journal
- Water bottle
- Ziploc bags, plastic bags or compression sacks
- Sleep sack (i.e. a sheet sewn at seams to make lightweight sack). This is not required, but may be of good use at a hostel or on retreats/weekends
- FAA-approved locks for your luggage
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Hard case for glasses so they don't get crushed
- Safety pins, rubber bands, paper clips, stapler and/or duct tape
- Travel alarm clock or watch with alarm
- Pocket knife
- Small flashlight or head lamp
- Music Player
- Camera, extra memory or film,
- Electrical adaptors
- Charger for electronics and batteries
- Pens/pencils, notebook
- One or two books to read and then share
- Photos of your home, family, and friends (consider bringing extra photos to give away)
- Gifts for host family in first country (unique items from your hometown work great)
- List of addresses of friends and family
- Travel pillow (or a pillowcase to hold a sweater for long plane and bus rides)
- Travel mug and coffee filter
- A4 Tyvek or plastic envelopes to keep papers organized
- Clipboard
- Sewing kit
- Small Tupperware
- Stain stick