

# 2-WEEK PACKING GUIDE FOR El Nido, The Philippines

The Philippines is generally a hot and humid country all year round, so packing is relatively easy. Keep in mind the season you're travelling, but in most cases, the packing list will be pretty much the same.

## Clothes

Opt for comfortable and breathable clothing but also something that dries pretty quickly because due to humidity even bikinis don't dry completely. Fabrics like cotton, linen, chambray or rayon are breathable and are great for hot weather. Packing light is highly recommended so one week's worth of clothes will be enough for two weeks if you get them washed once.

What to pack:

- 2 bikinis
- 1 swimsuit
- 1 scarf/sarong
- 1 tunic
- 1 regular bra
- 1 sports bra
- 1 sports shorts
- 2 regular shorts
- 1 loose trousers
- 1 loose shirt
- 2 dresses
- 5 short-sleeved tops
- 1 hat/baseball cap (baseball cap is good for when you go kayaking or island hopping, and a hat - for beach days if that's what you prefer. Unfortunately I didn't get to wear my hat once as it was super windy!)
- 1 weeks' worth underwear

There aren't fashion trends going on so you can wear pretty much whatever you want as long as it's not offensive and you respect the culture - it's a deeply religious country with the biggest Christian population in Southeast Asia, so you shouldn't dress too provocatively while you're there. Also, you should avoid wearing swimwear in restaurants and bars.

## Shoes

Having a pair of flip-flops and comfy sandals is going to be more than enough. Even better if sandals are waterproof as it's likely that you'll be in the water when getting on and off the boats, or when it rains. Only bring trainers if you're hiking or if you're travelling in them then that's sufficient enough. The pavements in El Nido are very uneven so leave high

heels/platforms/wedges at home. When it rains streets are quite dirty so bring shoes you're not worried to get dirty.

- Flip flops
- Sandals
- Trainers (only if you're hiking)

## Other items

These are the things that I highly recommend packing to have a comfortable and hassle-free trip:

- **Portable charger** - probably the most obvious one. The Philippines are far and you'll be travelling for hours. My favourite is this small Anker charger which gives two charges.



- **Head torch** - during the storms, electricity was going off very often. You may be in a dark hotel room or walking on a dark road, so a torch will be your best friend. Also, if you're staying in a hostel and come back to your room late or have to leave early head torch is especially useful.

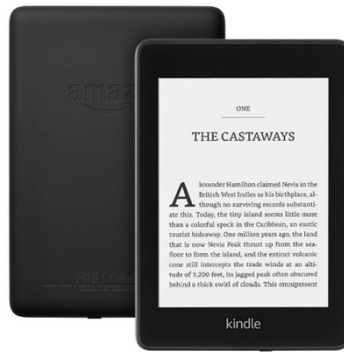


- **Multi adaptor** - most devices nowadays are charged via USB cable, so it's a good idea to have an adaptor that allows you to charge a few devices at once. I packed this universal adaptor and it was enough between two people.



- **Adaptor** - if you have electronics that don't charge via USB, then bring one other single adaptor.

- **Kindle** - I love it when travelling as it takes so little space in my bag, just have some books ready in advance as you might struggle with poor WiFi in most places.



- **Microfibre/Turkish towel** - these are thin so they save space in the suitcase and also dry quicker than normal towels. I especially love Turkish towels as they look pretty.



- **Memory foam travel pillow** - for those long flights and bus journeys. I recently upgraded to a memory foam one and was so happy about it, so much more comfortable! Bought **mine** in Heathrow airport for £12.99.



- **Dry bag** - highly recommended. For those island hopping, kayaking and beach days. It'll keep your belongings dry and you can chuck it on sand without worrying about it. We used 10l one between two people and it was a bit too small, so choose 15l if sharing. It comes with a waterproof phone case which is good when you go kayaking and want to take some pics with your phone and also don't need to worry about sand getting to your phone when on the beach.



- **Reusable rain poncho** - this will be your best friend on rainy days. It's good quality and durable and has drawstring hood and elastic sleeves.



- **Sunscreen** – this one's no brainer, but I know people who don't like using it. The sun is strong in the Philippines and you can get burnt even on a cloudy day. With sand and salt on your skin, the spray one is probably the best option.
- **Mosquito repellent** – there weren't that many mosquitos, but there were some in the garden in one of the hotels and at Dryft Camp on Darocotan Island. If you prefer a spray one to cream, I would recommend bringing it as we couldn't find any in El Nido.
- **Medicine** – if you're careful with food and water (i.e. don't eat food that looks unclean and is cooked on the street and don't drink tap water) you'll be fine, but just in case, pack some anti-diarrhoea tablets. Also, it's good to pack some paracetamol/ibuprofen as well as a nasal spray - I managed to catch a cold somewhere on the plane or in a hotel room and I got sick when on Darocotan Island and I was glad I had some medicine on me.
- **Water bottle** – Palawan island has banned single plastic use on boats and island tours and people are encouraged to use reusable water bottles as much as possible. You can't drink tap water, but restaurants will always give you free drinking water and hotels and island tours will have large water tanks for you to fill up your water bottle.



- **Deck of cards** – these take pretty much no space in your bag but will be perfect to kill time when it rains.
- **Travel insurance** – last but not least, this one's super important! Let's hope you won't need it but in case you do, you want to be covered. If you're going scuba diving/freediving make sure that's included too. I buy mine from **World Nomads** as it seems to offer best overall travel insurance. Have a copy printed and keep it in your bag.

- **Bank card with no fees** – most of El Nido is cash only, so you'll need to withdraw money more than once for sure. Cards like Monzo or Revolut offer good rates.

#### **Things to leave at home:**

- Expensive jewellery - just to avoid becoming a target and also it might get ruined in the seawater and sand.
- Lots of makeup (bb cream, mascara, eyebrow powder and a lip balm was all I packed and it was enough).
- Your best, fancy clothes - as mentioned, Filipinos dress very simple, so you can do the same. Also will likely to get dirty there.
- Umbrella - it might be raining but it's likely going to be super windy too, so it'll be useless.

*Safe travels!*