**Mira Costa High School Orchestra - Spain Tour**

**General Information for Participants**

**Passports**

* Everyone is required to have a passport which is valid for at least 3 months after the tour.

**Parent Consent Forms**

* U.S. Customs and Borders Protection strongly recommends that children under 18 that are not travelling with both parents be prepared to present written parent permission from both parents to cross international borders. All parents will be asked to complete a permission form.

**Travel Medical Insurance**

* Out of Country Travel Medical Insurance is mandatory for this tour. Many people already have this coverage through their personal Health care plans. Culture Path will be sending an email asking people to submit this information via our online secure portal. If people do not have this insurance, they can buy it through the online portal for $29.00 USD per person. The insurance provider is Seven Corners.

**Baggage Allowance**

* Checked bag - 1 piece per person with a max weight of 50lb (L+W+H not to exceed 62 in)
* Carry on - 1 piece of carry on hand baggage such as a large purse or back-back – no roller bags! This bag needs to fit under the seat as the overhead bins will be used for the instruments.
	+ Musical Instruments that will fit in the overhead bins will be carried on board
	+ The final decision for carry on allowance is determined at the gate by the airline agent -if as a group we try and bring too much “stuff” on board they will make us check some items. Obviously, it is not acceptable for violins etc. to be checked so this will mean other hand bags will need to be checked. If we are all reasonable there will not be a problem.

**Baggage Restrictions** – Summary of most common recommendations below (other restrictions may apply and rules may change). **The final decision is made by the agent at the security check point at the airport.**

* **Liquids** You are allowed to bring a quart-sized bag of liquids, aerosols, gels, creams and pastes in your carry-on bag and through the checkpoint. These are limited to travel-sized **containers** that are **3.4 ounces (100 milliliters) or less** per item. Placing these items in the small bag and separating from your carry-on baggage facilitates the screening process. Pack items that are in **containers** larger than 3.4 ounces or 100 milliliters in checked baggage. One plastic bag per guest will be permitted. Please note that the container must not exceed the capacity of 3.4 ounces. If the container has a greater capacity than 3.4 ounces, even if it is only filled with 3.4 ounces of liquid, this item will not be allowed.
* Note if you are carrying on your instrument, take any prohibited items out of the case. (Sharp items/tools, valve oil etc.)
* Pack items that are in containers larger than 3.4 ounces in checked baggage.
* If you need to bring larger capacity liquids or icepacks, needles, or other medical supplies for medical reasons, include a note from your doctor.
* **Batteries**
* Batteries, spare/loose, including lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries, for portable electronic devices must be carried **in carry-on baggage only**. Articles which have the primary purpose as a power source, e.g. power banks are considered as spare batteries. **These batteries must be clearly marked with capacity** and individually protected to prevent short circuits.
* **Lithium Batteries**: Portable electronic devices containing lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries, including medical devices such as portable oxygen concentrators (POC) and consumer electronics such as cameras, mobile phones, laptops and tablets, when carried for personal use must not exceed 2 g for lithium metal batteries and 100 Wh for lithium ion batteries.

**Suggestions for Long Haul Flights**

* All groups are required to be at the airport 3 hours before the scheduled flight departure.
* You will check in at the airport with your passport.
* If you have Frequent Flyer points, you should tell the agent your Frequent Flyer information at the time of check in.
* For a group booking the seats are allocated as a block. Seats are assigned by the airline and we do not have control of where people are seated. The airline asks that group leaders switch seat assignments within their block once they are on board to accommodate individual concerns. The flight attendent will need to know where people with special meals have been re-seated.
1. **Food**. The flights to and from Spain includes a stop-over in the USA on route. There is no food provided on the domestic flights within the USA. There is one meal provided on the oversees flights. Although the airlines sell food on board for the domestic flights the number of food items is very limited. We suggest that people eat well before they get on the plane, bring packaged snacks such as granola bars or crackers or purchase other snacks once you pass through security.
2. **Drinks** If you want to bring a drink on board, buy it after you pass through security. You can bring an empty water bottle, then fill it with water after you clear security. The air inside the plane is dry; drink plenty of water throughout the flight.
3. **Hygiene**  Always a good idea to carry some tissues and hand wipes.
4. Wear comfortable clothing in layers and comfortable shoes. It can get chilly or hot on a plane.
5. We suggest not to wear jewelry as you probably will have to take it off to pass through security
6. Neck pillow
7. Headphones and/or earplugs – some people also find an eye mask helpful.
8. Some adults find wearing compression socks help to avoid swollen feet and ankles – you might want to check with your doctor to determine if wearing compression socks is best for you.
9. Rotating your ankles and flexing your feet and getting up and walking the aisle every few hours should also help if you experience swelling.
10. Charge all your devices before you leave and you might want to bring along a portable **charger (clearly marked with capacity)** so you can top up your devices along the way if there are no power outlets available. I expect you will be taking a lot of pictures with your phone or tablet which uses up a lot of battery power. An external charging device is a great back-up on the plane and on the bus rides throughout the tour so you don’t miss those amazing pics.



1. Bring back-up entertainment. Books, sketch pad, journal, crossword, and sudoku are all good options to give your eyes a break from screen time.
2. Relax and try to get some sleep.
3. Culture Path staff will meet you at arrivals at the Airport in Spain.

**Cell phone** - Check with your carrier to see what international plans are available if you want to use your phone when off wifi. There is wifi included at all the accommodation sites.

**Money Currency Exchange** - People should check with their local bank as to how far in advance they will need to order Euros. People would only need spending money to buy gifts/souvenirs and your own snacks, treats, drinks etc.

**Credit Cards and Debit Cards**

People can also use ATM’s to acquire cash

Major credit cards can be used at hotels, major stores, and tourist attractions.

Check with your bank to see if you need to notify them of your travel plans

**Special Meals** –We will notify airlines and restaurants of any special meal requirements when we pre order the meals. We advise people with special meal requirements to bring some familiar/safe food/snacks from home as a back up. 

**Dress Code for Entering Churches in Spain –** Spain is a very catholic country and most churches and religious sites have a dress code. Basically, clothing should be modest with no bare shoulders and no “short shorts”.

**Packing Suggestions**

* Re-fillable water bottle
* Comfortable walking shoes
* Performance clothing (as outlined by your own ensemble)
* Bathing suit, hat and sunscreen
* Layers for airplane and “over” air conditioning
* Batteries and chargers (clearly marked with capacity)
* All toiletries including: shampoo, soap, toothpaste, deodorant, etc. (3.4 ounce max size)
* Spain uses the Europe “two-prong” outlet adapter (example shown) – note: this is a different type of adapter than what is used in the United Kingdom!



* All prescription and over the counter medications in the original containers
* Epi pen if applicable
* Rain Coat and/or umbrella
* Snacks from home