

Europe Information

Unfortunately, a lot has changed since the September 11th incidents and now that we are under an "Amber Alert", things are even more stressful. I suggest that if you have access to the internet, please check the TSA and the Lufthansa websites so you can get the latest line on what is expected of you as an air traveler. Their websites are as follows: www.tsa.gov and www.lufthansa.com. For those of you that don't have access to the internet, I have copied the latest information below, but remember, things change quickly, so you may want to call the week you are traveling to make sure you are following the correct guidelines:

From TSA...

Before the Airport

Do NOT pack or bring prohibited items to the airport. Read the [Permitted and Prohibited Items](#) list. Remember, liquid products need to be packed in your checked luggage. If you choose to bring liquids, they have to be less than 3 ounces each and fit in 1 quart size ziplock bag, and you are permitted one bag per person. Remember: **3-1-1 for carry-ons** = 3 ounce bottle or less; 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. 3 oz. container size is a security measure.

Consolidate bottles into one bag and X-ray separately to speed screening.

Be prepared. Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

3-1-1 is for short trips. If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.

Declare larger liquids. Prescription medications, baby formula and milk are allowed in quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

- Refrain from taking **wrapped presents** to the airport. TSA is recommending that you either ship wrapped packages ahead of time or wrap on arrival. If the package alarms, TSA will need to unwrap it to investigate the source of the alarm.
- **Avoid wearing shoes, clothing, jewelry, and accessories that contain metal.** Metal items may set off the alarm on the metal detector.
- **Put all undeveloped film and cameras with film in your carry-on baggage.** Checked baggage screening equipment will damage undeveloped film.
- Carry-on baggage is limited to one carry-on bag plus one personal item. Personal items include laptops, purses, small backpacks, briefcases, or camera cases. Remember, 1+1.
- Place identification tags in and on all of your baggage. **Don't forget to label your laptop computer.** These are one of the most forgotten items at Screening Checkpoints.

At the Airport

Put metal **IN** your carry-on bag. This includes jewelry, loose change, keys, mobile phones, pagers, and personal data assistants (PDAs).

Take **OUT** your laptop computer. Place it in a bin, separate from its carrying case.

Take **OFF** your outer coat. Place it in a bin. Suit jackets and blazers do not have to be removed, unless requested by the screener.

Air Travel Tips

Baggage

A few tips that may come in handy when you pack!

- Travel on the light side- if at all possible, take the least amount of luggage as possible. Remember, you will be dragging your luggage through airports, hotel lobbies, possibly trains, etc. Don't take more than you can physically handle. No one else may be there to help you...
- Do not "Lock" your luggage. With the new security measures, they ask that you use the disposable plastic cable locks that you get at the hardware store. They will cut locks off without hesitation. If you use a hard ski tube for your skis and the only way to close the tube is with a lock, consider a screwable carbuncle instead, so they can remove it to search the tube. TSA sells the new "TSA Approved Lock" that the baggage checkers have the master key, but from what I hear, not all airports have them, so the locks will probably get cut off anyway.
- Mark your baggage clearly both on the inside and the outside with your name, permanent address and that of your destination- including your skis.
- Take pictures of your luggage and print them before your trip. Write on the pictures to include names, identifying markings, etc, so if the luggage is lost, you can give them the pictures and that will allow them to identify and find your luggage faster. Much easier showing a non-english speaking counter person a picture than try to translate...
- Whenever possible, choose to check your baggage in the baggage hold.
- Choose baggage conforming to airline standards for your safety and comfort.
- Be careful to keep the baggage tickets you were given by the check-in agent. In Europe, they do ask for these to get your luggage in case of loss. It is your only proof of ownership.
- Don't pack special, or fragile items (crochery, electronic devices, bottles, paintings...), Heavy (unit weight higher than 32 kg) or bulky (bicycles, surfboards...) items transportation is subject to prior approval and notification upon reservation.
- Because of these reinforced security measures, you are requested to always carry with you a valid ID with a photo.
- Only one piece of hand-baggage is allowed in the cabin and it must fit through the sizing box.
- Pack personal items in a see through ziplock so they don't have to rifle through your "personals"

For international travel (except USA, Canada, Mexico, Caribbean) on Lufthansa sectors the free baggage allowance in Economy Class is 20 kg, in Business Class 30 kg and in First Class 40 kg. These amounts are valid for all Star Alliance members.

Weight Concept

20 kg: Economy Class

20 kg additional to class allowance: Holder of the Lufthansa Senator Card or Star Gold Card.

On journeys to and from USA, Canada and to Mexico and the Caribbean the free baggage allowance is either as described above, or based on a piece-baggage concept as follows: 2 pieces of baggage and 1 piece of hand baggage, the dimensions as described below.

Piece Concept

Applicable on flights to/from USA, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. New: for travel origin in South and Central America to Europe, valid for Star Alliance partners

pieces: 2 pieces for all classes

one extra: Star Alliance Gold customers

weight: each piece not exceeding 32 kg

volume: Each piece may not exceed 158 cm (length + height + width) and in Economy Class 2 pieces together may not exceed 273 cm.

infants: 1 piece, not exceeding 115 cm, plus one collapsable stroller (may be carried in the cabin, if storage space available)

Hand baggage

One piece of hand baggage per passenger is allowed on board. Two pieces are permitted if you travel in business class. Hand baggage must not exceed 55x40x20 cm or 22x16x8 inch (57x54x15 cm or 22x21x6 inch in case of a foldable garment bag), or weigh more than 8 kg. One piece should be stowed under the seat in front of you, the other one in the overhead bins. Please take care when opening the bins while the aircraft is airborne or after the landing.

Please observe the following change of procedure at Frankfurt airport:

At Frankfurt airport, carry-on baggage gauges are attached to all security control machines so that the size of hand baggage can be checked. Access to the gates through security control will only be possible with hand baggage pieces not exceeding the size allowance. Passengers bringing oversized pieces of baggage to security control will be sent back by the staff to the airline check-in counter and must give up their baggage for check-in there. Therefore, please observe the maximum size allowed for hand baggage and check in larger pieces of baggage in advance.

They are VERY specific about what is allowed. Most international specifications are less than what is considered normal for domestic flights, so that wheeled bag you normally carry on to that Delta flight to Florida, might be too big for carry on for an international flights (and they don't care what your excuse is- and they take their policy SERIOUSLY- trust me!)

General Information

1. Make a copy of your passport, insurance policy (or insurance card), credit cards and travelers checks and put them in a separate piece of luggage. Also leave a copy with someone at home in case you need to have it faxed while you are in Europe. It is much easier to get a duplicate passport if you have a copy of the original.
2. Because we are traveling in a group, we are allowed a little leeway when it comes to ski baggage. You will be allowed one carry-on and two checked bags. One bag plus one set of skis and a boot bag (the boots and skis are considered on piece). Be careful though- if the boot bag does not look like a boot bag, has anything but boots in it, or it is oversized, they WILL charge you and call it a third bag. Again- check the weight and dimensions so you don't get a surprise surcharge of \$50 on that heavy stuffed bag you drag up to the counter. Most airlines will actually weights your luggage to make sure you don't exceed the "coach" weight allowance.
3. You must get to the airport 3 hours ahead of time. The flights are packed these days, and any seats that are not checked in by 3 hours ahead of time, are fair game to bumping. You also need to make sure you can get through security with enough time. This is very important right now, because of the excessive screening they are doing for all foreign flyers. Remember that the international flights take longer to board, so leave yourself some extra time at the airport to get through all the hurdles. You can always kill extra time in the bar.
4. As far as cash and exchange rates, here are a few suggestions...
 - a. Have some American cash on you for when you are at the airport, but you don't need to exchange any money before you get over there. There are currency counters at the airport.
 - b. To get the best exchange rates, use your credit cards and ATMs for as many purchases as you can. Check with the CC company to see what the exchange rate is- many CC

companies have now instituted an "exchange fee" which could be more than the current cost of exchanging money at an exchange counter. Also, call your CC companies before you leave and tell them you are going to Europe. Sometimes if you don't do that, they may reject your purchases thinking it has been stolen- this has happened to me several times and it is pain to call overseas to get them to unlock it in a timely fashion.

- c. Use your ATM card to get foreign cash. There are ATMs all over Europe. Check with your bank card to make sure you can use your card overseas and check with the bank to see where the card can be taken and what systems you can use (most ATMs over there use the "Plus" or "Interlink" systems).
 - d. Not all places take travelers checks. Small out of the way restaurants on the mountains are usually "cash only". Make sure you ski with a few \$\$ in your pocket just in case you have to take a taxi or buy something.
 - e. If you use an ATM, make sure this is not your "main" account. A few weeks before your trip, create a savings account and put in what you think you will spend. Then get an ATM card for that account. This way, if someone decides to get into your account, they will only get to your secondary account- not your checking or main account that could contain your life savings.
 - f. If you are worried about someone stealing your CC, get your CC company to issue you another card with a smaller limit to use on the trip. This way, if something happens, you don't have to give up your main CC for weeks while they straighten out the mess.
 - g. If you have an international cell phone, call the telephone company a few weeks in advanced to setup the phone internationally. If your phone has email capability, you may want to turn that off- if your phone automatically downloads email, you will get charged when on international roaming per kilobyte. If you happen to check email and get a few huge emails containing jokes or pictures, that may cost you a hundred or so dollars. Cingular charges \$.0197/kilobyte- you do the math on what it will cost. It won't be a joke when you open the bill. Most phones don't have the capability to stop email once the service is turned on- you have to call the cell phone provider and have that service temporarily turned off- they are not stupid, they know if you don't know any better, they make money...
 - h. Make sure you have adapters for chargables- their car outlets are not the same, so don't think you can just bring your car charger- it won't work.
 - i. Buy good electrical adaptors- the cheap ones will blow your stuff up and cost you more than if you just bought the good ones.
5. To fight the jetlag- here are a couple of suggestions:
- a. Several days before the flight, start waking up an hour earlier than usual and go to bed an hour earlier. I normally wake up at 5:30am so starting on the Tuesday and Wednesday before we leave, I wake up at 4:30 and go work out at the gym before work. Thursday and Friday, I get up at 3:30, and then I am already two hours into the 6 hour jetlag, which will make my recover time less than a day.
 - b. Another trick is to sleep going over and stay awake coming back. I do OTC sleeping pills to help me doze on the 7 hour flight over there, then I am fresh as a daisy when I get there.
6. Remember not to check any medication in your baggage- carry all medication on you or in your purse. Also, many Europe countries forbid importation of pseudophed of any amount. If you have to travel with it, put it in a small Tylenol bottle and leave the box at home. If anyone asks- it's Tylenol. If you are going to Japan or the Far East, you MUST have the prescription with you to bring in the medication. Check with the state department website for any bulletins or warnings.
7. Flasks- don't try to fill the metal flask and put it in your carry on- remember the liquid ban? they will make you go over to the water fountain and dump it in front of them. If you must travel with liquor- put the little travel bottles in the ziplock and have that as your carry on liquids. You can fit about 6 of them in a quart size ziplock.
8. Leave your white tennis shoes and fanny packs at home, as well as your "USA" apparel. Nothing screams "I am a stupid American" more than white tennis shoes and a t-shirt that says "NY Yankees". When in Rome- do as the romans do- dress nicely and try to at least say a few words in their language like excuse me, thank you, and please. The less you look like an American, the

less you will be treated like one. Europeans hate Americans. They will ignore you, diss you, and even spit on you (two years ago in Munich, some Germans spit on our group- not fun). Don't give them the chance. So, instead of jeans and tennies, try khakis and black crepe soled shoes- you will look nicer and it will give you some respect from the locals.

9. Tipping- there is no need to tip at most European restaurants. You can "round up", but it is not necessary to tip unless you got some really great service and you want to. Cabs- that is different- there you do the customary 15% tip.
10. Cell Phones (called "handies" in Europe)- some work, some don't- check with your phone manufacture and see if it will work and where you will have coverage. Coverage is usually very good throughout Europe, but it will depend on your carrier on exact locations. Other option- you can rent handies at the airport for the location you are going. Not sure of the fees.
11. Laptops- most laptops have power supplies that are good from 110-240 and 5—60hz. There is no need for a "power converter", but you will need to have a plug converter to plug it into the wall. Check the power supply label on your plug to ensure you can use it without the power converter. Same holds true for cell phone plugs, hair dryers, anything you plug in. It should be written on the plug or back of the appliance.
12. Wireless- Wireless is very popular overseas and there are a surprising number of "hot spots" available. If you have access to frequent flyer clubs, simply ask for the password at the desk and you should be able to use it free. Otherwise, turn on your laptop and the connection should come up. Most of the time, it will guide you to the sign up page where you will simply type in your CC number, and it will charge you by the minute in most cases. If you don't have a laptop, there are internet cafes available usually in the \$5/half hour range.
13. Clothes- if you have plans to buy a lot of clothes on the trip- here's a hint... bring clothes you plan on throwing out- this way, as your trip progresses, you simply toss your old clothes when they get dirty, and buy new ones, and viola! You don't have to pack extra bags to bring your wares home. This is especially nice when the exchange rate for the US\$ was good, but nowadays, it is not always the bargain, so you will need to be a savvy shopper these days. Bargaining is acceptable at the open markets and at some shops- so give it a try- you have nothing to lose by trying to bargain.
14. Bags- bags get lost, so while you are packing, make a list of the contents in case your luggage gets lost- this has come in very handy in the past for me when my bags went into the "lost sock bin" in the sky. Never did see them again, but it was a lot easier pulling out the inventory list than trying to remember what was in it...
15. Tour busses- The first thing I do when I get to a new city is take one of those stupid double decker tour guide busses that drive around the city showing you the sites. They are equipped with headphones that you put on that tell you what you are passing and they come in many languages. It is usually 2 hours, but what it will do is give you an idea what you want to see and how you want to spend your time for the next couple of days. It will also give you an idea where everything is in the city so you can come up with a gameplan to get everything in within a small amount of time.
16. Tour guides- Everyone laughs at the group toting behind the tour guide holding up some silly sign, but they are worth their weight in gold. Many times, these tour guides can get you into "tough to get into" exhibits or bypass long lines. They also know what and where all the good stuff is in the museum and when to get there before the crowds. In Cairo, 90% of the exhibits are unmarked. Without a tour guide, you would have no idea what you are looking at, and to find it in the exhibit book, it would take you days to find it- (they are constantly moving stuff around and don't have locations of items). Also, don't forget to tip- 15-20% is the norm.
17. Ski Lockers- don't bring your skis to your room- big no-no. All hotels have a "ski room" where you put your skis/poles/boots. Bring a lock so you can lock them up overnight.

Checklist for Faqowee Ski Trip

This is a list that I hope will help you pack for your ski trip. It has standard items and it's weird quirks. If you feel I left something out or can suggest how to lighten the load, please feel free to let me know. If you're new to the sport, let it give you some ideas. If you can't afford all this stuff, don't feel left out. Many of us have shopped Ski Swaps, Salvation Army, and Sonny's Surplus. Just slowly accumulate what you can and in the mean time, just make due. The idea is to enjoy the slopes, not become overly obsessed with the gear. Just don't push what you got beyond what you can handle and freeze to death, OK? This "checklist" has a lot of comments. Take what you like, and leave the rest, as they say. Hope this helps!

STRONG SUGGESTION – INSURANCE

Four years ago, a member got into an accident and did not have insurance. Not getting insurance cost him and his family \$60,000. Don't make that mistake. Anything can happen to anyone and accidents happen. Don't assume that just because you aren't skiing that something can't happen. Make sure you are covered somehow in case of emergency and you have emergency funds (cash in bank account you can get to via ATM or extended credit line on the CC) in case you have to have any medical attention.

The “Standards”

The Alps are at a higher elevation, so be forewarned, it is cold!!! When you get up to the top of the mountain, it will be very very cold. Dress appropriately- layer, layer, layer...

Long Underwear

- **Expedition Weight Capilene Zip Neck Top:**

I prefer to wear this against my skin because it is warmer and wicks moisture away from my skin. But, like polypropylene, it seems to hold body odor in the material even after washing. I've found soaking it in a concentrated baking soda solution solves this problem, as does a cup of ammonia in the wash does the same trick. I like the expedition weight because it is often just enough warmth under a gortex parka shell while being active. The zip neck color easily adjusts for venting heat. Chili's hot pants are an excellent product and they are inexpensive and don't smell quite as bad as other products.

- **Expedition Weight Capilene Pants:**

Expedition weight Polypropylene long underwear pants or winter insulated bicycling tights against the skin work pretty good under the ski pants, as does fleece tights. All dry quickly. I prefer the insulated bike tights since they are cool enough for skiing, they're wind and water resistant, suspenders clip to them, and they can be worn without anything else over them for when you get to après-ski and want to take off the ski pants to dance.

- **Sports Underwear:**

Think about it- you spend all that money on Polypropylene long underwear just to put on cotton briefs/panties next to your skin just so you can have a cold wet butt all day... Women- don't forget the bra's- they need to be non-cotton as well.

Gortex Ski pants (or similar material):

I don't use bibs because they are frequently too hot and require you to undress to use the restroom. But, they do stay up better after a "biff" and keep snow from going down your pants.

Suspenders:

Clip on ones can be shifted away from places where your pack's hip belt will press them against your waist. A disadvantage is the teeth can rag out material with use.

Socks:

I use ski socks because they are specially made for ski boots, are padded in the right places, and don't have seams in the wrong places. Always use just one pair of socks- NEVER TWO- EVER! It will make your feet both colder and will trap the moisture. This is one place I NEVER try to save money. Go for the good stuff- your feet will thank you. Remember- those boots will be on your feet all day, and crappy saggy socks you have to pull up every turn will ruin your day.

Parka:

A shell that is seam taped with no insulating liner. This way you can stay dry when skiing. It's got to have a good hood that can be cinched down when the rain or wet snow starts. Pockets to hold flask/snacks/water are real convenient so you don't have to use a pack. A powder waist is a must and helps keep in warmth and snow out without restricting leg motion. Make sure the zipper is easy to do with mittens/gloves on. Reinforced shoulders help keep the gortex membrane from wearing out from carrying skis across your shoulder.

Coat for Warmth under Parka:

Fleece jackets work great under a shell. It is light, warm, dries quickly, and is not very bulky. If your fleece jacket isn't really thick, you may need another layer.

Hats:

You will need a warm hat that covers the ears. Make sure that the pile isn't itchy and it dries fast. Some pile hats have chinstraps, which keep your hat on in wind. A peaked hat that dries fast is nice for keeping your hair dry in warm storms, and shaded from the sun in warmer weather. The peak will protect your shades somewhat from flying snow.

Mittens/Gloves:

Mittens are warmer, and believe it not, the snowboarder mittens are the best. They come up high on your jacket so you don't get chilly wrists, and they are easy on-off with the cinch tops. You can also look at mitten shells and liners that allow you to use layering on your hands. Lightweight gloves can be one set of liners under mitten shells, so you have some dexterity if you take off the shells without baring your fingers (silk is my favorite although medium weight wool or pile mitten liners are good too). If you are really equipped, you could carry a really thick pair of mitten liners that you "never" use in order to keep them dry and ready for extreme weather if everything else gets wet.

Neck Gaiter:

What is a neck gaiter? It could be a knit hat with the top cut off by a pair of scissors. Pull it down over your head and around your neck. It serves as a super scarf without the danger**. It also covers your jugulars and keeps the heat in. You can also pull it up over your mouth and nose just to the bottom of your goggles for face protection in strong wind, bitter cold, and driving, stinging snow. **I never use a scarf when skiing because it can get caught in the chair lift or get snagged in the trees when skiing (not a good thing)

Goggles:

The goggles are a pain to pack because they are fragile. Good ones cost \$\$\$ and you don't want to crush them. Cheap ones fog up and are useless. Goggles let you see when you're above the tree line in a blizzard. Shades will get fogged and ice up. Naked eyeballs will freeze closed by snow "globing" on the eyelashes. Wind driven snow will also be painful, so more than a neck gaiter, when you need goggles, you need them bad. Pack them carefully and when you need them, you'll have them. Also, don't forget anti-fog liquid. I like Cat Crap- that seems to work best for me, but we all have our own methods.

“Other Stuff”

- **Walkie-Talkie-** I would get the good ones because they have better range and better reception. Remember- Europe has hills a little bigger than Ski Liberty. The Fagowee club set's their channel on channel 6, station 9 (just remember 69). And- don't forget extra batteries!
- **Shades-** A must for a nice day- you may want to treat them with anti-fog before you put them on

- **Lip Balm**- Make sure you get the one with SPF-20 at a minimum. Nothing more unattractive than blistered lips when hitting on the opposite sex.
- **Sunblock**- there is nothing worse than going into that big meeting Monday morning with “goggle eyes”
- **Flask**- Need I say more....
- **Bandana**- if for nothing else but for cleaning glasses and wiping your perpetually runny nose
- **Water bottle**: Must stay hydrated. Must drink water. 1 quart per hour during exercise- minimum- especially with the altitude. Water does not equal beer either...
- **Snacks**- dried fruit works well. Some food bars freeze too easily and become inedible
- **Bathing Suit**- The hotel has a hottub- you won't want to miss out on the “shot ski” now would you?
- **Skis**- waxed and ready. May want to think about renting. Is all the hassle worth dragging the skis through 2 airports and 4 busses when you can rent the “latest-greatest” for less than \$100 for the week?
- **Ski Boots**- (forgotten them before)
- **Poles**
- **Fagowee Flag** for your ski poles
- **MONEY**- Credit Card-Travelers Checks- Money Card-
- **Info Card** - Name and room of hotel (in case you can't find your way back) and insurance information
- **Car Key**: to let you into your parked car when you get back to Dulles. Don't forget to write down the row and section where you parked. It would suck not remembering where you parked after a week of drinking and skiing.
- **Passport**- you may not want to come back, but eventually you will have to. Experience has shown- you will want to take this on your body wherever you go, Just in case you happen to wander out of the country on a whim or by accident. There are plans to cross the boarder and ski into Switzerland, so DON'T forget your passport!
- **Wallet**: In case you have to buy something or they need to identify you
- **Prescriptions**: If you have to take medicine with you, make sure that you pack enough for your trip because you may not be able to refill your prescription or get more while you are over there. Also make sure you pack enough in case the trip is extended because of weather delays, avalanches, or emergencies. **Do not put the medicine in a checked bag- put it in your carry-on or purse** because if your luggage is lost, you are SOL.
- **Medical Alert Tags/Insurance Card/Medical Information**
You should have your insurance card and personal information card with you at all times so in case you are hurt skiing, dancing, stumbling back to the hotel, drinking, etc, the doctors will have information on who to contact, allergies, next of kin, critical medical information, and insurance/hospitalization information. If you wear a Medical Alert Tag, please make sure you wear them at all times. Also, when skiing, make sure you have a Visa/MasterCard on you at all times. If they have to help you off the mountain, either by sled or helicopter, they will ask for it before they render services, so be prepared. You should also check what your policy covers before you leave so you have an idea of what you need to do in case you are injured.
- **Normal clothing and shoes**- Make sure you bring cloths to wear to dinner- nice shirt and slacks are appropriate for dinner- NOT JEANS! Europeans dress up a notch when they eat dinner so you don't want to look like the disrespectful “stupid American” now would you?
- **Camera-Film-Batteries**
- **Electric Current Converter**- Don't forget that Europe has those weird electrical outlets. If you are bringing a hair dryer or battery charger, you will need to pick up an outlet converter. Also, the 12v car outlets are different from US 12v car outlets, so don't go over there expecting to plug in that cell phone with your car adapter. Be careful what you use with those converters too- I blew up a few things already. Buy the best converter you can afford and be careful. I usually bring my old hairdryer that is on its last leg that I can afford to ditch if it blows.
- **Cat Tracks**: These are the plastic slip on's for your ski boots. You may be doing a lot of walking in your ski boots and you don't want to ruin the soles of your boots on cobblestones. Excessive sole wear will make your boots pop out of your bindings easier. Cost is \$12 at Ski Chalet.

- **Extra Luggage:** If you are planning on going shopping, you may want to throw in an extra bag so you can get all your goodies back home. But don't forget that you will have to pay for it when you get to the counter of the airline, so shipping your stuff home may be a better option.