

# British travellers urged to lighten their holiday load

Submitted by: TUI UK

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New study shows we're hopeless at packing and it's not just our backs breaking under the extra weight

As the schools break up this week, Brits will turn their thoughts to summer holidays (<http://www.thomson.co.uk/>), and start panicking on what on earth should be packed. As well as wanting to look good on holiday, many of us load ourselves up in preparation for any eventuality. A new study released today shows a quarter of us spend between two and three days packing our bags for our holiday, but once there only 16% actually use and wear everything they've packed. In fact, over a third of those asked, do not use 25% of stuff taken away\*.

This means not only do we struggle to lug around ridiculously heavy suitcases but our overstuffed luggage is now becoming a contributor to the pollution of the planet. In an effort to cope with so much unnecessary weight, aeroplanes are using more fuel and therefore creating more carbon dioxide. The impact is clear. If a third of holiday makers left that extra 25% of unused luggage at home it would save 7,537 tonnes\*\* of carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere each year. This equates to taking a staggering 2,216 cars family cars off the road each year.

But it seems most of us are completely unaware or unconcerned about the implications of our bulging suitcases. The study commissioned as part of Thomson's new sustainable tourism (<http://www.thomson.co.uk/editorial/sustainable-tourism/sustainable-tourism.html>) campaign Holidays Forever (<http://www.holidaysforever.co.uk/>) found that half of us have never considered the environment when packing and that's led to calls for British travellers to start taking into account the impact their heavy loads are having on the planet.

Television stylist and fashion guru Brix Smith-Start is supporting Thomson's Holidays Forever (<http://www.holidaysforever.co.uk/>) packing campaign and says: "Everyone wants to look fabulous when they are on holiday, yet too many of us don't think about what outfits we'll actually want to wear and so we end up with clothes that won't see the light of day once we are away. As this weekend will be one of the busiest weekends for travelling overseas, I'm providing travellers with some top tips on how to make their luggage more green and advising how holiday makers can bring fewer items, but still look great."

Jane Ashton, Head of Sustainable Development for Thomson says: "We are thrilled to be working with Brix in encouraging our customers to think more wisely when packing and leave that unutilised luggage at home. The weight of the aeroplane makes a huge difference in how much fuel is needed to fly and how much carbon dioxide waste gets released into the atmosphere. This is why one of the twenty commitments we have set ourselves through our Holidays Forever (<http://www.holidaysforever.co.uk/>) campaign is to reduce the weight of our aircraft in order to save fuel. Things like using paint which is 55kg lighter per aircraft and using lighter catering equipment. Customers can also help us on this journey by taking the simple step of thinking of the environment when packing their suitcase. Together we can make our holidays more sustainable and drive real change."

## Brix's top tips for packing

- Check the weather before you travel

If the weather forecast is dry and sunny throughout the time you are away then you are unlikely to need more than one warm jumper and one pair of jeans. Jeans and jumpers are heavy clothes so wear them on the flight. Bring an umbrella just in case, but leave your rain coat at home!

- Think about the kind of holiday you are going to have

If you love active adventure then by all means bring your hiking boots and heavy duty combat trousers to protect your legs from scrapes. However if you are just going to lie by the beach and possibly do some sightseeing then leave your boots behind, unpack your gym kit and just bring a pair of plimsolls or shoes that you'll be comfortable walking around in.

- Plan what shoes you'll wear

Shoes weigh a lot, and yet over 10% of those asked packed five or more pairs! On holiday you don't need to match your shoes with every dress instead bring a pair of sparkly flat flip flops or sandals, and a pair of wedges or neutral high heel sandals, which will go with everything. You then just need a pair of flip flops for the beach and some plimsolls for walking.

- Bring a couple of statement items

A fabulous maxi-dress, an original kaftan or a statement necklace will be all you need to get you from looking chic during the day to looking glamorous at night. Kaftans and maxi-dresses are so easy to dress up or down and a bright print will make you really stand out and feel confident while you are away.

- Don't bring a towel

Towels are heavy, get smelly when damp and take up a lot of room in your case. A lot of beach hotels provide beach towels and if yours doesn't you can easily pick up a cheap one once you are away or just use your sarong.

- Get a great sarong

A good quality sarong can be used as a beach dress, a cover up, a sun protector for babies, a bag, a head scarf or as I said before instead of a beach towel. Get one that you love so that you'll get the best use out of it.

- Bring accessories that will work hard

Strings of beads that can be worn as bracelets or necklaces, chunky earrings and necklaces that can smarten up a beach dress and flower corsages that can jazz up a plain boob tube or can be pinned to your sun hat – accessories should be the key to your summer wardrobe. They are small and will ensure that your outfits can look different each time you wear them.

- Cut down on toiletries

Do you need hair spray, mousse, serum, gel, body lotion, body oil, after sun etc? – probably not. In fact if you are anything like me your toiletries bag will be the heaviest thing in your suitcase. Try and cut down by bringing mini versions of your products and deciding what you actually need to get you through the day. Remember you'll probably spend less time getting ready at night as it will be too hot

for blow dries and straightening sessions. Also if you are going away with the girls, choose who will bring what. You don't need four bottles of shampoo between four of you!

- White pants

White shorts, white three quarter length trousers, white jeans, white linen trousers any of the above will work well on holiday as with the right top they look so glamorous. Find a pair that make you look great and wear them with everything.

- Bring fun jewellery on holiday

Holidays are not the place for diamonds and pearls. If you lost something valuable when you were away you'd be devastated and it is more likely to happen when you are moving around. Instead bring fun, bright, cheap jewellery that will dress up your outfits and look fabulous!

\*The packing survey had 932 national respondents and was carried out by Thomson and First Choice's Customer Insight team

\*\* Based on 1/3 of Thomson's airline, Thomson Airways passengers packing 25% less luggage. Fuel and carbon calculations based on popular mid haul route flying 223,724 hours.

Editor's Notes:

Holidays Forever (<http://www.holidaysforever.co.uk/>) - Thomson and First Choice unveiled their new joint Holidays Forever campaign at the end of June. It brings together all their sustainable tourism (<http://www.thomson.co.uk/editorial/sustainable-tourism/sustainable-tourism.html>) initiatives under one clear and stylish umbrella and aims to get customers on board supporting sustainable tourism.

Holidays Forever encompasses 20 sustainable commitments that Thomson and First Choice have pledged to achieve. These include reducing the carbon emissions from the TUI Travel airlines by 6% by 2014, working towards having all of its suppliers Travelife-awarded by 2014 and aiming to recycle approximately 30% of the cans it hands out onboard its flights, equating to 13 tonnes of aluminium in the next year.

Click here

(<http://communicationcentre.thomson.co.uk/2010/06/29/new-holidays-forever-brand-outlines-thomson-and-first-choice%e2%8>) to find out more.

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