

Just in case

Men's Health Magazine

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Do you travel with the bare essentials or do you take the lot, including the kitchen sink? If you're a kitchen sinker, read on ...

For most of us, it's the same old story: lugging along a heavy suitcase and then not even wearing half of what you've packed – all of which leaves you wondering whether holiday and business trips are as strenuous as your gym training.

Travelling should be fun and enjoyable – whether you're on a quick business trip to the Cape or a long holiday overseas. And what really helps to make it so, says leading fashion and image consultant Chata Romano, is not having to worry about things like hunting for a porter, paying excess baggage charges, or stretching your arms to your knees by staggering out to the aircraft with mega-kilo hand luggage.

Says Chata "Most people have three words when packing – 'Just in case!' " She stresses the importance of having a plan when packing, irrespective of what trip you are taking – business, leisure, summer, winter or any of these combinations.

Visualise what you'll need on your trip – for morning, afternoon and evening. By using some clear mixing and matching techniques, you can pack 21 items to achieve 63 completely different outfits!

The Golden Rule for packing should be that each item you choose must go with at least three others in your suitcase, so that from the start you're thinking about how you can mix and match them.

And take a selection of colors that suit you, cautions Chata. Don't take three black jackets – even if they're all different shades, you'll still look the same every day. "Rather work with the minimum to achieve the maximum", she says.

By combining correctly, you'll be able to go to a lunch, a business meeting, a movie, a smart restaurant or shopping and still look suitably dressed for every occasion.

Chata treats us with the perfect packing capsule for a 10-day combination business and leisure trip:

4 Jackets

2 smart & 2 casual

- Smart jacket - basic color
- Smart jacket - warm color
- Casual jacket - denim
- Casual jacket - leather

12 Shirts

6 smart & 6 casual

- 4 white shirts
- 4 striped shirts
- 4 color shirts (blue, mauve, etc)

5 Bottoms

3 smart & 2 casual

- 2 smart pants (tailored pants)
- 2 casual / casual pants (chinos)
- 1 casual pant (jeans)

Extras

Gym wear - tracksuit

Sweatshirt or jersey

Accessories

5 Shoes: 3 smart & 2 casual

2 Belts: 1 smart & 1 casual

Bon voyage!

