



BBYO Passport to the World
Pre-Trip Prep Info

Trek West USA



SUMMER 2011



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I. ABOUT YOUR TRIP GROUP

GROUP PLACEMENT & ROOMING

Each BBYO Passport group forms its own traveling community. The size of each group varies by trip date, and we will release exact group sizes towards the end of May. In the meantime, we encourage you to sign-up for your trip-specific Facebook group. If you are not sure where to find your Facebook group, please contact us directly, and we will re-send the invitation.

In terms of the staffing, the Trek West USA group is accompanied by two North American staffers, a professional guide, and a bus driver. Trip staff names are posted online to your Passport registration account about 4-6 weeks prior to the start of the program, and you can expect to receive a phone call from your staff to personally welcome you in the weeks leading up to the trip.

ROOMING CONFIGURATIONS

Trek West USA uses a variety of hotels, lodges, and dormitories for accommodations. At most locations, rooming is based on three participants per room, and occasionally it is based on four participants per room, always in individual beds, and with a private bathroom in every room. Each



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time we move to a new overnight location, we rotate the rooming assignments to provide a better opportunity to get to know one another better and build group bonds.

TRAVELING ON A GROUP PROGRAM

By registering for a BBYO Passport experience you are making a commitment to fully participate in a group travel program with a demanding schedule. Each day is packed with touring, activities, and programming. In order to ensure the success of the experience for everyone, we expect you to stay on the schedule, stay with the group at all times, and contribute to the positive group dynamics of your traveling community. Although the program is intensive and has necessary limitations on free time, there is plenty of room for personal exploration, shopping, and relaxation.

FORMAL PROGRAM ITINERARY

Confirmed itineraries for each trip group with all relevant hotel contact information will be posted online and emailed to you approximately four weeks prior to your departure date. Please note that even the confirmed itineraries will be subject to some change on the ground. We will do our best to notify parents and participants in advance if changes are necessary.

OPTIONAL TRIP CONNECTIONS

Participants on Trek West USA have the option of adding a 3-week experience in Israel or a 2-week experience in Italy or Costa Rica. The exact dates and details vary by trip, and you can learn more at <http://passport.bbyo.org/destinations/compare/> or by contacting us directly. If you are interested in adding on an Israel or Europe experience, please let us know no later than May 7, 2011 as space will be limited.

II. FLIGHTS & TRAVEL

We have already distributed detailed instructions for meeting the group in Phoenix and returning from San Francisco. This information is also posted online as part of your BBYO Passport registration account at (login @ <https://passport.bbyo.org/destinations/tripbuilder/>). Please contact us directly should you need help access the document or should you wish us to re-send it to you.

III. COMMUNICATIONS ON THE TRIP

BRINGING A CELL PHONE

Participants are encouraged to bring a cell phone on the program. However, please keep in mind that BBYO Passport program staff regards cell phone use on the program as a privilege. Participants will NOT be allowed to use their phones during group programming time. Participants must exercise discretion when using the phones (i.e. respect sleeping roommates, etc.). If necessary, program staff reserves the right to suspend or even terminate a cell phone rental if usage privileges are abused.



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Important Note for Participants on Connected Experiences

If you are on a connected trip that starts with Trek West USA and ends in Israel or Europe, a cell phone rental is available through Israel Phones/Global Cellular (www.israelphones.com/bbyo.htm). If you are connecting to Europe, you will need to have the phone mailed to you before departing for Costa Rica. If you are connecting to Israel, the phone will be hand-delivered on arrival in Tel Aviv. If you are on a connected trip that starts with Trek West USA and ends in Costa Rica, a cell phone rental service is available through Costa Rica Cellular Connection. Rental rates and order form available at: http://passport.bbyo.org/CostaRica_CellPhonePlan.pdf

FRIENDS & FAMILY UPDATES DURING THE TRIP

BBYO Passport uses “Smug Mug” to post pictures for each trip group during the summer. Anyone can access the pictures online at <http://bbyopassport.smugmug.com/> during the trip. Parents of participants automatically receive email notifications whenever new pictures are posted or whenever we have an update to share from trip. Additional friends and family members can sign-up to receive these same updates by filling out a short online form at this link: <http://passport.bbyo.org/enrolled/group/signup>

HOW AND WHEN TO CALL

For parents and friends who wish to contact a participant during the trip, keep in mind that part of the trip is in the Pacific Time Zone (California & Nevada), and part of the trip is in the Mountain Time Zone (Utah & Arizona). Our groups usually return to the hotel around 8:00pm each evening, and this is the best time to call.

EMAIL & INTERNET ACCESS

A handful of the hotels, dormitories and lodges that we stay at will have internet stations available which participants are welcome to use during free time – usually for an additional fee. However, often there are only one or two such stations available, and many eager customers. It is best not to expect participants to have online access during the program. We strongly suggest not bringing a laptop on the program or any expensive communication devices as the risk of theft or damage is very high.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The BBYO Passport emergency phone number is 1-216-832-8059, and is handled by the Sr. Program Director, Lane Schlessel. The emergency phone number applies to ALL trips, regardless of location. The emergency number is ONLY meant for use in the event of a true emergency. To help alleviate any confusion about what is or is not an emergency, we have provided a few examples below:

Emergency Situations

- Family health emergency which requires immediate booking of a return flight home
- Urgent medical or safety situation



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Non-Emergency Situations

- Concerns about child's fatigue or social adjustment
- Requests for flight extensions
- Fax confirmation requests
- Request for children to be featured in online photos
- Security concerns

Please keep in mind that all non-emergency issues should be channeled only through the North American office. The BBYO Passport office in North America will be open throughout the summer from 9:00am EDT to 5:00pm EDT from Monday through Friday. If you have a question or wish to express any kind of general concern, feel free to call 1-800-698-1002 or e-mail us at info@passport2theworld.org. Calls and emails will always be returned promptly.

IV. MONEY ON THE TRIP

BRINGING EXTRA SPENDING MONEY

Sleeping accommodations, all meals, in-country transportation, and all program activities are covered by the core program fees. The only spending that is your responsibility will be snacks, bottled water, souvenirs, gifts, hotel internet usage and laundry service. We estimate that \$100/week is more than sufficient to cover all such expenses. There are a number of ways to bring money on the trip:

A) Pre-Paid Debit Cards – Payoneer

Payoneer provides a pre-paid debit card which will be mailed to you at home prior to the start of the program. Through the use of Payoneer, participants will have the ability to withdraw funds from ATMs as well as charge items to the card wherever Mastercard is accepted. Parents can load money to the card through Payoneer's website, and can monitor/replenish the account online as necessary. Additional advantages of Payoneer are:

- No need to travel with large amounts of cash and minimal interference with the program logistics – no need to go to a bank to exchange cash and/or travelers checks.
- Trip staff carry spare cards which can be easily activated with the current balance of funds if the original card is lost
- An umbrella organization that ensures the money – MasterCard® means that there is no personal liability for unauthorized purchases. Should unauthorized purchases be made, a call to Payoneer's customer support initiates the chargeback process from MasterCard®.
- Simple fee structure (detailed on Payoneer website)

If you plan to use a Payoneer card, be sure to complete the order within 30 days of the program start.



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To sign-up, go to this link and follow the online steps at www.teentraveldebitcard.com

B) Other ATM / Credit Cards

You may also choose to use your personal ATM card or credit card abroad. If your ATM card has a Visa or MasterCard logo imprint, there should not be problem withdrawing money. Other ATM network cards may not work universally.

GRATUITIES FOR THE GUIDE & DRIVER

Tipping the guides and drivers is encouraged. In addition to being customary, you will soon realize that the professional in-country staff is working round-the-clock to ensure the success of the experience. Gratuities are a small way to say thanks. Please bring an envelope containing tip money to the airport – we suggest \$100. The North America trip staff will collect this money at the start of the trip and it will be held onto for safekeeping and distribution at the end of the program. It is not customary to tip the North American trip staff.

NOTE: If you are taking part in a connected experience, we suggest bringing \$150 for staff gratuities

V. PACKING FOR THE TRIP

LUGGAGE ADVICE

Packing for a traveling based program can be a challenge. On the one hand, you do not want to pack too many things or else you will get weighed down schlepping your heavy luggage on/off the bus and to/from your hotel room. On the other hand, laundry is only available sporadically, so you definitely do not want to pack too little either.

- We highly recommend that you only bring one main piece of luggage to check onto the plane (duffel bags and rolling suitcases work best) and one full size carry-on bag or rolling suitcase.
- Be sure to bring at least one change of clothes, toiletries, and any prescription medicine in your carry-on bag in the unlikely event that your checked luggage gets delayed.
- BBYO Passport luggage tags will be distributed on arrival. Make sure to fill in your name, address, home telephone number, and email address...and fix it to your luggage for the duration of the program.
- In addition to the luggage tag, it is also a smart idea to attach some kind of easy identifier such as a colored ribbon to your checked luggage as well.
- BBYO Passport will be providing a light-weight draw-string backpack which participants will receive on arrival. This backpack is ideal way to store small items and water while we are traveling each day.



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- Finally, before packing, please review the updated restrictions listed by the TSA:
www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm

ABOUT THE WEATHER

When deciding what to bring on the trip, the most important thing to keep in mind is the weather. The weather in the American West in the summer is typically hot and generally dry. However, there are some things to keep in mind...

- The weather in San Francisco may be in the 60's and even 50's – much colder than you expect
- The weather in Tahoe and Yosemite mountains can also be cool, especially in the evenings
- The weather in/around Las Vegas and Arizona is regularly in the 90's and may reach the 100's
- Rain is not expected along the coast in California but possible elsewhere on the trip

GENERAL PACKING TIPS

- The clothing that you pack should be light weight and comfortable in hot temperatures – and easily hand washed for repeat use between scheduled laundry pick-ups.
- Whenever we plan to be outside for an extended period of time, participants will be **required** to wear a hat, a shirt with sleeves, and sunscreen. You will also be required to carry sufficient water.
- Because the evenings can turn cool quickly, and we will not always be able to return to the hotel to change before an evening activity, it's important to always bring a day-pack with you on the bus with a windbreaker, long-sleeved shirt, or light sweater.
- Pack comfortable walking shoes – or even better – light weight hiking shoes. We will be doing a lot of walking and hiking, and having comfortable shoes will go a long way. Wearing flip flops is fine for down time, but not when we are on the move. While athletic sandals like Texas or Chacos are fine most days, they are NOT appropriate for days when we have hikes on the itinerary.
- Finally, to create a more special Shabbat atmosphere, it is tradition to wear clothing on Friday nights and Saturday days that is nicer than what we wear the rest of the week. Of course, this is a casual program, so we are talking about nothing more than “casual dressy” clothing.

SAMPLE PACKING LIST

Everyone travels differently, and while we do not require that you follow this list exactly, please use it as a guideline for deciding what to pack.

What we highly recommend

- 7-10 t-shirts
- 4 pairs of shorts



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- 2 pairs of jeans or khakis
- 10 pairs of underwear & socks
- 1 long sleeve shirts
- 1 windbreaker or lightweight sweater/sweatshirt
- 2-3 bathing suits
- 1 beach towel
- 1-2 nicer outfits for Shabbat and special occasions
(*khakis and polo shirts or casual button-down shirts for boys; skirts & blouses, casual dresses or nice slacks for girls*)
- 1 pair of sneakers/walking shoes/athletic sandals for touring and outdoors activities
- 1 pair of water shoes
- 1 hat for protection from the sun (no visors)
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)
- Toiletry bag with enough of what you need for the whole trip (including prescription medications)
- Travel-side shampoo/conditioner (available at most hotels, but best to have a back-up)
- Photocopy of passport (inside cover page with photo/passport numbers)
- Extra copy of any prescriptions in case medicine is lost during trip
- Small flashlight
- Digital camera*
- Small travel umbrella

What we suggest

- Sunglasses
- Travel pouch for carrying passport copy, wallet, etc. when we are on the move
- Bug spray
- Small bottle of Woolite and stain remover for personal washing in between scheduled laundry days
- Frisbees, cards, etc.
- MP3 player*
- Camelback water carrying device (or similar) – Recommending 3-liter/100 oz variety
- Travel journal
- Various sized zip lock bags for holding valuables on water hikes or in wet clothing
- Electric converter & adapter for anything that needs to be plugged in
- Kippah for Shabbat (traditional for males)

What we do not recommend

- Linens and pillows
- Luggage that is not easily carried



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- Expensive jewelry or other valuables
- Heavy backpack
- Heavy hiking boots
- Laptop or expensive electronics

**While we encourage you to bring an MP3 player and basic digital camera, please remember to bring appropriate electricity converting devices so that you do not “fry” your devices. Also please pay special attention to keeping such valuable items in a safe place at all times. BBYO Passport and its tour providing partners are not responsible for any lost or stolen items. Participants are responsible for their possessions and valuables at all times.*

LAUNDRY ON THE TRIP

Laundry service will be available periodically during the program (approximately once per 7-10 days). Laundry is done on an individual basis by participants. Participants can expect to pay approximately \$5 per load. Participants should be sure to label clothing in advance that will be sent to the laundry service. BBYO Passport and its tour providing partners are not responsible for any clothing lost or damaged by the laundry service.

VI. MEDICAL & TRAVEL INSURANCE

ABOUT COVERAGE DURING THE TRIP

BBYO Passport program fees include basic medical insurance that covers treatment and medication for of any non pre-existing medical conditions. What this means is that the policy covers treatment for issues like a stomach bug, a sprained ankle, or dehydration without any out-of-pocket expenses or paperwork. The policy does not cover any medical conditions for which a participant is already being treated for or for which treatment has been received in the past. This exclusion rule also applies to any psychological care as well as care for any medical matter stemming from a pre-existing condition. For this reason, participants are required to come on the program with their own medical insurance policy which includes coverage for short term travel throughout the United States. **In the event that a participant needs to be treated for a pre-existing condition during the program, the parents of the participant will be solely responsible for any associated costs.**

TRAVELERS'S INSURANCE

We encourage all Passport participants to purchase travelers insurance in advance of the program. Travel insurance is valuable for situations such as:

- Last minute cancellation due to personal illness or family illness. Note: Some policies also allow for any-reason cancellation coverage.
- Cancellation of connecting flight due to weather delays, etc.



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- Medical insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions. Note: Passport programs do not cover pre-existing conditions
- Lost luggage and other services

BBYO Passport recommends Travel Insured International as a reputable provider of travel insurance. A negotiated group discount policy is available to BBYO Passport participants. To learn more and purchase insurance, go to: <http://passport.bbyo.org/enrolled/insurance/>

VII. GENERAL PRE-TRIP TIPS

FREE TIME

Each BBYO Passport program is relatively short, and you will find that each day is jam-packed with must-see's and must-do's. Typically, free time during the day is limited and is allowed only in certain areas that are deemed safe.

KASHRUT & SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

All meals provided by the program are either kosher or vegetarian. Additionally, some meals in will be provided according to the “*pizur*” system (aka – allowance for purchasing your own meal at a local eatery), and you are encouraged, but not required, to purchase food that is consistent with the program’s kashrut standards. Most meals on Shabbat will be kosher. People with special dietary situations (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian, etc.) should contact us in advance to make proper arrangements during the program.

MEDICATION AND CONTACT LENSES

If you are taking prescribed medication, bring enough for the duration of the program as well as an extra written prescription record in case you misplace/lose your medicine. Take all medication on the plane with you in your hand luggage. Do NOT pack any medication with your checked-in luggage. The same is true for contact lenses. Be sure to check TSA’s restrictions on traveling with medication and liquids at: <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>. Participants are responsible for taking their own medication during the trip. Keep in mind that while staff has a list of all medications taken by participants, staff members will not legally be allowed to assist in administering any medication for participants. If you have special requests (i.e. refrigeration requirements), please note them on your health forms and feel free to contact the office as well to confirm. Finally, please be advised that participants are never allowed to share, dispense, or sell medication. Violation of this policy is grounds for program dismissal.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

If you are musically inclined and willing to bring your instrument (with all of the hassle and risks involved in flying with it), by all means, feel free to do so. There will be plenty of occasions to show



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off your skills. Please just remember that as with any other valuable item, bringing an instrument on the program is done at your own risk of loss or damage.

SHABBAT PROGRAMMING

Shabbat is a special time on the BBYO Passport program. Since there is no driving on Shabbat, it is our best chance to sit back as a group and reflect on the prior week's activities. Friday nights and Saturdays will include plenty of time for informal discussions and some much needed rest. Where ever possible, we try to include visits to local synagogues to give you a flavor of how Judaism is observed in different parts of the world. Some times our best or only option is a traditional orthodox service. Even if it is not what you are accustomed to, it is an opportunity for a rich cultural experience and can be a very meaningful way to celebrate Shabbat.

The BBYO Passport program also provides a number of alternative options for the celebration of Shabbat, and participants are encouraged to take a leadership role in planning these programs. As a general rule, nothing in the BBYO Passport program will oblige or encourage participants to violate the rules of Shabbat. At the same time, what participants do during non-programmed Shabbat time is a personal decision so long as it is within the overall rules of the program. We only ask that participants be mindful and considerate of the various levels of religious practice of everyone around them. It is very important that everyone feel comfortable on Shabbat regardless of Jewish background.

VALUABLES

Theft is not uncommon in any place where a large number of tourists congregate, and there have been some instances in the past. Accordingly, we encourage you to leave items of value at home and to carefully keep track of anything valuable that you do bring on the program. As a general rule, hotel rooms should always remain locked. However, even a locked hotel room should not be considered a secure area unless a locked safe is available. If it is possible to bring a locking suitcase*, we recommend it, although it is not a solution by itself. Participant property is the sole responsibility of the participant. *NOTE: If you do bring a suitcase that locks, remember not to lock it for the flight unless it is a TSA friendly lock!*

WATER

Proper hydration is essential during a trip of this nature. Expect to be drinking at least two large bottles of water a day (more in the desert!). You can expect that the staff will be constantly reminding you to drink, drink, drink!! But ultimately you must take this responsibility on your own shoulders. If you would like to get fancy, you can always bring a Camelback type hydration device. If you do, make sure it is the kind that can hold at least two full liters of water. Participants will not be allowed off the bus without full water bottles!



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VIII. PROGRAM RULES & EXPECTATIONS

As a Jewish leadership organization, BBYO sets a high standard and expects a great degree of self-discipline. While our staff is professionally trained to deal with issues relating to individuals and to the group as a whole, please remember that we also place trust and responsibility on the shoulders of our participants. By signing the program waiver form each teen has agreed to abide by the BBYO Code of Conduct, which we encourage teens and parents to review prior to the start of the program at <http://passport.bbyo.org/BBYOCODE.pdf>. These rules go into effect at the airport prior to the departure of the group flight and extend throughout the program, including the Host Family Weekend.

For the sake of creating safe and successful program experience, BBYO Passport has established a series of rules and disciplinary guidelines. Each disciplinary situation is evaluated individually, but as a general rule, infractions related to physical violence, drugs/controlled substances, alcohol, and leaving the group without authorization are dealt with on a zero-tolerance basis. A single infraction will result in immediate separation from the group and dismissal from the program. BBYO Passport staff reserves the sole right to make these decisions, and there may also be further consequences for BBYO members within their local regions after returning to North America. In the event of a program dismissal, the parents of a dismissed participant will be solely responsible for all associated fees, including the cost of special transportation to the airport, a flight chaperone if necessary, or an airline change fee. No portion of the program fees will be refunded. Given the international nature of the program, the consequences of dismissal are extremely serious, very embarrassing, costly, and disruptive to the rest of the group.

It is our sincere hope that no one will need to be expelled from a BBYO Passport program this summer, and accordingly, we encourage parents and teens to discuss this matter carefully together before the start of the program.

There is also a range of other behavioral matters which are dealt with on the program through a series of steps -- which may involve a staff-teen conversation, a formal warning, loss of free time or other privileges, program probation, and ultimately dismissal. Again, BBYO Passport staff reserves the sole right to make decisions related to behavioral conduct and disciplinary consequences. Any specific follow-on questions related to disciplinary rules and regulations should be directed to the BBYO Passport's Sr. Program Director, Lane Schlessel (lane@passport2theworld.org).

The following is a very partial list of our expectations for teen behavior on the program:

Curfew & Rooming Rules

To fully appreciate the program, a good night sleep is essential. A curfew will be enforced at the discretion of trip staff. Participants are expected to abide by these curfew rules. Hotel rooms are



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assigned on a single-gender basis, and participants of the opposite sex are not allowed to be in the same hotel room at any time during the program.

Drugs & Alcohol

Possession, consumption, and/or purchase of drugs and/or alcohol will not be tolerated on any BBYO Passport program and will result in immediate dismissal. Moreover, it is the policy of BBYO Passport to allow the police and justice departments of the respective countries visited to prosecute when infractions have occurred without intervention by BBYO Passport.

NOTE: BBYO Passport staff reserves the right to administer a breathalyzer test and/or search any participant's belongings or room at any time and for any reason during the course of the trip.

Leaving the Program without Authorization

As part of our general approach to safety and security, participants on all BBYO Passport programs are not allowed to leave the supervision of the program at any time. There will be occasions for limited free time with travel buddies in specific areas that are deemed secure by program staff. However, the general rule is that there is no leaving the program at any time and for any reason whatsoever during the day or at night. Leaving the program without specific staff authorization is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Smoking

BBYO Passport policy does not allow for smoking of any kind by participants regardless of age – including purchasing and/or possession. This policy includes water pipes (i.e. hookah pipes). The purchase or possession of smoking paraphernalia is not allowed on the program for any reason and will result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

Tattooing & Piercing

Such activities are forbidden during the program, including during the Host Family Weekend. Tattooing and piercing can be unsafe in foreign countries, and any resulting medical complications would not be covered under the program medical insurance policy. Any piercings or tattoos that are acquired during the trip will result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

Respect for Property

It is the expectation of BBYO Passport that participants will behave responsibly and with respect regarding belongings and property throughout the program. Should property be damaged or defaced by a fellow participant, those responsible will be held accountable for payment of damages.

Social Cohesion

BBYO Passport treats each trip as an individual traveling community. We believe in the unique power of a group experience as opposed to a collection of individual experiences. As a member of a traveling community, each participant has a responsibility to treat his/her fellow participants with



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respect and decency. Our aim is to create an atmosphere where everyone on the program is made to feel welcomed and comfortable, and each participant plays a role in making this possible.

Timeliness & Cooperation with Program Staff

Behind the scenes of each BBYO Passport program is a complicated logistical plan which requires us to keep to an exact schedule. Staying on schedule requires the cooperation of every participant. It means waking up in the morning on time, not wandering from the group, and respecting the overall schedule of the program. The consequence of being late is that elements of the program will be cancelled. It is our goal to share as much of the world with you as we can, and we need every participant's cooperation to enable the program to be fully experienced.

Cell Phone & Communication Device Use

BBYO Passport program staff regards the use of a cell phone or any communications device on the program to be a privilege. Participants will NOT be allowed to use their phones/devices during group programming time. Participants must exercise discretion when using the phones (i.e. respect sleeping roommates, etc.). If necessary, program staff reserves the right to suspend or even terminate a cell phone rental if usage privileges are abused.