



DECOR TOURS  
*Provence*

# PROVENCE DISPATCH

*No. 1: Pack It Up!*

We don't claim to be packing specialists, but we have learned a few things over the years! We hope some of these suggestions help...and if you are a carry-on only person, we can only say we wish we had your skills!

## *Suitcase Space Management*



**Susan:** "I use compression packing cubes whenever I travel. Everything is rolled and because Deb & I are typically sharing a room, I can just pull out my packs for most items, and hang others. There are many options on Amazon, but I'm currently using [these](#) along with [this set from Gonex](#) both of which have been great."

**Deb:** "I prefer [this type of clear travel compression bag](#), no vacuum required. You'll be amazed (or dismayed) at how much you can fit in your suitcase! I try to put two potential outfits together in a bag, so I can pull one bag out and (hopefully!) be ready to go without too much shuffling through my suitcase."

**Susan:** “I finally traded in my ratty zip-lock baggies for sets of [these sturdy, clear TSA-approved bags](#). As I’m not a “decanter” in terms of TSA liquid requirements, my favorites are in my checked luggage. But I am a hand lotion, lip balm, mouthwash, face moisturizer, etc. person while in flight. The sturdier shape holds up better in a carry-on without getting lost, and it’s so much easier to see what’s inside.

Plus for checked luggage, they’re big enough for hair accessories in another one, skin care in a third, etc. but obviously compact enough to insure I don’t overpack!”





## *Liquid Issues*

**Deb & Susan:** “We never travel without coming back with some wine, olive oil, or other tasty treats. We first encountered [these bubble bottle wraps years ago](#) and now, each trip, we make sure to pack some, so they can come back filled with deliciousness. But a friend recently recommended [these](#), so we’re going to give them a try.

We’ve also added some new items to our assortment, as they take up so little room and make a big difference: [Food-safe silicone bottle stoppers](#): useful for that not-quite-finished bottle (even for sparkling wine) and in case any shipped liquid item caps stop working. And [silicone bottle covers](#): useful for make-up, for that jar of mustard you opened but still want to ship home, etc. There are lots of options for these online and they are super-stretchy, enough to fit wider jars.



# Weight Management

**Deb & Susan:** "Given that our return luggage is typically filled with all types of treasures, a travel scale is an absolute must. You don't want to be that person scrambling at check-in to redo your luggage in order to make weight.

Susan has had a version of this one for years, while Deb upgraded to a sleeker version.

Important note: European airlines are sticklers on weight and luggage size. Most airlines only allow 12 kg (26.4 lb) for both your carryon and personal item. They weigh them together and will send you back to check (and pay) if the combined weight of those two items are above the stated limit.



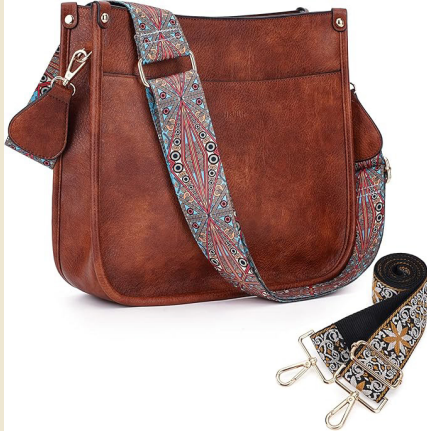
## *Jewelry Protection*



**Deb:** "I admit to being a pretty haphazard packer when it comes to jewelry and know I could benefit from a jewelry organizer. I'm considering one of these [pretty velvet cases](#) for rings and smaller items, but would need or [one of these options](#) for my larger items, but I most likely need this one, which has a [bit more capacity.](#)"



## *Bags, Totes, & Wallets*



**Deb & Susan:** “Cross-body bags are a must when traveling, both to deter pick-pocketing and to be more hands-free when visiting ateliers, museums, etc. Susan has used [a version of this bag for a couple of years](#), but recently switched to [this waxed canvas tote](#), which is also available in a taller version, and a slightly larger, more horizontal size. She also replaced the somewhat narrow strap for [a wider one](#), with coordinating antique bronze hardware.

If you're more of a nylon tote person, [this option from Travelon](#) is always highly recommended. And we also recommend purchasing [an RFID wallet](#), or some blocking cards to add to your current wallet.”



## *Tech Issues*

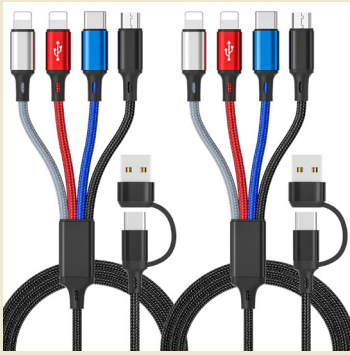


**Deb & Susan:** “Even if you’re not traveling with a laptop, or earbud/earphones, you’ll still need to wrangle chargers, adapters, cords, etc. [A dedicated electronics organizer isn’t a necessity, but we can’t deny it’s helpful!](#)”

And, in terms of the items you should fill that with: you’ll need [an international adapter/converter](#), [a portable charger or two](#), your various charger cords, and, if your using a corded portable charger, [a short charger cord](#) that definitely works with your phone. Be sure to check this before you leave!

A note on portable chargers: You’ll definitely want to pack some of these. And both of us have made the switch to [magnetic chargers](#). The newer model magnetic chargers have gotten faster, slimmer, lighter, less prone to slipping off your phone while in your purse, and generate less heat than earlier models. A couple of our recents favorites can be found [here](#), [here](#), and, while not a magnetic charge, [we like this mini plug-in one](#) as well. See note on next page regarding these!





## *Tech Issues*

Also, seeing as many connections have switched or are switching to using USB C and/or micro USB, multi-head cables, [like these](#), are a must, as are a pack of these [USB adapter heads](#), which have definitely come in handy!



We'd also recommend picking up [a set of USB data blockers](#), which can help protect against malware installation and data theft when using open-access USB charging stations at airports, airlines, hotels, cafés, etc. They allow power to flow while restricting unwanted data transfer.

### **Susan Notes:**

- While data blockers are great, your best protection is to carry a personal power bank, use your own wall charger in a standard outlet, or use an authorized USB charger.
- Recently airlines have been cracking down on portable chargers. These are not allowed in checked baggage, and, as a carry-on, not allowed in your overhead bag. Some airlines are even checking how many—limited passengers to two chargers at the most. And check your power: Chargers must not exceed 100 watt-hours (Wh). If your power bank is only marked in milliamp-hours (mAh), a 27,000 mAh bank is roughly 100Wh.





## *Additional Notes*

**Susan:** “I always bring a couple of zip lock bags, because you never know when you need corral some smallish misc. items—buttons, beads, or other pieces that came loose. I bring some safety pins of various sizes and colors for the same reason, you never know when you might need them and they take up no room at all. Also, a tiny utility knife that’s always in my checked luggage has proven to be super useful!”



**Deb:** “There have been a couple of items I’ve seen recently on my long-haul flights that have intrigued me. [Tray table foot slings](#), [airplane seat organizers](#), with special versions for window seats and, [suitcase handle cup holders](#). I still haven’t found [compression socks](#) I like, but I’m still looking! And, after several lost luggage situations (both personal and some Decor Tour guests) I will not check my luggage without making sure I have an [AirTag or something similar tucked inside](#).





In the next issue of the  
**PROVENCE  
DISPATCH**  
*No. 2: Money Matters*

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