



## LADIES: BE A WEEKEND WARRIOR WHEN PACKING A SUMMER TOTE

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Summer weekend get-aways are typically something we women look forward to. The caveat is that, unlike men who can just toss things into a carry on, we ladies struggle for hours sitting in front of our closets mentally torturing ourselves thinking about what we should pack. 99% of the time, we return from the weekend with handbags, shoes and purses we never wore, but tossed into our bags for fear that we would arrive at our destination missing the “right thing.” While it may sound shallow in the grand scheme of life, often this insecurity women face when it comes to fashion and what to pack can sap our energy. **Dr. Ngozi Etufugh is a fashion blogger who wants women to empower themselves and feel great about the way they look. Ngozi is a world traveler and shares her secrets on how to pack the perfect weekend travel bag.**

Before you even start packing, there’s an art to choosing a travel-friendly wardrobe.

### **Stick to Three Colors**

By ensuring your entire travel wardrobe matches (including shoes!), you’ll have infinitely more combinations of clothing to choose from.

### **Choose Multi-Functional**

A sarong is a perfect example of multi-functional travel gear. It can double as a blanket, skirt, towel, beach accessory, privacy curtain, scarf, and more. There are also many clothing choices (mostly for women) that can be worn multiple ways to suit differing climate or style requirements.

### **SHOES**

Shoes are the most heavy items in your bag and take up the most space, however they are also the most important to pull off a great look. Here are shoes one should never leave home without.

A pair of black ankle boots. Always en vogue, will transition from night to day and compliment a wide range of hemlines shorts or pants.

A wedge sandal or shoe , compliments a wide range of leg shapes and ages, elongates the leg is comfortable for walking and gives much needed height for many looks.

A nude colored pump is classic in style and the color will compliment many outfits for both night and day. Wild card designer creepers/ trainers or high tops are the rage now. Their fun, flirty support arches more so than ballet slippers and just gives you a little edge in your choices.

Choose clothing from one designer that you like for a cohesive look in the same color palate and separates to pull off multiple looks with a combination of a few items.

Pack a bathing suit that can be worn as a blouse under a skirt or romper under a jacket.

Choose to pack either a blazer or a sweater jacket for cold nights. It should be a dark, light or metallic color. A jacket sweater can be worn belted as a blouse or dress over shorts or open as a jacket clearly the more flexible of the two.

White shirts can be worn causally buttoned down and tied or formally buttoned up with a broach at the neck or as a jacket for a more bohemian look.

Choose custom jewelry that can be flexible. For example, worn as a belt, necklace or even wrapped around your wrist as a bracelet. Ngozi has pieces that can also be worn as headbands over scarfs or as a bonnet for a more Avant garde look.

If have “shopped till you dropped” have it shipped and waiting for you by UPS or Fed ex at your destination.

### **Fly Quick-Dry**

You'll probably end up having to hand-wash something at some point. (See my note on Ziploc bags below for how to make this easy.) Your travel wardrobe should be comprised largely of items that can air-dry (inside) in less than 24 hours, ideally overnight. Quick-dry clothing has the added benefit of being light-weight

### **Buy Wrinkle-Free**

No matter how carefully you roll or fold (see below) your clothing, if it wrinkles you'll continually look disheveled, or you'll continually be in search of an iron. (And really — who wants to iron when they travel?) Try a wrinkle-test on each item before you pack it: Bunch some material up in your fist for 5-10 seconds, and then let it go. If doesn't hang out satisfactorily, don't bring it.

### **Luggage**

Your luggage is your home on the road (or at least in-transit). If you're traveling at a fast pace you might never have a chance to unpack. Thus, your luggage is a very important help — or hindrance — to your trip. Choose luggage that suits your needs without being too big. If you intend on bringing back loads of

souvenirs, then pack a second bag that can be filled and checked separately on your return. Co-mingling lots of souvenirs with your luggage only confuse and elongate the re-packing process every time you move on.

### **Dividers and Separate Compartments**

Things get lost in a big shell of a bag with no way to separate or organize your belongings. Even simple functions like elasticized mesh along the sides and separate zippered compartments will help you to easily find what you need, when you need it.