

Marcia's Top Ten (and a half) Packing Tips for Similans Liveboard Dive Trips

We often get asked about what to bring along on the boat for liveboard trip, so here's a downloadable tip sheet for you. Have fun packing, but even more, have fun on your liveboard trip!

1) If you are lucky enough to be bringing your own dive equipment, pack a net bag inside your airline-worthy gear bag. There is often no place on an LOB to store big bags, so when you arrive in Phuket, transfer your gear to the net bag, and then ask us or the dive op to hold your big bag on land until your return. The net bag can be folded up and stored in your cabin until you need to repack it to disembark. (Pack photo equipment separately, of course in a protective case.)

2) Bring along a basic save-a-dive kit with spares for gear you own: mask strap, fin strap/buckle, o-rings for your camera housing, silicon grease for your dive light and camera housing o-rings, spare batteries, etc. Consider bringing adapter plugs and a power strip if you expect to have a lot of battery charging to do.

3) Take a soft duffel to carry the few really necessary things on board. Cabins are typically cramped, so take aboard only what you will need during the trip: minimum clothing and basic toiletries. Even if you are combining a dive trip with a land-based tour, you won't need all of your stuff on the boat. You can flatten the duffel for storage somewhere in your cabin.

4) Clothing: for the typical 4-day/4-night LOB trip to Thailand's Similan Islands in the Andaman Sea, we advise our divers to take one or two swimshorts/bikinis, a couple of pair of regular shorts, five t-shirts, and two pairs of undies. And if you plan to bunk in the open air on deck taking something to layer over your pjs for warmth. You can wash out your undies and swimwear each day when you shower. Oh, one more thing—bring a hat and an extra pair of sunglasses.

5) Even in warm climates like Thailand, you may feel chilled in the evening—especially after a night dive, so it's a good idea to bring a long-sleeved shirt or a hoodie to wear at those times.

6) Take only flip-flops for your feet. You will be asked to surrender your footwear when you embark, so leave the trainers/athletic shoes and dancing slippers ashore with all that other stuff you don't need on the boat.

7) You will need only the smallest sizes of toiletries. Some boats provide shampoo and soap in wall-mounted dispensers. You may want to take shower gel, a small container of shampoo, conditioner if you use it, toothpaste and a toothbrush, razor and shaving cream (or you can let it grow!).

7a) Deodorant is probably unnecessary as you will be in the water a good part of each day; you also won't need cologne or makeup on the boat. After all, you *know* that you *really* look your best when you have just come up from a dive with a big grin on your face, and we don't "dress for dinner" on liveboards!

8) Bring along any meds you regularly take, and don't forget contact lens solution and sunscreen. There will be remedies such as motion sickness pills, antiseptic ointment, and other basic first aid supplies on board.

9) Pack a book or reading material for times you'd like some solitude.

10) Please, please do not forget to take your certification card and dive log along, together with your DAN or other dive insurance card.

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