

# PACKING LIST & PRACTICAL TIPS

## Accommodation

- ☪ The following items are in your apartment: curtains, duvet, sheets, 2 pillows, towels (2 bath, 2 hand), silverware & dishes, cooking utensils (including pots, pans,), lamps, all furniture (desk, table, chairs, drawers, shelves, etc.), oven, stove, refrigerator with a freezer, iron and ironing board.
- ☪ No washcloth, pot holders, kitchen towels, can opener or clock – you can buy all these, when you arrive if you want them (or bring them if you have room or are picky).
- ☪ No measuring cups or spoons. You cannot find these with American measurements (only metric), so if you intend to cook recipes from home, bring these with you. It will make cooking a lot easier.
- ☪ No muffin tins, and they are hard to find. Just FYI for any bakers!
- ☪ Hangers are pretty expensive, so you might want to consider stuffing a few in your bag if you have room.
- ☪ When you arrive in Ankara, there should be a bit of food in your apartment to pull you over until you are able to go to the store. You might want to bring some snacks just in case, though.
- ☪ The power sometimes goes out in the flats, so you might want to bring a battery-operated clock if you prefer to use it as your alarm.
- ☪ There are free laundry machines in the basement of nearly all apartment complexes.

## Food

- ☪ The following items are either hard to find or expensive. Either get your fill before you come or bring them along if possible:
  - ✓ peanut butter, some Western candy (twizzlers, M&Ms, sour anything, Reese's, gum that lasts...), black beans (and thus good Mexican food), pork products (hard to find or pretty expensive if you do), famous brand-name cereals
  - ✓ cilantro, poppy seeds, cream of tartar, ground cloves, all-spice, nutmeg, vanilla extract, food coloring
- ☪ Only some restaurants serve alcohol. There are many bars, though, and drinking is not taboo. The local beer is not bad, but there is generally little variety in beer options.

- ☪ Vegetarians may have some problems with the lack of options when eating out. Salad, mezes (starters) and Turkish pizzas can be good choices.
- ☪ There is a HUGE grocery store next to Main Campus and you can simply take the campus ring bus to get there, which is free to staff and students. They have some imported items and a wide selection of produce and groceries.
- ☪ Some foreigners bring Ziplocs, because the plastic storage bags here are not as good.
- ☪ High quality water bottles are difficult to find, so if you're picky about having a Nalgene, SIGG, etc. bring it from home.
- ☪ Travel mugs are not as cheap and ubiquitous as back home. They sell them at Starbucks, but they are kind of expensive.
- ☪ About coffee: Nescafe (instant) is the norm. Filter coffee and coffee machines range from very expensive to budget. They do have French presses here for sale as well (at nicer coffee shops like Starbucks).
- ☪ You will receive a booklet each month with meal coupons that are good on campus, for most restaurants in Ankara and throughout Turkey. If you spend judiciously, these books can often pay for most your meals out each month (and can even be used in some grocery stores).

## Medications/Health

- ☪ Pharmacies are easy to find and helpful (look for "*eczane*"). The trick is finding a pharmacist that speaks good English, but it can be done. Most medications you can find here, which will most likely be cheaper back home. Bring your medication, and you should be able to get refills over the counter.
- ☪ You have health insurance that covers approximately 70-80% of medical costs. The insurance plan is very good and the quality of healthcare is also good, so no need to worry. There are health clinics on campus (which are free to visit) and good private hospitals in the city. It should be noted though that the insurance doesn't cover documented pre-existing conditions.
- ☪ About contraceptives: If there is a specific kind of birth control you like using, you should bring a year's supply. On the other hand, know that birth control is available over-the-counter here (for significantly cheaper prices than in the U.S.), as is Plan B. You can find most of the Turkish equivalents of your American brand in pharmacies.
- ☪ Some feminine products, such as tampons with applicators, are hard to find. Think about bringing them if you use them.
- ☪ Bring vitamins because they are about double or triple the price as in America.

- ☪ Saline solution can be found in pharmacies, but be very expensive, so bring a year's supply along if you can.
- ☪ You can find most basic toiletries here. They are sometimes more expensive if imported, but Turkish brands tend to be acceptable (ex: shampoo, soap, dental products, baby wipes). However, if there are face/body products that you like and are picky about, bring them because they will either be impossible to get or very expensive. Also, sunscreen is expensive.
- ☪ Ankara is dry, especially in the winter. They have lotion here, but really nice stuff tends to be expensive. Think about bringing it from home if you are picky or have sensitive skin.
- ☪ Brand-name make-up and face products from outside Turkey (Clinique, Covergirl, Chanel, etc.) are overpriced or hard to find, so bring enough if you can.

## **Clothing**

- ☪ There is a lot of shopping in Ankara! The Turks love malls. If you forget something clothing related, you can most likely find it here.
- ☪ Business casual is probably the best way to describe the dress code for training and teaching. Work clothes range from jeans and a nice shirt to blazers/ties or business-type clothing (Refer to pictures at the end of the document).
- ☪ Flips flops are normally not worn outside the home by Turks. You can get away with wearing them around town as a foreigner, but they are not appropriate for work. Sandals for men are never really work-appropriate.
- ☪ It will snow during the winter, so bring shoes that can cope with snowy/icy conditions if you have them. You can also find them here.
- ☪ There is a free gym on campus for staff and students with a variety of machines and weights that you can access with your Bilkent ID card. There are also work-out classes that you can join for a small fee per semester.
- ☪ Exercise Clothes: Sleeveless shirts are not permitted at the gym on campus for both genders. Also, girls are allowed to wear shorts above the knee, but tend to feel a bit uncomfortable, so maybe bring longer knee-length shorts or capris to work out in if you plan to go to the gym on campus or run outside.
- ☪ Undergarments for girls (bras and underwear specifically) tend to be expensive for the quality and/or are sub-par.
- ☪ Shoes end at European size 40 (size 9-10) for women and 45 (size 11.5-12) for men, so it can be a bit more difficult to find shoes for large feet, though still possible.

## Electronics

- ⌚ Remember that the power voltage is different in Turkey (220 volts, 50 Hz, 2 round-prong plugs), so it is not recommended to bring any electrical equipment if you don't have to. (Girls, you can find hair straighteners and hairdryers here.) You can buy outlet converters when you arrive (they cost about \$2). Power converters are more difficult to find, and you will ruin your electronics from North America if you don't have this, so consider bringing one if you are bringing any electronic things from home. Almost all laptops don't need a converter and work without any trouble with just an outlet converter.
- ⌚ You will be given a laptop for work, so bringing a laptop is optional. It is still recommended to bring your own personal laptop so that you don't have to carry it back and forth and keep having to reconfigure the wireless settings. Also, there are administrator settings and rules on the work computers that control downloading, adding programs, etc.
- ⌚ You will have the opportunity to visit the cell phone store with assistance from the school soon after you arrive. Plans are pay-as-you-go and the most basic cell phone will probably be around \$40 or \$50. It is a hassle to register an international phone so it is best to get a cheap local phone with a local SIM card when you arrive.

## Mailing

If you are getting a package from home, it is best to have it sent in a padded envelope (not a box). Padded envelopes rarely have problems going through customs and getting delivered to the apartment. Boxes often get held up at customs and have to be picked up at a post office that is very difficult to get to or might even be taxed. It takes a while sometimes (2-3 weeks from the U.S.) for packages to arrive. If you declare the value of the box, make sure you keep it under \$100 or else you might have to pay import taxes.

## Random Tips

- ⌚ Warning: it will be hot when you arrive in August! Bring linen and cotton that you can layer.
- ⌚ Bring a watch if you have one (or you can buy one here) to keep track of time during your lessons, because there are no clocks in the classrooms.
- ⌚ You will have access to the Bilkent University library. When considering what books/DVDs to bring, visit <http://library.bilkent.edu.tr/> to see if the library already has a copy or not.
- ⌚ Games (i.e. taboo) are fun and also a good activity for class. Brainstorm other good conversation class activities and bring along if you have room.

# AT WORK!

