



## KOKODA GEAR LIST

### The key items to invest your money in are as follows:

**1a. Big Pack** - If you are carrying your own pack, this will be your most important investment. **A good quality backpack designed for bushwalking, that has a well-designed harness that fits your height and is well padded.** (including a waist and chest strap that can be adjusted to spread the weight off the lumbar spine and shoulders)

**It should be made from waterproof material that is hard wearing and preferably top loading so that there is less chance of water getting in through zips** (zips should be sturdy to avoid breaking enroute.)

**1b. Small Pack** – If you have a personal porter, most of your gear will be carried in the big pack (above). You would then need a smaller 'Day Pack' to carry things such as 'Hydration Bladder' for drinking water, snacks, sunscreen, insect repellent, footcare 1<sup>st</sup> aid items, head torch, cup etc. **A well padded harness with airflow behind your back, good waist and chest straps** to take weight off your neck & shoulders are the main features to look for. **Capacity should be 35 Litres.**

2. **A pack cover** is also a good investment to minimise the amount of water that gets into your pack during torrential downpours.

3. **Drysacks of different sizes and colours to waterproof things individually.**

The advantage of this is, it helps you to find stuff quickly without having to rummage through all your gear. (Especially helpful in a tent at night or during a downpour when you are in a hurry to find something)

4. **A hands free water bladder with a hose that you drink from while you are walking is a convenient way to stay hydrated.**

The average water intake of a trekker on the Kokoda Trail is anywhere from 5-8litres per day. If you use water bottles only, you'll tend to drink less because it's not as convenient to stop and start each time you want to get your water bottle out of your pack.

**Adequate hydration is one of the most important aspects of staying healthy on the track. It's also important not to drink too much straight water (as this can cause Hyponatremia where electrolytes in your body become too diluted) so we recommend sipping water regularly while walking rather than gulping it down whenever you stop.** We also suggest drinking an electrolyte mix later in the day, so bringing an extra water bottle for mixing electrolyte drinks is a good idea.

5. **Good quality boots that are well worn in.**

You can go for boots with a Gortex lining or full leather. Both are waterproof but Gortex breathe better and dry quicker. Full leather boots also take longer to wear in. (It's best to talk to an outdoor gear retailer for the latest opinion on which type of boot is most suitable for you and the conditions you'll be walking in.)

**The key thing is that they fit your foot shape and size.** Make sure you try them on with the socks you'll be wearing and test the pressure on your toes with your weight forward on a slope.

6. **Coolmax or Bamboo Socks** are a good investment if you want to avoid blisters on your feet and heels. Coolmax, bamboo and similar fibres wick away moisture from your feet, so even though they get damp, your feet stay dryer and are less likely to get pulpy and form blisters. Wool; on the other hand retains moisture and gets hot. You can also get thin inner socks to put under your main sock, which provides two layers between your boots & skin to reduce friction.

Again, talk to an outdoor retailer and take at least 4 pairs (Coolmax and bamboo socks are more expensive, so you might just want to buy 2 pair and take some ordinary socks as a reserve) Make sure they are a good fit (when socks get damp they stretch and wrinkle which can cause blisters)

#### 7. **Personal First Aid Kit**

Our guide will carry a comprehensive group medical kit in addition to that you can take a small basic kit for personal first aid items such as:

- **Vaseline** to put on hot spots to prevent blisters
- **Antifungal powder** to dry out your feet at night.
- A roll of **sticking plaster** and **blister kit**.
- **Anti-inflammatory gel** such as Voltaren or Nurofen for inflamed joints/tendons.
- A small bottle of **tea tree oil** – a good natural antibiotic and great for insect bites.
- **Sunscreen** & tropical strength **insect repellent** such as RID or Bushmans.
- **Rehydration electrolyte mix** such as Gastrolyte or sports drink powders.
- **Antibiotics** for gut, bladder, skin infections (discuss with your doctor)
- **Immodium** for diarrhoea
- **Malaria medication** – Most people use Doxycycline which is convenient, economical and doesn't cause any tummy upsets if you have it at night with a meal at least an hour before lying down. **See your doctor for best advice before you make a decision about what's best for you.**

There is usually an oversupply of first aid items, so you might like to share some items amongst the group apart from personal things that you'll use regularly.

If you don't have a regular GP that knows your history we would recommend that you go to the **Travel Doctor** (Travellers Medical & Vaccination Centre) in your capital city.

You can make an appointment by calling 1300 658844. They will book you in for all of your vaccinations (eg; Tetanus, HepA/Typhoid) and discuss your medical needs.

8. **Bike shorts, thigh length leotards or 'Skins'** are a good item of clothing to wear while you are walking because they prevent chaffing between your thighs, especially when you get wet or sweaty. (People who don't wear them get red raw thighs after a couple of days) You can pick up **'trunks' style underwear** from Target for about \$10 a pair! (4 pairs minimum)

9. **Headtorch** This comes in handy most days when you are eating or unpacking in the dark, going to the toilet in the middle of the night or walking at night. Consult your outdoor retailer but shop around. (\$50-\$90 depending on quality)

10. **A pair of ankle covers** to keep the mud and water from running down inside your socks. Long gaiters sweat like crazy, so we recommend short gaiters or ankle covers. They do the job and keep mud and sticks out of your boots. If you're going to buy gaiters, get some short cheap ones for this trip unless you plan on walking in Tasmania or New Zealand sometime in the future.

11. **Sports Towel** – compact, light weight and quick drying.

12. **Foam or air mattress & camp pillow** – self-inflating, light weight mats or the cheaper foam mat for a tenth of the price. Both are sufficient as you'll probably be uncomfortable anyway. Some people use both (the foam mat under the self-inflating one, prevents punctures)

13. **Sleeping Bag** – Most people already have a bag, so just take what you have. If you are going to purchase one, you need to think about the conditions you'll be using it for in the future but for PNG you can get away with a very light sleeping bag rated at zero or 5 degrees. These are usually very compact bags to carry! (Most people sleep on top of their sleeping bag on most nights apart from at higher altitude where it can get cold at night)

**Other items to take which don't need to be hi-tech**

- **Mozzie Net** (and some venetian cord to hang it up – also can be used as a clothes line)
- **Sandshoes or sandals** /thongs for night wear (sandals also come in handy for deep river crossings when you want to protect your feet but not get your boots soaked – 'Crocs' or something similar are excellent)
- **Bandana** that you can soak in cold mountain water to keep your head cool.
- **Track pants or long quick dry pants** for night time or walking at dusk.
- One **windcheater or light jumper** for warmth some nights (hardly used)
- **A cheap poncho** to keep the rain off when you're not walking or at night when you're not under shelter. (Don't bring a heavy Rain Jacket! – too heavy & hot)
- **Two nylon t-shirts/polo shirts** that you can throw away after the trek. You'll find these the most comfortable top to wear while walking. Some people wear long sleeves to keep insects off and protect skin from sun but most of the time you'll be under canopy and there aren't many mozzies about during the day, especially as the altitude gets higher. Walking in shorts and short sleeve shirt prevents people from over-heating but it's a personal choice.
- **Take one or two long sleeve shirts** depending on how much you care about being clean and fresh at night. Good to wear in the early or late hours of the day or up high.
- **One pair of quick drying shorts for walking during the day.** (Wear longs at dawn, dusk & evening for protection if there are mozzies)
- **Bathers** for a swim or wash in the rivers.
- **Hat** to keep the sun off when you're not under the jungle canopy.
- **Handkerchief**
- **Spare batteries**
- **Toilet paper** in plastic bag (1 roll in the day pack and 2 spare rolls in your big pack)
- **Camera** (lots of film) and a waterproof bag for it)
- **Toiletries** – toothbrush & paste + antiseptic hand gel (no soap or shampoo please)
- **Bowl, cup and cutlery** (light weight) Pocket knife (optional)
- **Plastic bags** for wet clothing
- **Cheap cycling gloves** – protects hands & prevents blisters from holding walking stick.
- **Trek Pole** – If you have good quality poles you want to take, feel free or you can get a long, strong stick cut out of the jungle which is also a good option and can be carved.
- **50 Kina in small notes** (2's and 5's) for pocket money on the trail.
- **130 Kina for tips or a gift** for your porter if you prefer.

This covers the essential items apart from some extra snack foods such as nuts, dried fruit, jelly beans etc and any personal medications, a notebook and spare film.

For further advice **please email:** [wayne@freespiritadventures.com.au](mailto:wayne@freespiritadventures.com.au) or Ph/fax: 08 8377 2415

