



## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***ALL Masters Athletes Traveling Internationally***

Each Section will be updated as needed and this is to be used as a guide and but please feel free to contact [Phillip Greenwald or Mary Rosado](#) for more detailed or specific questions.

**This guide is for the 2018 WMA Championships in Malaga, Spain.**

Thank you,

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## **TRAVEL SECTION:**

**When is the best time to arrive if I'm attending a WMA (World Masters Athletics) World Masters Games or any other international competition?**

Best time of arrival would be in the same time zone **48 or more hours** prior to your first day of competition. There are formulas to help determine the best time to arrive in a foreign country but even those may not work. The goal to keep in mind is not to feel rushed and overwhelmed before your event.

**When should I book my flight if I'm traveling abroad?**

The best time to book a flight depends are several key items:

- ✓ You are 100% going to compete.
- ✓ You have set up several airfare trackers so you know when it is really a good “deal” (Ex: <http://matrix.itasoftware.com> & <http://www.skyscanner.com> to name a few).
- ✓ Funds are available.
- ✓ Research the layover times to catch your connecting flights to and from your destination.
- ✓ Research the timeframe to get through customs to and from your connecting flight from your destination (*this one is very important ☺*) Give yourself at least 2-3 hours just to be on the safe side.

**How do I know if the hotel I choose is a quality choice from the event site?**

The LOC &/or bidders of the event want everyone especially foreigners to enjoy their stay in the host country and will provide hotels with an acceptable reputation and service.

(Please visit [http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018\\_Malaga\\_WMA/eng\\_alojamiento.htm](http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018_Malaga_WMA/eng_alojamiento.htm))

**Team USA has arranged a block of rooms at Malaga Hilton Garden Inn and this form must be used in order to receive the 25% deposit that was negotiated for TEAM USA.**

<http://www.usatfmasters.org/content/2018malagaaccommodation.pdf>

**What if I don't want to stay in a hotel, what are some other options and websites to book my stay?**

Here are a few sites and always read the comments others have left and if there are any requirements and/or restrictions. Each person's experience may be different.

1. Booking <https://www.booking.com/>
2. VRBO (Vacation Rentals by Owner) <http://www.vrbo.com> (focus on **vacation or second-home rentals**)
3. Airbnb <https://www.airbnb.com>
4. Housetrip <http://www.housetrip.com>
5. Tripping <http://www.tripping.com>
6. Wimdu <http://www.wimdu.com>

### **I want to rent a car or vehicle; is there anything I should do differently than here in the US?**

Yes-You will need a valid International Driving Permit (IDP) in addition to a Passport and Credit Card. An International Driving Permit (IDP) allows citizens of a foreign country with a valid driver's license to drive while in Spain. You must obtain your IDP in the same country that issued your driver's license and your full name must match on both. Always confirm the dates you know you want to use the vehicle to help reduce any unnecessary cost. Understand the rate and rental policy and procedures before you book it.

### **What if I want to extend my trip?**

Please research the requirements needed if you plan to visit nearby countries.

### **What should I do if there is an emergency while I am abroad?**

A family or friend not traveling with you should have your flight, address of your living accommodation and the duration of your trip in case of an emergency in the US or with you. Also, someone on the team should have information in case something happens to you and they know who to contact. The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

<https://step.state.gov/step/>

### **Passport and what do I need to know?**

Everyone traveling internationally must possess a passport especially if you are flying. If you do not have one, please visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english.html> to begin the process. This should be done several months in advance as it takes at least 6 weeks to process and 3 weeks to pay for an expedited one.

- ✓ Anybody traveling on a passport from another country needs to check the information on Spain Visa requirements.

### **NO VISA is required for USA citizens when traveling to Spain**

### **Are there maps available to help me navigate the city/country?**

The event site offers the address and maps of where the venues are located but if you are interested in a more detailed map, use Google Maps. <https://www.google.com/maps>

### **Where is the best place to look for weather updates?**

The two apps I would recommend are <http://downloads.accuweather.com> & <http://www.weather.com/apps>

## **Should I contact my cellular provider if I'm traveling abroad? Will there be Wi-Fi or Hotspots?**

Yes! Each provider has different plans and restrictions and it is best to contact them a few weeks prior to your departure. Note roaming charges are high abroad and use your phone if possible on a limited basis to avoid this additional fee.

Yes! There are Hotspots and Wi-Fi available which will help save cost when checking emails and communicating with family and friends back home. Many hotels, restaurants and other public places offer Wi-Fi.

Many traveling abroad use WhatsApp to communicate with those inside and outside the country. (*It is Free*)

<https://www.whatsapp.com/>

## **Should I use currency or a credit card traveling abroad?**

This is an individual choice and some examples may help you determine which option (s) will be best for you and your situation.

- Best to have both currency and a card just in case there is an emergency. If you decide to use a card, it is advisable to use one that has a Chip embedded. Many countries use this type of card (Chip and Pin) instead of the magnetic strip. More cards in the US are offering this type of card and please contact your credit card company to see if they have this available. (Note: Most if not all Credit Cards now have a chip)
- Currency Only-Contact your bank as to when you need to order it before you leave and the conversion rate used is the day you place your order. Try to budget what you will need the funds for such as food, souvenirs, transportation, etc. The goal is to get enough currency and not too much due to the conversion rate when you come back to the US. (Note: This is a personal preference where to purchase)
  - *The best place to convert your foreign currency is usually your bank and not the conversion booths at the airport.*
  - *Many athletes have found that converting in the country yields the best rates.*
  - *ATMs often have better rates than either bank tellers or currency shops.*
- Card Only-Contact your bank and let them know you will be leaving the country and that you plan to use your credit card (s), this is highly recommended. The reason is that the bank may place a hold on your card believing it is stolen since you are in another country.
- Check with your credit card company to see if they add a “foreign transaction fee” to charges in other countries. Some do; some do not. Those charges can be anywhere from 3-5% of the actual charge.

**NOTE: Spain is a member of the European Union (EU) and the currency is the Euro.**

Here are 2 links to calculate your currency when abroad if you do not already have one on your phone:

<http://currencyapp.com/#android>

<http://www.oanda.com/mobile/converter/iphone>

## **Travel, Medical, and Evacuation Insurance**

Insurance can be critically important for Americans traveling abroad. You should first check to see what kind of coverage, if any, your existing insurance provides. Many medical plans do not cover you while you are outside the U.S. Others provide no coverage if you require medical evacuation or, God forbid, repatriation of your remains.

- There are many companies that offer many different types of travel, overseas medical, and evacuation insurance. Good places to start in determining what is best for you, should you need it, are the following websites: (Both of them provide information about policies offered by several different companies and allow you to comparison shop.)  
<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>  
<http://www.travelinsurance.com/>
- It is important to note that coverage for pre-existing conditions is not included in all travel medical and evacuation policies and even those that do have restrictions (often you must purchase your insurance within as little as 10 days after making your initial trip payment).

## **PACKING FOR MY TRIP SECTION:**

### **How many suitcases can I bring? Should I pack more than enough?**

Each person will need to decide this for themselves, however; most if not all airlines charge extra for additional bags and unless your stay is for an extended amount of time, I would recommend packing your items in one checked bag that weighs 50lb or less.

#### **NOTE:**

- If you plan to get souvenirs, pack an extra empty bag that you can use as a carry-on.
- Remember-you are only allowed 2 carry-on bags so pack wisely.

Besides your USATF Uniform (*details in another section*), check the weather for the dates you plan to arrive and leave to come back to your city in the US. The listed items are suggestions and please use your best judgment.

- ✓ Bring comfortable shoes! There will be a lot of walking compared to what you may do at home.
- ✓ Always have at least one non-USA jacket (casual) for cool evenings.
- ✓ Pants and/or Jeans should be packed for cool evenings.
- ✓ Sunscreen, hat, glasses (you be surprised how many people forget to pack these especially if you are packing last minute).
- ✓ Women-dresses or skirts as you might decide to attend an event or function that requires a dress or skirt.
- ✓ Toiletry items-this can weigh easily 5lbs or more depending on what products you use. Pack sample sizes for as many items as you can and for liquids use plastic bags in case of spillage.
- ✓ In your carry on bag:
  - Pack your competition uniform and spikes (*take the spikes out*)-If your checked luggage doesn't make it, you can still compete until it arrives. (*Yes, this will take up valuable space but you can pack it in your checked bag on your return flight*).
  - Put prescription drugs in your carry-on and bring enough for your entire trip. (just like your competition shoes, this can be an issue if your checked bags are lost).

- Pack your TUE (Therapeutic Use Exemption) papers in your carry on with your passport/visa and other important documents.
- ✓ Ideally, it would be great if you can pack a few days prior to your departure to see what items work and those that can stay behind.
- ✓ Try to pack only what you need and will wear!

**Can I bring food/snacks during my trip?**

Yes! I would highly recommend non-perishable, nutritious and easily “packable” food. Bring food you like to eat and will keep you from having a sugar or hunger episode on the plane or during your layovers. Some items I have traveled with are Fig Newtons, Nuts, candy/Chocolate, PBJ sandwiches, pretzels, raisins and other dry fruit for example. The food you pack will help make your trip pleasurable.

**CULTURAL SECTION:**

**Is there anything that should be noted when traveling to Malaga, Spain? Some information may not be updated on the site so please read carefully.**

- Here is the link to their Tourist Center: <http://www.malagaturismo.com/en>
- Learn more about Spain:  
<https://www.donquijote.org/spanish-culture/traditions/>  
[https://www.expatica.com/es/about/30-facts-about-Spain\\_109108.html](https://www.expatica.com/es/about/30-facts-about-Spain_109108.html)  
[http://www.spain.info/en\\_US/](http://www.spain.info/en_US/)

**ATHLETE SECTION:**

This information can be located at the below link and it is strongly recommended to review the information prior to leaving. Highlighted are some key items below.

**Entry deadline is Friday, July 13, 2018**

If you haven't already visited the website for the 2018 WMA Championships, please visit:

[http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018\\_Malaga\\_WMA/eng\\_noticias.htm](http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018_Malaga_WMA/eng_noticias.htm)

**What is a TUE and do I need to get one? If so, where do I find the information so I can apply?**

A TUE (Therapeutic Use Exemption) is special permission to use a prohibited substance for medical reasons based on substantial medical documentation. (*definition taken from USADA's website*)

**\*\* If you are granted a TUE certificate, this must be with you at all times, along with proof of identification, and be produced at the Doping Control Center if you are selected for a drug test. \*\***

This is the link of the form you will need to complete: ??

**Who and where do I send the information?**

Dr. Martine Provost -WMA Medical Officer

17 Rue Leon Roby FR87000

Limoges, France

[Prevost.ma@wanadoo.fr](mailto:Prevost.ma@wanadoo.fr)

**You must submit written application to this officer at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the Championships.**

For more information and details about doping control, please visit the link under the athlete info:

**WHAT LINK?**

**Schedule:**

[http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018\\_Malaga\\_WMA/eng\\_horario.htm](http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018_Malaga_WMA/eng_horario.htm)

**Stadia & Non-Stadia Venues:**

[http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018\\_Malaga\\_WMA/eng\\_sedes.htm](http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018_Malaga_WMA/eng_sedes.htm)

**Transportation Info:**

[http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018\\_Malaga\\_WMA/eng\\_transporte.htm](http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018_Malaga_WMA/eng_transporte.htm)

**Registration Info and Fees:**

[http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018\\_Malaga\\_WMA/eng\\_inscripciones.htm](http://www.rfea.es/competi/2018_Malaga_WMA/eng_inscripciones.htm)

**Non-Stadia Athletes (XC, Road Race and Road Walking Athletes)**

\*Cross Country is the first event of the meet so it is critical that participating athletes contact Mary Rosado, Non Stadia Manager (Email: [mvrosadoesq@prodigy.net](mailto:mvrosadoesq@prodigy.net) or cell 917-400-3961) once you have arrived.

**Please Review information regarding team selection: NEED TO PROVIDE USATF WEBSITE**

**Reminder Tips:**

- ✓ Print out everything you will need prior to leaving-location, map and address of stadium (s) you will be competing at during the championships, your hotel, etc.
- ✓ Leave your emergency contact information as to your travel plans in case something happens while you are away (this question was asked when you registered for the meet)