

DIVA PACKING – NEW YEAR IN NEW YORK

I understand from Andrea there are lovely Divas struggling with what to pack for their fabulous New Year's trip to New York. But don't worry, help is at hand – follow my advice and I guarantee you will have more outfits, and have more room for all that lovely shopping you are going to do.

First some general principles

- It's winter. Assume it has or will snow. If you aren't used to snow and Northern Hemisphere winter don't underestimate just how cold you can get.
- It's New York. Therefore chic is key.
- You need to pack light. Even though Andrea thinks of everything, and I know you will all be so spoilt, lugging heavy bags is never chic. Even if you take a big suitcase, pack light to leave room for that shopping!
- You will be doing a lot of walking. Practical shoes are therefore a must. In the snow I find rubber soled shoes work best.
- Shops and museums will be overheated, so think in layers rather than bulk.
- Consider a capsule wardrobe, rather than outfits – everything you take should be able to be worn with everything else. Take things that you can dress up or down with jewelry and accessories to suit the mood. You will pack less and actually have more to wear!
- Accept that the only person who cares about what you wearing is you. Stop obsessing about what you wearing, and JUST HAVE FUN!!!

Key pieces for your packing list

A warm coat. Down is warmest – now is a good time to buy one cheaply (often half price) at a camping/outdoors shop sale. Target also had some great cheap ones (with proper duck down that looked quite chic) for under \$100. This will pack down into a suitcase much better than an overcoat and will be warmer and more waterproof. Get one that comes to mid thigh at a minimum.

Thermals. I know that sounds incredibly dowdy, but trust me, they make a massive difference. Again, now is a good time to buy them on sale in camping stores. Buy both tops and bottoms. The tops are great for laying under blouses even if it's not that cold.

Trousers. Take two pairs in black. Leave the jeans at home – they are heavy and space consuming in your bag, and take ages to dry if they get wet. Black pants dress up or down easily.

Shoes. If you choose carefully, you should manage with only 2 pairs of shoes. One pair of rubber soled ankle boots will be your “go to” shoe for everyday. They will keep your feet warm and dry. Then a pair of dressy blingy ballet flats for dinners or for shopping/sightseeing when you know you won’t need to be outside too much.

Blouses. Perfect for your layering strategy. Two or three blouses that you can dress up or down will take you through every activity on your itinerary.

A skirt. Again, I like a skirt that I can dress up or down.

Two to three jumpers or cardigans. Take the best quality you can afford, that is not too bulky. Cashmere is warmest (take Andrea’s advice and stock up at Uniqlo) or good old Aussie Merino wool work best. Even if you need to wear two you will look good without the bulk. Leave the fleece at home – they are so bulky, and in a sophisticated city like New York just scream “tourist!!”

Tights/socks (wool or cashmere will keep you warmest)/gloves/warm scarf.

Some great costume jewelery for dressing up those pants and blouses at night.

My perfect New Year’s Eve outfit for this trip to go with my perfect make up and beautiful smile? A fabulous skirt, chic blouse, ballet flats and statement jewelery.

Other ways to pack light

Toilet bag. Forget about those fancy girly toilet bags – they take up too much space and don’t hold much. While you are stocking up on thermals in the camping shop check out the light toilet bags they sell – brilliant!

Camping shop umbrella. I bought the most amazing folding umbrella in a camping shop. It is so light and small and has served me well over many years.

Stick to the 100ml liquid limits even if you are checking luggage. For 8 days you don’t need a full sized bottle of anything. Decant into little bottles (easily and cheaply bought at chainstores or pharmacies in the toiletry department).

Have a fantastic trip and remember, travel is about what you did, the friends you made and the memories you create, NOT how many pairs of shoes you got to wear!