**List of things to be brought from India:**

Below listed are some food items you may be prefer to get:

Packets of Chole Masala, Pav bhaji masala, Sambar Powder, Rasam Powder and Masalas as per your preference (ex: "tamarind rice powder)

Appalam/Vadam/pickles

Basic spices (cumin, mustard, cloves, cardamom, cinnamon etc)

Tamarind paste or ½ kg of tamarind

Different types of pulses (dals) in small quantity for initial phase

Asafoetida powder

Indian instant coffee + Indian tea (takes some time to get  used to American stuff)

**Note:** most of these items are available in the Indian stores in the major cities. However you need to carry them for use in the first few days.

\*\*Please take care in packing Pickles\*\*

Take all dry food stuff in sealed plastic packets

A Pressure cooker (for 3-4 people)

Steel vessels like cups/saucepan/karhai/degchis etc.

Two full sleeve sweaters, leather jackets are not of use. You can buy a good winter jacket after coming here for about $60 - $70 the ones you get at home aren't enough for the climate Potsdam has.

Formal suit (for interviews etc.)

A pair of formal leather shoes

Buy Jeans/shirts in India. They are expensive out here (though you can get the good brands cheaper on deals from time to time)

Do not get electronic goods which requires AC. Out here its 110V.

Books are very costly out here. On average costs around $80 so try to get the books that you might need

A wallet which can carry at least three credit cards

Get some cash in 1 dollar notes (about 10-15 say). Try to get Quarters (25 cent coins) as many as possible-typically 15-20. It'll be useful at the airport and for making calls. Get rest of the money in the form of travellers cheques or travel card (ex: SBI Vishwa Yatra). It’s safer and can also be directly deposited in the bank

A few passport size photos

Medicines (get some vitamins too for initial use)

(Eg: Crocin - For fever, bodyaches, headache, Tablets for cold, pain killers, for diarrhea & stomach discomfort, for sore-throat, Zandu balm, Volini spray etc.

Medicines are relatively very expensive in the US, but you will also tend to fall ill less frequently. Get all the medicines prescribed above if you must, but atleast get them in much smaller quantities.

**Things to be carried along with you:**

Copy of all certificates/documents (originals in hand baggage)

Important application materials (SOP, reco etc)

Copy of address book/telephone book/diary

Some stationery and related items suggested (not absolutely necessary - just for the first few weeks)

Medical history files

1 pair chappals.

Toiletries (soap (bath), toothbrushes (slightly costly in the US - 1 or 2 bucks) etc)

**Things to be kept in Hand Baggage**:

Original documents (I-20, visa, tickets ...)

Some medicines (including for air-sickness)

Novel/mags/books for inflight reading

Sweater

Enough money (little cash, travellers' checks, travel card (ex: SBI Vishwa yathra))

Address book/phone book (Indian & US)

Copies of your photo (passport size)

Things to survive for a week in case luggage gets misplaced (two sets of clothes, addresses etc)

Laptop

Shorter extract of contact addresses.

**Things to be left at home:**

List of addresses/phone numbers at which info about you can be obtained

One copy of all your important documents

A copy of all relevant parts of Medical History files

**Things to be done in the last week before the flight:**

Call up & find if there is any delay or change of schedule of the plane

Rest well - ready to face the long journey/jet lag

**Final checklist for students travelling to the USA:**

 Airline tickets, Passport, I-20 (Travel documents/immigration documents).

Health care documents/Immunization forms.

General and specific medication, spectacles (spare too) and contact lenses

Clothing and Accessories: Sweaters, even a pair of good boots if you can.

Formal and traditional attire. Atleast 2 weeks supply of daily-wear garments.

Required cooking utensils

Edible items/Spices/Masalas

Textbooks, plastic files and folders to start you off in school. Other stationery you think will be useful.

List of contact numbers and useful addresses

Some loose change eg: Dollar bills and 25 cents

Travelers' checks/cash/Travel Card

**On the day of the flight & in-flight + later:**

Since it is going to be a long flight wear something comfortable (cotton dress + full hand shirt).

Be at the airport 3-4 hours before flight departure

Relax during flight, sleep as much as possible

For vegetarians - watch out before you eat - you may get non-veg

Once out of India be very careful (from sheer experience of seniors). Don't trust anyone. Don't hire a taxi (unless emergency) till you reach your destination. If required don't hesitate to spend money.

Don't hesitate to talk to people to ask questions - usually they will answer all your queries properly.

**Port of entry procedures:**

Sometime before landing the flight attendant will distribute customs declaration forms & immigration forms as mentioned below. Fill these out on the plane (you will submit them to the appropriate authorities when you land). Do not hesitate to take the flight attendant's help.

You can indicate that you have nothing to declare & total value of all your things is less than $100 on the customs form

Form I-94 - fill in the plane. After seeing your documents immigration officer will indicate length of stay, Univ, etc.  Form I-20 ID copy - all transactions regarding your non-immigrant status will be recorded in this form. This should be retained at all times (not surrendered when you temporarily leave the US).

Just before you land the correct local time will be announced set your watch

Once you are out of the plane go straight to the immigration counter - rush for them to beat the queue. It might take 0.5-1 hour here.  Keep your I-20, passport, admission & aid letters ready. They might ask a few questions like - is this your first time in the US? Student? F-1 visa? Which Univ?

**You are now in the USA!**

Then go to the baggage are to fetch your luggage. Pick up a cart (you get this at a machine for ~$5) to carry the bags.  Then pick up your bags as they come out on the conveyor (suitable eye-catching labels help here). If you don't get your baggage inform the enquiry section – you may have to wait 0.5-1 hour here.

Cart your baggage to nearby Customs. If asked tell them that  you are a student, F-1 visa, school, dept., coming to US for  the first time

If asked to open the baggage do so slowly - do not mess up the place.  If asked about the "podi" tell them that they are "dried Indian spices" to make traditional Indian food like curry.

Note: In most cases you will NOT be asked to open your bags at all & will be simply waved through.

Never leave your baggage unattended. Don't go out of the airport until somebody comes & picks you up. If you have doubts about the guy who comes to pick you up, don't hesitate to ask for his ID. [All this is of course being a little extra cautious]

Once you reach your friend's house (or other destination) call home & inform them of reaching safely.

**Few important things upon arrival to the University:**

Your first work is to meet the Foreign Students' Advisor (Tess Casler) in the International Student Office (ISSO). They keep a record of you (passport, visa details etc). When you leave the US (temporarily or permanently) you have to go there again.

Get your Univ ID card

Meet the department secretary for the necessary formalities which needs to be completed upon arrival.

 Meet the HOD/grad. Student advisor/advisor, Register for classes