



CATALYST RESOURCES INTERNATIONAL

Team Information Packet 2020

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.
Proverbs 31:8–9*

General Information

Frequently Asked Questions

When can we come to Guatemala?

Contact CRI to schedule dates for your group to come and serve in Guatemala. Dates fill up quickly, especially in the summer months, so contact us now to ensure that you get the dates you desire. We normally host 12 months out of the year. It is common for groups to schedule a year or more in advance.

What does the trip involve?

Your group will travel to Guatemala City and stay with Fontaine and Paula Greene at their home in San Cristobal. The Greene family lives at a ministry center that includes five team houses. They utilize your skills and expertise as well as your passions and desires in order to serve those in need.

What is expected of me as the team leader?

Communicate information with your team as well as with CRI, have planning meetings if necessary, and collect funds for your trip.

What is expected of our group?

We ask that everyone keep a positive attitude throughout the planning of the trip as well as the trip itself. Group members need to **BE FLEXIBLE** and be respectful of Guatemalan culture while in the country. There are several sources in the back of this packet if you wish to learn more about Guatemala and the culture.

What kinds of projects are available?

CRI has several projects in which teams can be involved. Each project is led or supervised by our staff. Therefore, no experience or construction skills are required. Below are some examples of past projects along with a brief description of each:

*For each project the recipient/family is required to raise a small portion of the total cost and also provides manual labor alongside the volunteers. We find it enjoyable and important to let the family be involved with their life changing project. ex: House project = \$3000, the family would be required to raise Q1,000 or \$130 and participate in preparing the worksite. After the project is complete and teams have left, the family continues to work on their house to transform it into a home.

- **Home construction projects** – at a cost of \$3,600 each, families are provided with a 16'x 20' wood home, one bunk bed with two twin beds, and household good package (table, four chairs, plates, bowls, cups, pitcher, trash can, food bin, and two porch chairs).
- **Painting houses** - \$100 per house.
- **General Construction** - On occasion we build churches and other projects involving concrete and masonry. We have skilled Guatemalan workers to lead and supervise.
- **Bathroom** - build a shower, toilet and septic system for a family for a cost of \$1,200.
- **Ecocomal stove installations** – at a cost of \$150 each, families are given a stove with which to cook. They greatly reduce the amount of work that needs to be done by the women in the village because they require only 30% of the wood with which to cook.

Stoves are also vented to reduce the amount of harmful fumes breathed in by families each day.

- **VBS or Bible school for children**
- **Women's ministry**
- **Men's ministry**
- **Medical/Dental/Vision/Veterinarian clinics**
- **Feeding projects**
- **Mimi's House Orphanages - Please ask about construction projects and other opportunities to serve the children and nannies at the homes.**

The specific projects for your trip are determined by your team. There are many opportunities to serve. Begin praying about how God may want to use you in Guatemala and make those desires known to us. We will work with you and your team to determine the exact schedule for your trip. For more information on any of these projects, please contact us.

How much does the trip cost?

Following are the costs associated with the trip:

- Airline Ticket: up to each individual team. Please have every member of the team scheduled to travel on the same flight(s) if coming from the same state / city. If your team includes members from multiple states / cities, please arrange your flights to arrive in Guatemala close to the same time.
 - o Baggage fees may also be assessed depending on the amount of luggage you bring and the airline you choose
- Project Costs: up to each individual team
- **Room & Board: \$70 per day. Cost per day based on Check In Time: 12:00pm and Check Out Time: 11:00am.**
- Sight-seeing expenses: varies based on your group's desired outing
- Money for restaurant meals and shopping in Antigua
- Other costs as desired
 - o Tips for drivers and housekeeping: \$20
 - o Tips for luggage handlers at the airport: \$10 (\$5 arrival/\$5 departure)
 - o Meals/snacks on travel days (at airports): \$20-40
- Other fees dependent on each individual team

The room and board fees help to fund the ministry by offsetting the cost of utilities and support the Guatemalan staff members who work with us each day.

When do we need to have our project money and fees turned in to CRI?

Because there are lots of materials we need to order before your arrival in Guatemala, CRI needs all **fees and project money to be mailed to our Ohio address at least one month prior to your trip**. Please send partial payments if you do not have the full amount. The address for mailing your payment is PO Box 967, West Chester, OH 45071. Please include your church group's name and the purpose of the funds (project costs, room and board, feeding program, etc). You may also use our online giving site. If you choose to do so, we ask that you cover the transaction fees. Please also remember to specify what the funds are for.

Where will we stay?

Your group will stay at the team house located at the ministry center operated by the Greene family. The name of the ministry is Catalyst Resources International. The property is gated and is also located in a gated neighborhood. Employees of CRI are completely trustworthy.

23 Calle 3-63 Lo De Coy Zona 1
Mixco, Guatemala 01057

To learn more about this ministry, please go to www.catalystresources.net.

When do we need to let CRI know the size of our group and when we are coming?

We need to know the total size of your group at least one month prior to your arrival in Guatemala. If you would like to make any changes in your dates for the trip, please let us know as soon as possible. Dates fill up very quickly, especially in the summer months, and we want to ensure that we can accommodate your entire group on the days that work best for everyone.

What's the minimum and maximum size that my team can be?

Minimum team size is ten members and the maximum size is one hundred.

What do I need to wear?

Please bring conservative, modest clothing to wear while in Guatemala. The people with whom we will be working are very conservative and we do not want to give them the wrong impression as we interact with them each day. Ladies, we ask that you not bring cami-style / spaghetti strap tank tops nor short shorts / running shorts. Please ensure that your clothing is not tight and/or revealing. Men, please do not bring sleeveless shirts. In addition, please remain clothed at all times, both on the work sites and on Mimi's House property. People may get the wrong impression when they see men without shirts on or women wearing tight, revealing clothing as they work. We want to be an example for Christ in this community and do not want to hinder that example in any way.

What about special dietary needs?

At this point, CRI is unable to accommodate special dietary needs. Guatemala is a third-world country and it is difficult to obtain gluten-free products and other special dietary foods. In addition, due to the volume of people we host each day, a special grocery run is not possible. Please note that we eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches each day for lunch while working on the field. When planning to come and serve with CRI, you would need to bring all food with you for your trip (Note: CRI is unable to discount the daily room and board rate due to dietary restrictions). If you have a concern, please notify your team leader or email us at info@catalystresources.net prior to your trip.

I have tattoos and/or piercings. Is that an issue?

If possible, tattoos and visible piercings should be covered or removed when you are on work sites (small earrings are acceptable for females). These rural areas are very conservative and tattoos and piercings are often associated with gang activity. This could have a negative impact on our witness for Christ in these communities. However, if you have tattoos or piercings that you can't cover up, please do not allow that to hinder you from coming to serve.

Will I be safe?

CRI is experienced at hosting mission groups and we do our best to make wise choices for your in-country travel. We will travel in groups and stay away from areas of known dangers. No travel is totally risk-free, though, even in the US. You may check the US State Department website (www.travel.state.gov) for any current travel advisories. There is generally a warning from the US government to use caution during travel.

What do we need to do about exchanging money?

There are several options for exchanging money in Guatemala. We do not recommend bringing a lot of cash with you on your trip. The best options for currency exchange are to either exchange money before your arrival in the country (through your local bank or at the airport) or bring a debit card and retrieve money from an ATM machine.

What shots do I need before we leave?

Personal discretion and your doctor's recommendation should be considered. General guidelines include each traveler being up to date on tetanus, Hepatitis A, and Hepatitis B vaccinations. Please check <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/guatemala> for the most up to date recommendation and if you are working in areas outside of Guatemala City.

What medicine is suggested to bring for personal use?

Cipro - This is a prescription drug you can ask for from your Dr in case you get traveler's diarrhea. You should ask for 1 500mg pill twice a day for 7 days.

Band-aids and first aid cream or a first aid kit

Cold medicine

Throat Lozenges

Allergy medicine

Tums or Rolaids

Advil/Tylenol

Ducolax

Ammonium

Any personal medication that you take or may need.

Are passports needed?

YES! A valid passport is required when traveling to and from Guatemala. Please check your passport to ensure it is valid through the ending date of your trip. You do not need a separate visa. You will be given a form to register with the US Embassy as you travel.

What will the weather be like while we are there?

Guatemala hosts spring-like temperatures all year round. May-October is the rainy season in Guatemala, so it is likely to rain if your trip is scheduled in those months. It is usually cool in the mornings and evenings (50's) and warm during the day (70's and 80s). It can be cooler and breezier than expected due to the elevation. There is no heat or air conditioning. Make sure to pack layers, warm pajamas, and a rain coat.

Will there be a day to explore the country?

Yes, most groups usually take one day to explore and enjoy Guatemala. There are several different options for your group's fun day. Your group can decide what you would like to do. Following is information on each option:

- **Antigua** (30-40 minutes travel time): There are many options of activities to do while in Antigua. You can choose where you would like to eat from the numerous restaurants available in the town. Options for activities are:
 - o **La Azotea**: Coffee plantation tour. Cost is \$5 per person. The plantation is only open for half of the day on Saturday and is closed on Sundays.
 - o **Capuchinas**: Tour of ruins from a convent, built in the 1700s. Cost is \$5 per person.
 - o **Artisan Market**: Shopping. The market is full of different vendors who sell various souvenirs. Cost is whatever you choose to spend.
- **Volcán Pacaya** (1 hour travel time): Climb to the top of this active volcano in Guatemala. Cost is Q50 or \$10 per person for admission. Horses are available to ride if you choose (\$10 each way). You can choose to roast hot dogs and marshmallows over a hot spot on the volcano or eat at a restaurant on your own (McDonald's, Pollo Campero, Hacienda Real, etc).
- **Pana** (2 ½ - 3 hours travel time): Sightseeing and adventure. Ziplines are available (\$30 with tip per person). Also available is a boat ride across Lake Atitlan (\$5 per person) with shopping. You may choose to eat at Pollo Campero or at a nice steak house (Hacienda Real - \$10-20 per person including tip).
- **Santa Teresita** (30 minutes travel time): Hot springs and massages. Hosts 16 heated pools of differing temperatures. You may also choose to get a massage. Pool admission is \$12 and a one-hour massage is \$30.
- **Aqua Magic** (2 hours travel time): Water Park. Located on the Pacific Coast with a black sand beach. Cost is \$13 per person for admission and includes a lunch of fried chicken, fries and a drink.
- **CRI Iztapa Beach** \$20 includes lunch, snacks, pool, beach...turtle release(seasonal), massage and 4 wheelers available for additional fees.
- **El Faro or Cayman Suites (hotels at the Beach)** - \$35 per person - includes lunch, pool and beach plus massage and 4 wheelers available for additional fees.
- **Tecpan Mayan Ruins** 1.5 hour drive to the ruins. This is the most well preserved mayan ruin tour available this side of Tikal (10 hour drive). There's a bilingual tour guide available. Entrance fee is \$5 per person.

Do I need to know Spanish before I can serve in Guatemala?

No, you do not need to know Spanish before serving in Guatemala. We have excellent interpreters who will help your group with communication. There are, however, some helpful phrases you can practice before your arrival that will help you with basic communication:

Hola - Hello

Como se llama? - What is your name?

Como esta? - How are you?

Mucho gusto - Nice to meet you.

Cuanto cuesta? - How much does it cost?

Dios le bendiga - God bless you

Habla ingles? - Do you speak English?

Por favor - Please
Adios - Goodbye
Gracias - Thank you

What about questions that haven't been addressed in this packet?
PLEASE ASK! We want to answer any and all questions you may have.

Suggested Packing List

- Clothing (Please remember to keep your clothing modest – no spaghetti straps or short shorts)
 - o 3-4 pair of pants/shorts (recommend: casual pants, capri pants, scrubs, jeans, etc.)
 - o 6 - 8 short sleeve shirts
 - o 2 long sleeve shirts
 - o 1 - 2 sweaters/sweatshirts
- Warm pajamas (no heat and it gets chilly at night)
- Undergarments
- 2 pairs of comfortable shoes for daily use (not 'flashy' gym shoes and they may be ruined if painting, cleaning, or construction)
- Soap/shampoo/toiletries (travel sizes are sufficient for one week's stay)
- Lice Shampoo for your personal use (optional)
- Hair ties or something to hold your hair back while working
- Eyeglasses, extra contacts, and sunglasses (Guatemalans do not typically wear sunglasses so please remove your sunglasses when in conversation)
- Snacks for week for personal use (granola bars, raisins, chocolate, gum, etc). Snacks are going to be important while out each day, so think of things that are easy to pack and will curb your appetite if a meal is delayed)
- Travel umbrella/poncho (especially during rainy season – May-October)
- Earplugs if you are a light sleeper—it can be noisy at night
- Backpack for daily use (use as one of your carry-ons)
- Travel toilet paper/tissues
- Wet wipes/hand sanitizer
- Digital camera
- Spanish/English dictionary/phrase book (not necessary but nice)
- Journal
- Leisure activities: book, cards, etc.
- **Passport** and two copies (pack in separate bags) **Please make sure passport is valid through the ending date of your trip!**
- Separate photo ID and two copies (pack with passport copies)
- Credit card (Visa or MasterCard is accepted in some markets. American Express and traveler's checks are not accepted. Call your credit card company before departure to inform them you may be using your credit card in Guatemala and the appropriate dates.)
- Cash (can get Quetzals (local currency) at Guatemala City airport; have US SINGLES for tips if necessary). We will make a trip to the ATM in order to get money out for shopping purposes.
- Medications (Prescription & over-the-counter) **Keep in original packaging/bottles!**
 - o We recommend that everyone bring their own 'stomach' medications – Pepto, Imodium, and ask your doctor to prescribe you Ciprofloxacin in case you get 'traveler's diarrhea', which is possible
 - o Pain medication for headaches or aches/pains
 - o If you have allergies, Asthma or other breathing problems, please bring your inhalers/medications and be aware that pollution in Guatemala is high

Do not wear/bring expensive or flashy jewelry. It is recommended not wearing any at all. If you choose to do so, jewelry should be very simple, plain, and inexpensive. Consider leaving wedding rings at home.

Towels and linens will be supplied by the ministry center.
No plug adapter is needed for things like hairdryers, laptops, etc.

*Remember our days will consist of work projects, so bring items which can be ruined.

MAP OF GUATEMALA



Suggested Reading Materials

- **Culture Smart! Guatemala: A Quick Guide to Customs & Etiquette** – An excellent book to learn a general overview of the country.
- **Guatemala** – Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com)
- **Paradise in Ashes** – Beatriz Manz
- **Guatemalan Journey** – Stephen Connely Benz 1996
- **To the Mountain and Back** – Jody Glittenberg 1994
- **I, Rogoberta Menchu** – Edited by Elisabeth Burgos-Debray
- **The Heart of the Sky, Travels Among the Maya** – Peter Canby
- **National Geographic Magazine, Into the Mayan Underworld** – November 2004, page 36
- **Smithsonian Magazine, Beguiling Tikal, Mysteries of the Ancient Maya** – July 2004, page 49

