

commissionexpeditions

guatemala

June 1-28, 2008

trip information packet

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If you are looking for an adventure that will challenge and inspire you this summer commissionexpeditions has a trip for you.

Our expedition to Guatemala combines ministry and adventure into a life changing trip that will expand your worldview and show you the part you can play in serving the global community. You will study Spanish, live with a local Guatemalan family, explore ancient Mayan ruins, kayak through the jungle into the Caribbean, and share Christ's love with those in need through service projects in the region.

Our team will be small and spots are limited so send in your application and initial payment as soon as possible to secure your place on this adventure. Carefully review the information in this packet as it contains very important details about preparation for your trip. If you have any questions feel free to contact us at the address below. I look forward to seeing you in Guatemala!

Joél Malm
Director
joelmalm@gmail.com

trip overview and itinerary

The Mayan civilization flourished throughout much of Guatemala and the surrounding region long before the Spanish arrived, but it was already in decline when the Mayans were defeated by Pedro de Alvarado in 1523-24. The first colonial capital, Ciudad Vieja, was ruined by floods and an earthquake in 1542. Survivors founded Antigua, the second capital, in 1543. Antigua was destroyed by two earthquakes in 1773. The remnants of its Spanish colonial architecture have been preserved as a national monument.

Our trip to Guatemala will be based in the city of Antigua. Your first week will be spent living with a local family and studying Spanish 4-5 hours per day with your own private instructor. This time will be important to prepare you for your upcoming work in the community. Weekends will be spent on adventure expeditions around the region including climbing the active Pacaya volcano, a trip to Lake Atitlan, and several other adventures. The second and third weeks of your expedition you will be involved in a variety of service projects to help local ministries in the area. Previous ce teams have helped build homes, churches, done children's programs, and even installed plumbing - so be ready for anything! The last week of your trip will begin in Antigua where you will start your trek to the amazing ruins of Tikal. For five days you will travel through the jungles of Guatemala and visit breathtaking waterfalls, caves and rivers as you explore the ruins of the ancient Mayan civilization.

Though always subject to change, the planned itinerary is the following:

Week 1	Language training and cultural immersion
Weekend	Adventure expedition
Week 2	Service project
Weekend	Adventure expedition
Week 3	Service project
Weekend	Jungle expedition trip preparation
Week 4	Jungle expedition to Tikal and Peten

getting there

Your flight to Guatemala will depart from Houston, Texas (IAH) where the team will meet and fly together to Guatemala City. Upon arrival you will be transported to our homestay families and will be given the evening free to familiarize yourself with Antigua.

general information

passports

You must have a valid passport that expires no earlier than 30 days from the time of your last day in the country of your expedition. To apply for a new passport, or renewal, please visit the website below for information and application forms.

<http://www.state.gov>

NOTE: Requests for new passports may take up to 10 weeks to process, so make sure you leave plenty of time for this. Airlines will not let you travel internationally without a passport. Further passport and travel information is available on the [ce](#) website under travel tips.

what the trip includes

Your expedition costs cover the following:

- transportation to and from set locations within country
- housing and accommodations (double occupancy)
- meals as prepared for team, which will include local cuisine
- medical emergency and medevac insurance

The following are not included in trip costs:

- meals, transport, and lodging outside the regular itinerary
- bottled beverages
- international vaccinations
- charges incurred as a result of delays beyond the control of [commissionexpeditions](#)

transportation

The team will depart from Houston (IAH) to Guatemala City. The flight from Houston is around three hours long. Purchasing your airfare is your responsibility, but our travel consultant can assist you in that process. Make sure you leave plenty of time to make your connection, especially if you are changing airlines. Your travel itinerary will be available approximately two months in advance to allow you to book your flight. If you need the info prior to this, please contact [ce](#).

(Note: For airfare consider asking friends or family to donate frequent flier miles)

In most cases we will use public transportation while in country. This can be quite an adventure so be prepared for anything. Your in-country transportation may include taxi, van, bus and mini-bus.

lodging

It is important to remember you will be in a third world country and accommodations may not be what you are accustomed to. Rooms will be double occupancy unless other arrangements are made. For special arrangements contact the trip coordinator.

food

Food is prepared by local cooks and may include local cuisine. Trip costs cover these meals, special food requests and dietary needs may not be able to be accommodated. Contact the team leader prior to departure to make these arrangements.

general information cont'd

vaccinations

Vaccinations are not mandatory but are highly recommended. For a list of necessary and suggested vaccinations please visit the following website:

<http://www.cdc.gov>

currency information

Dollars are accepted nearly everywhere in the world, however, it is best to not bring large amounts of currency into the country. Bringing more than \$500-\$1000 is discouraged. Money can be acquired at local ATMs within the country. Traveler's cheques are HIGHLY discouraged due to the difficulty involved in cashing and their limited acceptance abroad.

insurance

ce provides comprehensive insurance which includes emergency medical evacuation and care while in country, costs are included in the price of the trip. For more information about coverage contact the trip coordinator.

payment

total \$2300 + airfare

refund policy

No refunds will be provided 29-days prior to expedition date.

All balances are due 15 days prior to departure date unless otherwise specified.

Participants whose balances are not received by the 15-day deadline as stated above, risk forfeiture of their place on the expedition.

contact info

commission **expeditions**

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Corpus Christi, TX 78411

trip coordinator: Joél Malm
 (210) 317-6406
 joelmalm@gmail.com

<http://commissionexpeditions.org>

gear list

required items for all trips

- Passport (see passport info in general information)
- Bible
- Large Backpack - absolutely no suitcases, duffles or rolling bags (see recommendation list)
- Clothes (see specific list below)
- Tennis shoes
- Sandals (most housing will not have carpet)
- Daypack
- Swim suit
- Water bottle (Nalgene or Camelback)
- Hat
- Toiletries
- Underwear and socks (be prepared for extensive walking)
- Sunglasses
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Sunscreen (waterproof, Bullfrog recommended)
- Rain gear (it will rain nearly every day)

gear details and recommendations:

backpacks

all ce team members are required to have one large internal frame backpack for their expedition and should also bring a small backpack for day trips. The size of your backpack is up to you but it will contain all items you need for your one-month expedition. ce recommends at least a 65 liter bag. This should offer plenty of space for all items you need. Some good brands are Arc'teryx, The North Face, Osprey (a bit pricy) and Mountainsmith. Previous ce team members have found these websites to have great prices on backpacks:

campmor.com
rei.com (outlet store site)
sierratradingpost.com

clothes

You should bring atleast 8 days of clean clothes with you. Wash days will be approximately every 7 days. June is considered the rainy season in Guatemala. You can expect 2-3 hours of rain every afternoon in most regions, so prepare for this by bringing rain gear.

packing

Always bring all essentials (medications, contact lenses, toiletries, passports, etc.) and at least one day worth of clean clothes in your carry-on. In the event your bag is lost it will usually take atleast one day for you to receive it, so make sure you have these items with you should this occur.